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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

21st March 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee will be held in Virtually via Microsoft Teams - if you would like to attend this meeting live via Microsoft Teams please contact committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk on Tuesday, 28th March, 2023 at 9.30 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.

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.
4. **PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** 3 - 6
To receive the decisions of the Partnership Scrutiny Committee held on 7th February, 2023.
(Please note the decisions are submitted for points of accuracy only).
5. **ACTION SHEET** 7 - 14
To receive
6. **EAS BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2025 (CONSULTATION VERSION – ACCESSIBLE)** 15 - 58
To consider the report of the Corporate Director Education.
7. **GWENT WELL-BEING PLAN 2023-28** 59 - 90
To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services, Governance and Partnerships.

To: Councillor W. Hodgins (Chair)
Councillor P. Baldwin (Vice-Chair)
Councillor K. Chaplin
Councillor D. Davies
Councillor E. Jones
Councillor L. Parsons
Councillor C. Smith
Councillor L. Winnett
Councillor D. Woods

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

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

SUBJECT: **PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 7TH FEBRUARY, 2023**

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

PRESENT: Councillor W. Hodgins (CHAIR)

Councillors P. Baldwin
 K. Chaplin
 D. Davies
 E Jones
 L. Parsons
 C. Smith
 L. Winnett

Cabinet Member People and Social Services
 Councillor H. Trollope

WITH: Interim Corporate Director Social Services
 Head of Partnerships and Governance
 Corporate Director Education
 Scrutiny and Democratic Officer

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> No apologies for absence were received.

<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>The following declaration of interest was raised:-</p> <p>Item No. 6 – Regional Partnership Update Councillor W. Hodgins – some of his clients may be service users of the Social Services Directorate.</p>
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The decisions of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on, 22nd November, 2022 were submitted.</p> <p>It was reported that Councillor L. Parsons’ apologies had been omitted from decisions.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing that the decisions be accepted as a true recording of proceedings.</p>
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Action Sheet.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Corporate Director Social Services.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and scrutinised the report and supported the programme of work by the Regional Partnership Board (Option 1).</p>

No. 7

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 7TH FEBRUARY, 2023

Consideration was given to report of the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer.

It was proposed that the Regional Partnership Update be presented to Committee on an annual basis. This proposal was seconded.

The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing that the Forward Work Programme for 7th February be accepted (Option 1).

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Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Action Sheet

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date	Action to be Taken	By Whom	Action Taken
22.11.22	Item 8 – Forward Work Programme Member Briefing Session to be arranged with Awen Trust.	Democratic Team / Service Manager Young People and Partnerships	Briefing note attached (Attachment 1)
07.02.23	Item 5 – Action Sheet Briefing note to be provided and circulated to Members of the committee, in relation to Awen Trust.		Action complete: 20.03.2023
07.02.23	Item 6 – Regional Partnership Update Briefing note to be provided, following the meeting of the Regional Partnership Board.a	Interim Corporate Director Social Services	Briefing note attached (Attachment 2) Action complete: 20.03.2023

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Briefing note on Awen Cultural Trust for Members of Partnership Scrutiny

Submitted by Jo Sims, Service manager- Young People and Partnerships

Date: 20/3/23

Background

On 24th February 2021, the then Executive Committee approved the proposal to award Awen Cultural Trust (Awen) as the preferred provider for the Metropole Theatre (The Met), following a full and thorough procurement process being held, in line with the corporate procurement policy. Awen's core business is arts and cultural related, with a range of expertise and connections to a broader span of theatres and venues across South Wales. In April 2021, The Met Theatre and associated staff transferred to Awen. The contract is supported by the following agreements:

- Funding and Management Agreement (FMA) - that includes a 5 yearly review process for the management fee to be paid to the Awen Trust going forward
- Business Transfer Agreement (BTA) – that dealt with tupe arrangements and other related staffing matters
- 30 year Lease Agreement – this is a shared arrangement and runs alongside the FMA. This is a separate lease to Awen and the Museum arrangements remains as it currently stands with the Council.

Awen, as part of the tender process, submitted a detailed 5 year business plan for both the building and staffing structure, supported by detailed organisational accounts.

At the time of approval, this alternative service delivery option contributed to savings required for the Council's five-year Medium Term Financial plan, in line with the Bridging the Gap proposals. This project makes a key contribution to the Council's ten-year Leisure and Cultural Strategy, which supports the health and wellbeing of residents. The Awen Cultural Trust business case has resulted in a tapered reducing cost pressure. This project was funded from a reduction in the management fee paid previously to Aneurin Leisure Trust for the operation of the Metropole which for 20/21 was £221,908. The management fee required since April 2021 is summarised below:

Financial years	Year 1 (2021-22)	Year 2 (2022-23)	Year 3 (2023-24)	Year 4 (2024-25)	Year 5 (2025-26)
Management Fee Agreement	205,000	195,000	190,000	180,000	180,000

Monitoring and Governance arrangements

The Education Directorate has the lead role for the Client function for this contract, and the Service Manager for Young People and Partnerships is the link officer. Similar governance arrangements are in place between the Council and Awen as that for

Aneurin Leisure Trust – monthly meetings with link officer, regular meetings with Tech Services and quarterly updates on progress to the Council.

Quarter 3 performance highlights:

- Significant increases in attendance and participation on the same period last year as the venue continues to recover from the after effects of the pandemic. Nearly 4000 people attended events at The Met in this quarter with a further 1000 participating in some form of creative activity in the venue.
- 130th concert for The Met's anniversary
- Over 100 people attended family offerings including The Smartest Giant in Town, the Halloween Disco, Roald Dahl and the Imagination Seekers and The Moomins.
- The theatre programme included a successful performance of The Invisible Man, which exceeded expected audience attendance, and the lunchtime theatre programme which has attracted small but consistent numbers throughout the quarter.
- In conjunction with Frozen Light Theatre a specialist production was provided aimed at individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their carers. This sensory performance is designed for small groups of individuals. 24 individuals accessed the performance over the four performances
- Performances from community performing arts groups including Little Shop of Horrors by AADMS, Showstoppers with A Dream is a Wish, Abertillery Town Band, LRS with Musicals Through the Years, and a collaborative concert from The Hermon Trust with over 100 -150 people at most performances.
- The December highlight was the return of Pantomime from Owen Money's Rainbow Productions which this year featured Welsh film and TV star Julian Lewis Jones. Six schools' performances were held for 867 pupils from Ebbw Vale, Six Bells, Abertillery and Pontypool. 840 people attended the 5 public performances for the panto with a total panto audience number of 1707.
- Head 4 Arts continued their Golden Melodies sing-along sessions for those living with dementia and their carers, along with the inclusive dance programme. Open Mic music sessions restarted and a new Open Mic poetry session in the bar.
- The Warm Welcome programme at The Met, developed to support local people through the cost of living crisis, included Free Music Fridays and Workplace Wednesdays. The former attracted between 10 and 30 people each week for some high-quality free entertainment and complimentary hot drinks. The latter supported local people with free access to quiet work space, high-speed wifi and complimentary free drinks. The programme has enabled us to test new opportunities and build new relationships with those who otherwise may not engage with The Met as a venue.

Performance measures:	Quarter 3	% difference on same period last year:
The Met Ticketed Attendances Professional Performances	2468	24% increase
The Met Ticketed Participations Professional Performance	161	33% increase
The Met Ticketed Attendances Community Performances	1420	40% increase
The Met Tickets Participations Community Performances	882	45% increase
The Met - Total Visitor number	11203	35% increase
The Met % venue capacity	84%	20% increase
Number of volunteers	6	N/A
Number of volunteering sessions (1 session = 2- 4 hrs)	30	N/A

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Partnership Committee Briefing Note.

Purpose of the Briefing Note

To update the Partnership Committee on matters discussed at the Region Partnership Board, held on the 14th of March 2023

Updates

1) Redesign of services for Older People and Frailty Services

Dr James Calvert gave a presentation. In short, the health board have reviewed the way in which services are currently being delivered and are planning to reconfigure resources to provide services to prevent needs from escalating in the hope that hospital admissions will be avoided.

2) Winter Plan review and System Pressures

The effectiveness of the Winter Plan was reviewed by the Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership which established what aspects of the plan had been successful and needed to be continued until the full evaluation has been undertaken. A full evaluation of the winter plan will be presented to the RPB in May when decisions will be made about future funding for the successful elements of the plan.

3) Area Plan

The Area Plan is in its final draft. An easy read version will be developed outlining clear actions for each of the partnerships that support the RPB to deliver

4) Updates were received from the Citizen's Panel and the Third Sector

5) Regional Integration Fund

Capital and revenue reports were received in relation to the RIF
The RPB endorsed the final capital applications which had already been endorsed by the various Strategic Partnerships for 2022-23 delivery.
The Revenue Budget was reporting an underspend due to some of the winter plan projects not being fully maximised. The RPB agreed the underspend would be split between the health board and the local authorities to support with the winter pressures

6) Presentation by Welsh Government on the Review of Parts 2 and 9 of the Social Services & Wellbeing Act,

Welsh Government are currently consulting on the review of Parts 2 and 9 codes of practice. Part 2 looks at the general functions including the need to undertake a population needs assessment, Part 9 looks at the functions of the Regional Partnership Board.

Tanya Evans
20.3.23

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Agenda Item 6

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Partnership Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **28 March 2023**
Report Subject: **EAS Business Plan 2023-2025 (Consultation Version – Accessible)**
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 Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
√	16.03.23	20.03.23			28.03.23	19.04.23		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 This report contains the draft EAS Business Plan 2023-2025 (June 2023 – March 2025). The consultation period for this plan is from 13th March 2023 to 19th April 2023. Through this consultative activity, Members will ensure that the plan enables bespoke support for schools and settings in Blaenau Gwent.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 As a result of the uncertain financial situation and funding for the EAS, Joint Executive Group (JEG) members agreed that the next iteration of the EAS Business Plan should be delayed starting in June 2023. JEG members agreed an accompanying timeline that includes a full consultation period.
 - 2.2 The current Business Plan spans three years, 2022-2025, this was agreed by the Joint Executive Group (JEG) and through each Local Authority (LA) Cabinet in the summer term 2022. This document contains the next iteration of this three-year plan and covers the period from June 2023 to April 2025 (**Appendix A**).
 - 2.3 This version of the EAS Business Plan is underpinned by the already agreed three-year Business Plan (**Appendix B**). It builds upon the progress and identifies priorities that have resulted from robust EAS self-evaluation processes. The plan will enable flexibility so that the specific needs within Blaenau Gwent are contributed to.
 - 2.4 This consultation version of the Business Plan 2023-2025 has been constructed using the best available financial information at the time of writing. This could be subject to change once the final funding profile from local authorities and Welsh Government are known. The LA has also agreed with the EAS to establish 2 priorities over the three terms of the academic year to ensure that we can do insightful and quality work. The two priorities include reading and support for eFSM learners. The Education Directorate are also in discussion with the EAS around whether BG (and the region) can move to a cluster model of School Improvement Partner (SIP) support and look at supporting with cluster

priorities to have more joined-up thinking. This would also help with self-evaluation within our services. The LA's priorities outlined above are draft and we want to consult more widely with our schools once Action Short of Strike (ASOS) is concluded with the Trade Unions.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been approved by Education DMT, CLT for submission to Partnership Scrutiny Committee.

3.2 **Option 1:**

For Members to receive and accept the Business Plan, as presented.

Option 2:

3.3 For Members to consider the plan and offer further comment for consideration by the EAS; this can be done through the scrutiny meeting or via a written response back to the EAS. Written feedback on the draft Business Plan should be provided to the EAS Managing Director following the scrutiny meeting. This feedback will be taken into consideration in the final version of the Business Plan.

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

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

4.1.1 **Education Improvement Plan (EIP) Priorities/Aims**

- 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 that delivers better educational outcomes and improved value for money.

NB. These priorities will include the response to the Estyn inspection and the 3 recommendations.

4.1.2 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

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

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

As noted in 2.4 - This consultation version of the Business Plan 2023-2025 has been constructed using the best available financial information at the time of writing. This could be subject to change once the final funding profile from local authorities and Welsh Government are known.

5.1.1 EAS Funding Sources:

The main funding sources to the EAS budget are:

- Annual core budget contributions from each of the 5 LAs – this fund approximately 50% of total costs.
- Annual Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and Education Improvement Grant – grants from WG fund approximately 50% of total costs.

5.1.2 The EAS Company Board have taken a series of steps to reduce operational costs and restructure EAS staff. One of the main factors in the EAS being able to achieve the efficiencies required and increase the breath of support to schools over the past 8 years has been the increased use of the school-to-school model. The move to Headteachers undertaking the role of School Improvement Partners (SIPs) from EAS employed SIPs has realised efficiencies and brought additional benefits to the model. In addition, the use of schools to support others through our Learning Network Schools (LNS) model has enabled reductions in the core team.

5.1.3 There has been a continued reduction in the combined LA core contributions to the EAS since inception in 2012. The EAS has faced significant challenges in being able to set a balanced budget for 2023-2024. Whilst there are some discussions still being undertaken with LA partners regarding their contributions, the EAS is working on a circa 10% reduction totalling £302,132, this is set alongside cost pressures equalling a total reduction of circa £504,000 for the budget in 2023-2024. Across the region, productive discussions have taken place with Corporate Directors of Education and JEG Members about how the delivery model will look for the forthcoming year.

5.1.4 The EAS Business Plan has been constructed with a view to protecting front line services to schools and settings for 2023-2024. Additionally, a phased approach will be taken over the next 2 years to explore potential additional cost savings to the delivery model. The current approach to set a balance budget for 2023-2024 does not present a long-term sustainable funding model for the EAS and represent a short-term solution.

5.1.5 The following proposals have been devised assuming a common percentage funding model from LAs can be reached. If LAs cannot agree on a common percentage reduction in core contributions, it will be essential to demonstrate how an equitable service is being delivered for those LAs who are contributing more / less into the model.

5.1.6 The table below shows the current known position of the LA core contribution funding for 2023-2024:

Local Authority Core Contribution	2022-23	2023-24	Contribution Cut
Percentage Cut		-10%	
Blaenau Gwent	£350,046	£315,041	(TBC)
Caerphilly	£980,663	£882,597	£98,066
Monmouthshire	£403,815	£363,434	£40,382
Newport	£783,291	£704,962	£78,329
Torfaen	£503,498	£453,148	(TBC)
Total	£3,021,313	£2,719,182	

5.1.7 The EAS remains committed to work closely with LA partners to respond appropriately in the context of a collectively challenging financial position and ensuring we remain flexible to meet the needs within each LA and in schools and settings. Blaenau Gwent's savings target agreed at Full Council falls well within the 10% reduction under discussion with the EAS on a regional basis.

5.2 Risks including Mitigating Actions

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

- The funding from both LA contributions and Welsh Government grants is sufficient to enable the effective delivery of the Business Plan.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- We have the expertise, capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the condition in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

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

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

5.3 Legal

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

5.5 Human Resources

None for this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

- 6.1 Last year the EAS reviewed how we constructed and communicated our Business Plan. We decided it was timely to review and adapt our processes to make them more accessible to a wider audience. The EAS used a new approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South-East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved.
- 6.1.1 This year we have further refined our success criteria so that we can better report on the impact of our work so that it aligns more explicitly to the EAS vision of developing all schools as learning organisations. We have made sure that our own evaluations, trends in school and LA needs and priorities, national policy and inspection findings are captured. These directly inform our priorities and success criteria.
- 6.1.2 We have also strengthened the plan by including a Partnership Annex that is specific to each LA's needs and priorities for the coming year. This section is also draft and further discussion is required with LA Officers to reach a final version. This will also be significantly determined by the EAS final financial position for 2023-2024.
- 6.1.3 We have prioritised our high level and high-risk areas, and further details and activities are in our Detailed Delivery Plans. We have captured several important 'Assumptions: Processes that should be in place' for each Business Plan priority to ensure this activity is visible in the system and that expectations are clear.
- 6.1.4 We fully recognise the importance of collaboration and fostering effective partnerships with the local authority and schools to realise the full potential of our actions. The plan identifies the aspects that the EAS would request that the local authority undertake to support the delivery of this plan.
- 6.1.5 As we review our work in schools, we are looking for indicators to demonstrate:
- Changes/ Improvements at leadership and governance levels;
 - Improved teaching and learning;
 - School wide improvement in policy and practice;
 - Learner progress
 - Growing capacity in the system.
- 6.1.6 Our expectations are clear and are set out in the EAS Business Plan success criteria and in our vision and values.
- 6.1.7 The EAS uses three models to help us frame the Intent, Implementation and Impact of our work. This model allows us to use a common language to plan, implement and evaluate the impact of the work of the EAS in schools and settings across Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.1.8 **EAS Business Plan: Success Criteria 2023-2025**
Welsh Government have set out 8 contributory factors to support schools to navigate the changing education landscape. These factors describe the key

attributes that schools that are successfully realising the curriculum will possess.

- 6.1.9 These describe the factors that support reform and which, where absent, are likely to act as barriers to success. The factors cover learner progress and the curriculum itself, as well as wider processes and priorities. The factors are captured below and are interwoven into our priorities for 2023-2025.
- 6.1.10 As part of our work to develop a strong approach to evaluation, and in particular the evaluation of learning, the EAS has developed a guide to help identify the wide range of evidence available for review and analysis. This builds on the work to look at the intent, implementation and impact of our interventions. It will support both School Improvement Partners and schools to consider how best to respond to the WG guidance quoted above. In particular, how to build the enabling conditions around the Curriculum for Wales and define its impact through embedded and accurate reflection and self-evaluation. Our approach to evaluating learning will focus on progress, attainment, wellbeing, social capital and equity and fairness.
- 6.1.11 The final version of this iteration of the 3-year plan will be accompanied by a detailed delivery plan which incorporates timescales, resource implications, accountabilities and evaluation. In addition, the evaluation following the Quarter 4 review of progress from the current Business Plan will be added in the final version of the new plan.
- 6.1.12 Following the consultation period and certainty on the EAS funding position, this draft plan will be updated, and the final version will be presented to JEG for final agreement on 24th May 2023.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

High Quality education is a fundamental pre-requisite of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority's statutory role to monitor and evaluate school performance and the quality of provision, coupled with its statutory powers of intervention in schools causing concern is fundamental to ensuring that all schools provide high quality education provision.

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

Involvement of partners is fundamental to securing and sustaining school improvement. The statutory framework advocates this and the work of the Local authority, its commissioned school improvement service (EAS) and schools evidences the positive impact of working in this way.

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

The EAS Business Plan that is being consulted upon for 2023/2024 aligns to the strategic priorities within Blaenau Gwent.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

A key element of the Council's work is to monitor settings and ensure appropriate support to secure continuing high standards. Estyn Inspection reports reflect the extent to which settings and Local Authorities has been effective in achieving this.

- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
Educational improvement in Blaenau Gwent is delivered on a regional basis through the South East Wales Consortium in collaboration with Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau-Gwent Councils.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
The Estyn Inspection Framework is aimed at promoting high standards and high-quality education provision. This aim is fundamental to the Council's well-being objectives and is fundamental to the joint work between Education and Social Services Directorates.
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**
No specific impact related to this report.
- 6.9 **Integrated Impact Assessment**
Not required for this report.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The EAS is required to submit to the Business Plan to Welsh Government, this plan covers the period 2023-2025. The progress on the implementation and impact of the Business Plan and the related LA Partnership Annex will be reported formally to the Joint Executive Group and Company Board. These reports, as in previous years, will be suitable for scrutiny activity at local authority and national level. In addition, the progress made towards the implementation of key actions will be reported at each meeting of the Joint Executive Group and Company Board.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix A - Education Achievement Service: Annual iteration - Business Plan 2023-2025 (Consultation Version – Accessible)

Appendix B - Education Achievement Service: Current Overarching 3-year Business Plan 2022-2025

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Regional Business Plan 2023-2025

(June 2023 - March 2025)

Consultation Version
(March 2023)



Forward

The Educational Achievement Service (EAS) is the school improvement service of the five local authorities in South East Wales: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.

The EAS is owned by the five Councils and operates within a robust governance structure which is populated by representative Elected Members from each Council. The EAS has been in operation since September 2012 and has undergone many changes during this period.

Through the commissioning of the three-year regional Business Plan the EAS delivers key school improvement support to all schools and educational settings across the South East Wales region. The EAS endeavours to work in partnership local authorities, schools and settings and wider stakeholders, ensuring that service delivery remains of a consistently high standard and meets the needs of the system. The service welcomes external expertise and challenge to support continued improvement and will remain agile and responsive to regional need.

EAS Values:

Integrity: Doing what is right and delivering what we promise by providing a high support and high challenge environment.

Innovation: We promise an innovative culture and attitude. We will challenge and aim for excellence in all we do.

Collaboration: We value everyone and work together to achieve our vision.

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1. Introduction

Last year we reviewed how we constructed and communicated our Business Plan. We decided it was timely to review and adapt our processes to make them more accessible to a wider audience. We used a new approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved.

The current Business Plan spans three years, 2022-2025, this was agreed by the Joint Executive Group (JEG) and through each Local Authority (LA) Cabinet in the summer term 2022. This document contains the next iteration of this three-year plan and covers the period from June 2023 to April 2025.

This year we have further refined our success criteria so that we can better report on the impact of our work so that it aligns more explicitly to the EAS vision of developing all schools as learning organisations. We have made sure that our own evaluations, trends in school and local authorities needs and priorities, national policy and inspection findings are captured. These directly inform our priorities and success criteria. We have also included a Partnership Annex that is specific to each local authority's needs and priorities for the coming year.

We have prioritised our high level and high-risk areas, and further details and activities are in our Detailed Delivery Plans. We have captured several important 'Assumptions: Processes that should be in place' for each Business Plan priority to ensure this activity is visible in the system. This means that we can make sure we undertake the range of statutory activities on behalf of local authorities as well as measure the penetration of our work and track individuals' and schools' development and engagement.

We fully recognise the strength of our collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders and our role in working increasingly together, so we have identified, as in our monitoring arrangements how we are dependent on effective joint working to succeed.

2. Impact: Key features of school improvement

As we review our work in schools, we are looking for indicators to demonstrate change at leadership and governance levels; improved teaching and learning; school and setting wide improvement in policy and practice; learner progress and growing capacity in the system. Our expectations are clear and set out in the EAS Business Plan success criteria, our vision and values.

The EAS uses three research informed models to consider three important questions that helps frame the Intent, Implementation and Impact approach as outlined below. Each model allows us to use a common language to plan, implement and evaluate the impact of the work of the EAS.

1. What are we trying to achieve?
2. Where are we?
3. How will we know?



INTENT

What are we trying to do? What is our intention? This considers what characterises effective school improvement and helps frame clear success criteria to measure impact against.



IMPLEMENTATION

Where are we on this improvement partnership journey? How can we evaluate where we are and where we go next? Where are we in the implementation of our organisational change journey? Is this supporting the school to become an effective learning organisation?



IMPACT

What impact are we having on an individual or organisational improvement journey? What first hand evidence can we use to capture progress and impact of professional learning? How long with this impact take, over what time scales can we expect to see impact? Are schools and settings better placed to lead and evaluate their own progress and plan for ongoing improvement? Is there an improvement in learners outcomes?

3. School Improvement

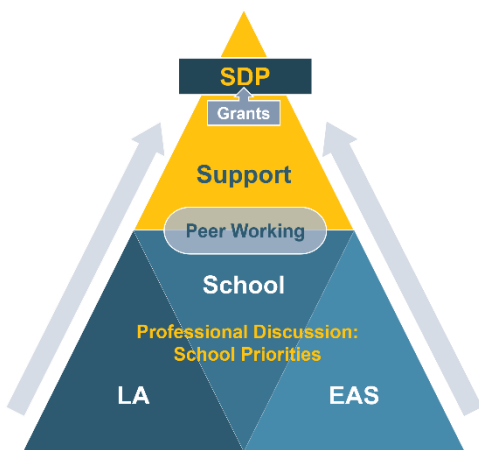
In August 2022 WG published the School Improvement Guidance: Framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability, which aims to:

- strengthen the effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvement planning by schools
- replace the national categorisation system with a similar support process that does not require the publication of school categories
- strengthen and provide clarity about the separation between evaluation / improvement activities and the accountability system
- clearly assign the roles and responsibilities of different bodies in a self-improving system.

This guidance provides a new point of reference for schools, pupil referral units, local authorities, diocesan authorities, regional consortia and Estyn, which outlines Welsh Governments expectations of these organisations in contributing to school improvement, in the context of their wider legal duties.

Within the context of Curriculum for Wales, the Welsh Government guidance aims to foster sustainable school improvement through a clear framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability. The majority of energy and focus in the system should be on delivering school improvement, guided by effective self-evaluation, improvement planning and support in all schools. To be successful, it is crucial that all aspects of the school system are aligned with and support the Curriculum for Wales along with its underlying principles.

The regional model for school improvement has been designed with all partners and includes:



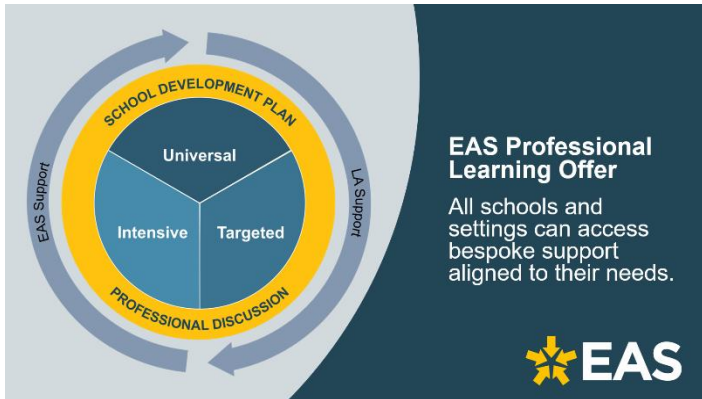
Local authorities and EAS will participate in a professional discussion with schools regarding their priorities for improvement and the progress the school is making towards them.

This process is cyclical and supports schools to determine and / or review their priorities in line with their self-evaluation processes.

The discussion also helps to determine the ongoing support needs of the school from each local authority and EAS and identify practice worth sharing.

All schools can access bespoke support aligned to their needs and priorities within their School Development Plan (SDP) which can be appropriately designed, co-constructed and facilitated in a flexible way.

4. Delivery approach: Universal, Targeted and Intensive

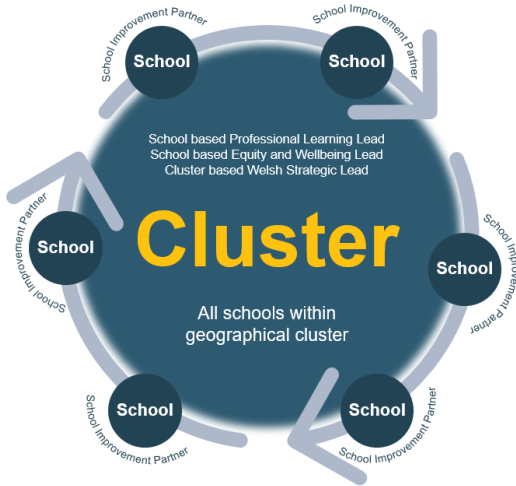


Universal Offer: All schools have access to a universal offer of support from their SIP (School Improvement Partner) and wider teams, focused on the school development plan. Schools have access to a wide range of professional learning opportunities and professional networks across a range of areas to include school leadership, support for teaching and learning and support for wellbeing. This also includes access to support from Professional Learning (PL) and Learning Network Schools (LNS). It is for schools to determine the most appropriate parts of the universal offer that most appropriately meet their needs.

Targeted Offer: This is in addition to the universal offer which is tailored and designed specifically to individual school or cluster needs. This can be brokered through the SIP and could come from the EAS and /or the local authority.

Intensive Offer: This is tailored, ongoing support for a school on an individual basis, with a focus on leadership and improving the quality of teaching and learning. This is coordinated wraparound support, usually provided by a Learning Network School, School to School model and / or intensive support from wider teams. This offer will be differentiated according to need and will usually be over a sustained period. Support will be reduced when improvement is sustained and embedded.

Team Around the Cluster



- Principal School Improvement Partner Cluster Link
- Curriculum Partner / Professional Learning Partner Link
- Governor Support Link



Team Around the Cluster:

In line with our vision to support collaboration and innovation, we will enhance our work with clusters of schools and align our resources accordingly. This will further support building capacity to more effectively support the progress that learners make.

5. Self-Evaluation: Progress towards current EAS Business Plan 2022-2025

EAS Business Plan 2022 - 2023: Evaluation and Impact Report (Quarter 4: May 2023) – this will be added in the final version of the new plan.

6. EAS Business Plan: Success Criteria 2023-2024

Welsh Government have set out 8 contributory factors to support schools to navigate the changing education landscape. These factors describe the key attributes that schools that are successfully realising the curriculum will possess. These describe the factors that support reform and which, where absent, are likely to act as barriers to success. The factors cover learner progress and the curriculum itself, as well as wider processes and priorities. The factors are captured below and are interwoven into our priorities for 2023-2024.

1. Enabling all learners, and in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to progress along their own learning pathway and raise their aspirations to achieve their full potential; allied to a range of assessment approaches to understand and support this progress.
2. Co-constructing a curriculum, in line with the Curriculum for Wales Framework, which promotes a broad range of knowledge, skills and experiences (including social and interactional experiences) with a clear understanding of why these matter.
3. Ensuring the school environment supports learners' and practitioners' well-being.
4. Supporting practitioners' understanding of what works in curriculum design by investing in the enquiry and pedagogic skills of all staff.
5. Enabling ambitious professional learning for all practitioners in a school dedicated to being a learning organisation.
6. Embedding reflection, self-evaluation and improvement within schools, with good school leadership as a pre-condition for that.
7. Being at the heart of their communities - building better relationships between schools and families, communities and employers, to support and promote educational achievement and excellent employment, next steps education and training.
8. Listening to children and young people as they engage with their learning and supporting them in achieving their aspirations.

As factors that contribute to curriculum realisation, they should inform schools' understanding about what successful realisation of the Curriculum for Wales is likely to involve, as well as being an important reference for schools when evaluating their own curriculum realisation and deciding where and how they need to improve. They are not designed to be an exhaustive checklist for schools. They do however offer a consistent framework for use across Wales.

The self-evaluation and improvement cycle is central in enabling schools to continually develop and improve their practice: to give all learners the best possible learning experiences and outcomes, whatever their background or circumstance, and in order to achieve high standards and aspirations for all. Welsh Government have co-constructed the National Resource:

Evaluation and Improvement to support schools in undertaking robust, evidence-based self-evaluation. Within the School Improvement guidance, Welsh Government recognise the new national priorities which schools must have regard to when setting their improvement priorities which are:

- Improving pupils' progression by ensuring their learning is supported by a range of knowledge, skills and experience;
- Reducing the impact of poverty on learners' progression and attainment.

As part of our work to develop a strong approach to evaluation, and in particular the evaluation of learning, the EAS has developed a guide to help identify the wide range of evidence available for review and analysis. This builds on the work to look at the intent, implementation and impact of our interventions. It will support both School Improvement Partners and schools to consider how best to respond to the WG guidance quoted above. In particular, how to build the enabling conditions around the Curriculum for Wales and define its impact through embedded and accurate reflection and self-evaluation. Our approach to evaluating learning will focus on progress, attainment, wellbeing, social capital and equity and fairness.

7. EAS Business Plan: Activity 2023-2024

This section details the activities that will take place during 2023-2024. Each section has a set of success criteria which contributes to the overarching vision that we have for 2025. The support across each area is interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation, this section will be accompanied by a detailed plan that links to accountability arrangements, timescales and resources.

Priority 1: School Improvement

Priority 2: Leadership and Teaching

Priority 3: Curriculum for Wales

Priority 4: Health Wellbeing and Equity

Priority 5: School Governance

Priority 6: EAS Organisational Foundations

Priority 1: School Improvement: Provide bespoke support to local authorities, schools and educational settings (PRUs and Non-Maintained Nursery settings) that promotes peer collaboration and cluster working through a high support, high challenge model that fosters the development of an effective learning organisation.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schools and educational settings accessing the universal, targeted or intensive offer, receive timely support aligned to their improvement priorities and demonstrate progress overtime. 2. Self-evaluation activity identifies areas of strength and bespoke support needs for all schools and educational settings enabling the EAS and local authorities to know schools and educational settings well. 3. All schools and educational settings make progress against their inspection recommendations and identified improvement priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in sessions to review, refine and co-construct regional processes and policies. • Share relevant and appropriate information that supports a holistic view of each school in a timely and systematic way. • Organise Professional Discussions in line with the regional guidance. • Identify schools who require a Team Around the School (TAS) approach in line with the regional guidance. • Document local authority support within the Support Plan and Notes of Activity as appropriate. • Support schools and settings with additional support which is outside the scope of the EAS role and responsibilities. • In partnership with the EAS, review the capacity of Headteachers to work as SIPs to support a self improving system.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- All schools and educational settings engage in professional discussions that enable the sharing of effective practice.
- All schools and educational settings have a bespoke support plan aligned to their identified priorities for improvement which is shared with the governing body on an annual basis.
- All schools and educational settings engage in regular supported self-evaluation activity.
- There are robust performance management arrangements in place for Headteachers.
- Estyn reports are co-constructed with local authorities for schools in statutory categories.
- Monthly partnership meetings are held with local authorities to meet accountability arrangements.
- Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and develop system leadership.

Priority 2: Leadership and Teaching: Provide professional learning and support for the continuous development and growth of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce (Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants), to enable the development of an effective learning organisation.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The workforce is supported by a professional learning offer and networking opportunities which promotes continuous learning opportunities and contributes to improvements in teaching and leadership. 2. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support, receive timely and appropriate professional learning which leads to improvements in teaching and leadership. 3. Practitioners who access agile leadership and/or coaching and mentoring professional learning develop improved approaches within their own schools and settings. 4. Effective partnership working reduces the impact of potential recruitment and retention challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage leaders to engage in regional processes to strengthen accurate self-evaluation and improvement planning and in the regional Celebrate, Share, Support and Refine (CSSR) processes. • Promote the regional teaching and learning offer for all practitioners (Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants). • Provide access to appropriate and relevant data about trends in staffing, particularly recruitment and retention. • Promote the regional Talent Management Approach for all schools and encourage schools, to engage in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) placements, where capacity allows. • Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) address challenges in recruitment and retention. • Support the work of professional learning and learning network schools. Identify schools that demonstrate any barriers to engagement in the regional professional learning offer. • Encourage appropriate schools to engage in ITE partnership across Wales. • Engage in the endorsement of candidates that meet the Aspiring Headteacher and preparation for National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) threshold.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools access valuable professional learning aligned to their own school priorities. • A sustainable supply of high-quality ITE placements are provided. • All schools have robust statutory induction support for newly qualified teachers (NQTs). • Higher Level Teaching Assistant assessment (HLTA) Status and NPQH assessment processes meet requirements. • All Curriculum for Wales professional learning schools and learning network schools adhere to their annual workplan on behalf of the EAS. • Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and develop system leadership.

Priority 3: Curriculum for Wales: Provide professional learning and support for schools and educational settings (PRUs and Non-Maintained Nursery Settings) to realise Curriculum for Wales (CfW) and to enable them to become effective learning organisations within and beyond clusters.

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Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The workforce is supported by a professional learning offer and networking opportunities for curriculum for Wales that supports and contributes to improvements in curriculum design, subject disciplines, teaching, skills development and learning. 2. All schools and educational settings have appropriate arrangements in place to review and evaluate their curriculum provision and its impact on learner progress. 3. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support for curriculum implementation, receive timely and appropriate professional learning that enhances provision and learning. 4. The provision for Welsh and bilingualism is developing both strategically and operationally in all English medium schools from the current position. 5. Work in clusters is benefiting learners, teachers and the wider system as collaboration and sharing enhances school's own improvement priorities in relation to the developments in curriculum provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine where slow progress is undermining schools' ability to deliver the agreed syllabus as part of curriculum for Wales. • Work collaboratively to determine where there may be risks to Welsh in Education delivery targets. • Promote and support the regional and national professional learning offer for curriculum for Wales. • Support the Religion and Values Education (RVE) partner to ensure effective operation of local Standing Advisory Councils for Religion, Values and Ethics (SACs). Identify where mandatory aspects and the agreed syllabus are not yet fully embedded. • Work collaboratively to review the work of schools and educational settings undertaking the role of learning network schools, and their capacity to support a school improving system.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools and educational settings have processes in place to ensure that the mandatory aspects of the curriculum for Wales framework support curriculum provision. • All schools and educational settings follow the agreed syllabus to ensure that the mandatory requirements of RVE and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are met and support curriculum provision. • Provision for Welsh enables a progressive pathway to qualifications in Welsh / through the medium of Welsh, including post 16, and opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in schools and educational settings (formal and informal). • All Curriculum for Wales professional learning schools and learning network schools adhere to their annual workplan on behalf of the EAS. • Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and system leadership.
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Priority 4: Health Wellbeing and Equity: Provide professional learning and support for health, wellbeing and equity to improve the outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners supporting the development of effective learning organisations.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All schools and educational settings have an appropriate vision and approach to health, wellbeing and equity. This integrated and responsive approach is reflected in each school's SDP and teaching and learning strategies. 2. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support, receive timely and appropriate professional learning in relation to Health, Wellbeing and Equity that supports improvement in the educational attainment and wellbeing outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. 3. Professional learning, support and guidance assists schools to develop systems and processes to reduce the impact of poverty on vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. 4. Schools' own evaluations of provision, teaching and learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners are appropriately informed by the professional learning provided. As a result, whole school strategic interventions are responding to learner needs and are improving attitudes to learning and leading to better progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the EAS and local authority services are joined up to support the regional provision for Health, Wellbeing and Equity. • Support the review and impact of the use of Pupil Development Grant (PDG). • Identify schools and educational settings who require additional support and share relevant information. • Promote and support the regional and national professional learning offer. • Support the EAS in keeping under review learning network school capacity to support the wider system sharing information where relevant.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear roles and responsibilities between the EAS and each local authority for the provision of support for Health, Wellbeing and Equity so that schools and educational settings are clear about where to access support. • All schools and educational settings comply with the policy directive to prioritise health and wellbeing and community focussed schools in their SDPs. • All schools and educational settings comply with PDG grant terms and condition requirements. • All Curriculum for Wales professional learning and learning network schools adhere to their annual workplan on behalf of the EAS. • Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and system leadership.

Priority 5: School Governance: Provide a broad range of professional learning, support, advice and guidance, that has a positive impact on developing governance and its role in the development of schools as effective learning organisations.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional Learning (PL) and networking enables governors to impact positively on school leadership and governance. 2. Governing Bodies accurately evaluate the impact of their work on the development of the school, using the self-evaluation tool to identify their own development needs. 3. Where schools require targeted or intensive support, the Governing Body is supported to understand both the implications and the support available, so that they can demonstrate a positive impact on leadership. 4. Governing Bodies knowledge and understanding of their school is improved through the provision of the SIP Annual Report detailing the support that is being provided to the school. 5. When required, Chairs of Governors engage with advice and support from the Regional Specialist HR service, through the school improvement team, so that they are able to support the development of school leadership. 6. The Service Level Agreement provides a comprehensive range of support services to support governing bodies in meeting their core responsibilities and statutory requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide local authority specific professional learning for governors. • Communicate support needs for specific governing bodies, to help target professional learning and support. • Encourage governing bodies to engage with the self-evaluation process. • Provide appropriate local authority input into statutory processes as required. • Consider the suitability of any applications for local authority governors, through usual governor appointment processes. • Take action to support recruitment or amend arrangements in governing bodies, where required. • Take action to support the recruitment of governors, amending arrangements in governing bodies, where required. • Ensure that they are satisfied, as per Welsh Government Guidance, that all schools have an adequate complaints procedure.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- All newly appointed governors attend mandatory training within the stipulated timescales and are supported by a mentor from within the governing body. Non-compliance is reported to the relevant chair of governors and LA.
- Where a Governing Body has more than three vacancies for over a term, does not hold three meetings in a year, or does not hold an Annual General Meeting the chair of governors, headteacher and LA are informed.
- All governing bodies have an 'adequate complaints procedure that is publicised' based on revised Welsh Government Guidance (December 2022).

Priority 6: EAS Organisational Foundations: Provide a lean, efficient organisational infrastructure which delivers on our agreed priorities to support all schools and educational settings to be thriving, learning organisations.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The financial and operational delivery model enables effective delivery of the regional school improvement model. 2. A balanced year end budget is achieved through effective financial management. 3. Timely progress is made towards the Business Plan priorities demonstrating impact and value for money. 4. Processes for self-evaluation and impact capture are used well to inform strengths and areas for improvement. 5. Processes for performance management and professional learning enable a skilled and effective workforce. 6. Effective systems enable the collation of a range of information on schools and educational settings to be used to support improvement. 7. Effective partnership working including national and cross regional work contributes to system wide improvement in Wales and beyond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities are committed to financing and supporting a sustainable regional model for school improvement. • Support effective governance arrangements through engagement and attendance. • Engage in consultation and self-evaluation processes, as appropriate.

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Assumptions: Processes that should be in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EAS is an agile and responsive organisation providing bespoke and flexible support to local authorities. • The EAS values and develops transparent and productive relationships with all partners. • The EAS regular reviews all systems and processes to ensure they consider workload implications. • A robust governance model is in operation with optimal attendance and engagement. • The EAS complies with all legal requirements as an employer and as a company. • The EAS engages in a broad range of internal and external audits that support improvement.

8. EAS Business Plan: LA Partnership Working 2023-2024 (draft and for further discussion)

LA Partnership Working in Blaenau Gwent 2023-2024

LA Priorities and Success Criteria	EAS targeted actions agreed with LA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for becoming a Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY) local authority. CSSR approach to be undertaken in identified schools, to establish specific aspects for support. To include all schools with Special Needs Resource Bases. LA officers to join the CSSR process in schools with Special Needs Resource Bases. LA officers to join supported self-evaluation activity in identified schools causing concern.

LA Estyn Recommendations
<p>November 2022:</p> <p>R1 Improve the corporate leadership of education services.</p> <p>R2 Improve the quality of self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management.</p> <p>R3 Accelerate improvements in provision for secondary age pupils in schools causing concern.</p>

LA Education Strategy Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Enhancing the performance culture for Education and Leisure that delivers better educational outcomes and improved value for money.

LA Themes		
Autumn 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
How effectively do schools plan for the teaching of reading that secures good pupil progress?	How effectively do schools plan for the teaching of reading that secures good pupil progress?	How effectively do schools plan for teaching that secures good progress for vulnerable learners?

Reporting impact: EAS Stats and Stories		
Autumn 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
What arrangements are schools making to assess and monitor pupil progress and how effectively is this used to plan for improvements in provision and progress?	How effectively do schools plan for the teaching of reading that secures good pupil progress?	How effectively do schools plan for the teaching of reading that secures good pupil progress?

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EAS

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



Education Achievement Service Regional Business Plan

April 2022 - March 2025

(Consultation Version - Accessible)



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The Educational Achievement Service (EAS) is the school improvement service of the five local authorities in South East Wales: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.

The EAS is owned by the five Councils and operates within a robust governance structure which is populated by representative Elected Members from each Council.

The EAS has been in operation since September 2012 and has undergone many changes during this period. Through the commissioning of an annual Business Plan the EAS delivers key school improvement support to all schools and educational settings across the South East Wales region.

The EAS endeavours to work in partnership local authorities, schools and settings and wider stakeholders, ensuring that service delivery remains of a consistently high standard and meets the needs of the system. The service welcomes external expertise and challenge to support continued improvement and will remain agile and responsive to regional need.

Section 1: Regional Context

Key regional facts and figures

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

Overview of regional school governors (As at 15/02/22)

Local Authority	Number of school governors
Blaenau Gwent	321
Caerphilly	1096
Monmouthshire	446
Newport	784
Torfaen -	399
EAS	3046

Overview of school numbers in the region Jan 2022

Blaenau Gwent (31.4% FSM)

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

Caerphilly (24.9% FSM)

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

Monmouthshire (16.6% FSM)

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

Newport (23.1% FSM)

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

Torfaen (30.0% FSM)

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

Overview of regional school / PRU staffing

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

Section 2: Introduction

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

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

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

Stats and Stories from 2020-2021

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

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

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

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

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

Section 3: Our Approach

The Theory of Change approach

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

Why? What are we aiming to achieve?

South East Wales Vision 2025

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

EAS Vision 2025

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

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

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

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

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

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

Activities:

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

Leadership and Teaching

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

Curriculum for Wales

Professional learning and support for curriculum for Wales.

Health, Wellbeing and Equity

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

Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning support.

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

What are the foundations that enable activities to take place?

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

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

What will be the impact?

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

Impact:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Outputs:

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

EAS Website
Case studies
Supporting Our Schools Site

Impact capture reports
Meeting minutes
Partnership documentation

Assumptions

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

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

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

Business Plan 2022-2025

Assumptions

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

Foundations

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

Section 4: EAS Business Plan Activities 2022-2023

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

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

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

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

Targeted Provision

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

Bespoke Provision

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

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

Universal Provision

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

Targeted Provision

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

Bespoke Provision

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

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

Universal Provision

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

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

Targeted Provision

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

Bespoke Provision

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

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

Universal Provision

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

Targeted Provision

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

Bespoke Provision

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

EAS Foundations:

Business delivery

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

Staff Development

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

Funding and Resources

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

Section 5: Delivery arrangements and resources for 2022-2023

Governance

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

Consortium funding

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

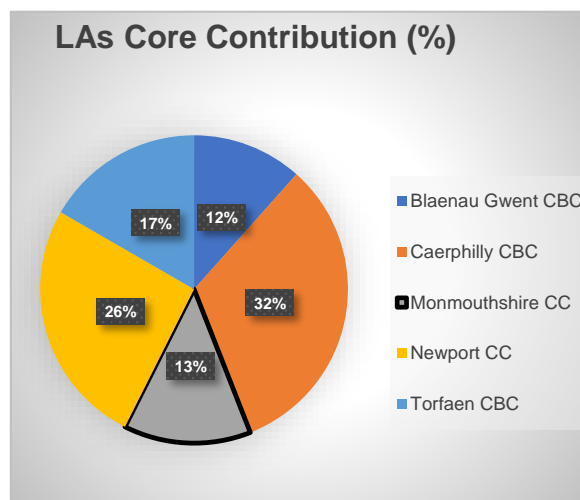
The delegation rate to schools increased to 95.5% in 2021/22, whilst the EAS staff profile has reduced by 53.1% since 2012.

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

Local authority contributions 2022-2023

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

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



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

Regional school improvement grants

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

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

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

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

Governor Support Service Level Agreement

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

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

Section 6: Additional supporting documents

This Business Plan is supported by the following documents:

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

Agenda Item 7

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

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

Committee: **Partnerships Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **28th March 2023**
Report Subject: **Gwent Well-being Plan 2023-28**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Steve Thomas, Leader of the Council**
Report Submitted by: **David Arnold, Professional Lead for Strategic Partnerships & Sarah King, Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
14/03/23	23/03/23	20.03.23			28/03/23		30/03/23	Gwent PSB Scrutiny Committee 29/03/23

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the final regional Well-Being Plan for Gwent 2023-28 for consideration and comment, as part of the statutory consultation process. The Gwent Well-being Plan is attached at Appendix 1.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The 5 PSBs in Gwent dissolved in September 2021, in favour of merging to form a regional Gwent PSB. This followed an Audit Wales report into the effectiveness of PSBs, which recommended (amongst other things) that PSBs develop flexible models of working such as merging. Merging was to provide a more simplified and streamlined model and closer alignment with other existing regional boards, such as the Regional Partnership Board and Safeguarding Board.
 - 2.2 Local Delivery Groups of the Gwent PSB have existed within each local authority area in Gwent since the inception of the GPSB, to ensure the continued delivery of the 2018-23 Well-Being Plans, and to deliver locally against regional well-being objectives going forward. Blaenau Gwent's Local Delivery Group is known as the BG Local Well-being Partnership.
 - 2.3 The Gwent PSB brings public bodies together to work to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Gwent. They are responsible, under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, for overseeing the development and delivery of a new regional Gwent Well-being Plan 2023-28, which is a long term vision for the well-being of the area. Further information on Gwent PSB's purpose, aim, role and responsibilities can be found in the [Terms of Reference](#).
 - 2.4 The Gwent PSB undertook a regional Well-being assessment which reviewed the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing in Gwent. The assessment used a wide range of qualitative and quantitative information including data, academic research, evidence, and people's

views (engagement) to help understand Wellbeing in Gwent. The assessment took an asset-based approach, rather than focussing purely on need, to build upon and identify the strengths of both individuals and communities and it also identified problems and challenges that need to be addressed. The evidence and key issues identified in the assessment have been used to develop the Wellbeing Plan for Gwent.

- 2.5 The final Gwent Wellbeing Plan must be published within 12 months of an election and is subject to a range of formal consultation and approval processes. The Partnerships Scrutiny Committee was a formal statutory consultee under Section 43 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and previously received the first draft of the Gwent Wellbeing plan for consideration and feedback on 14th October 2022, during the statutory consultation period for the draft plan.
- 2.6 This Wellbeing Plan is the first wellbeing plan of the regional Public Services Board, and it aims to set out the wellbeing objectives of the Gwent PSB and the steps it intends to take to meet those objectives.
- 2.7 Following the statutory consultation period, the Well-being Plan has now set out two key objectives for the region, informed by the data, evidence, and feedback from a broad range of contributors and audiences. The feedback has been considered and has helped to shape the two main objectives and five steps in the final draft of the plan. Much of the feedback centred around the need for more integrated steps to work towards achieving both new regional well-being objectives, as well as calling for more focus on housing and action to help tackle the Cost of Living crisis across our communities.
- 2.8 The two main well-being objectives are:
 1. We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all.
 2. We want to create a more climate-aware Gwent, where our environment is valued and protected, ensuring our well-being now and for future generations.
- 2.9 The five steps to achieve these two overarching objectives are:-
 - Take action to reduce the Cost of Living crisis in the longer term
 - Provide and enable the supply of good quality, affordable, appropriate homes
 - Take action to reduce our carbon emissions, help Gwent adapt to climate change, and protect and restore our natural environment
 - Take action to address inequalities, particularly in relation to health, through the framework of the Marmot principles
 - Enable and support resilient, connected, thriving and safe communities
- 2.10 The Gwent PSB will consider the final Gwent Well-being Plan in June 2023, after it has been considered by each of the 5 Gwent local authorities during February – April 2023. Blaenau Gwent full Council will be asked to consider and endorse the Gwent Well-being Plan at its meeting on 30th March 2023.

2.11 It is also worth noting that once the Gwent Wellbeing Plan has been agreed, a local well-being delivery plan for Blaenau Gwent will subsequently be developed by the Blaenau Gwent Local Well-being Partnership (Local Delivery Group of the Gwent PSB) to establish delivery of the regional priorities at a local level, and to also deliver on well-being priorities that are unique to communities across Blaenau Gwent.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 **Option One**

The Partnerships scrutiny committee

- I. Considers and endorses the Gwent Well-being Plan 2023-28 as it is presented to them today

3.2 **Option Two**

The Partnerships scrutiny Committee

- I. Considers the Gwent Well-being Plan 2023-28;
- II. Provides additional comments and feedback for consideration by full Council in March 2023; and

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

The final Gwent Well-being Plan will apply to all LA areas across Gwent, including Blaenau Gwent, with opportunities for the Gwent PSB Local Delivery Groups to deliver against local priorities through their own local actions plans going forward. The Blaenau Gwent Council Corporate Plan 2022-26 makes a commitment to contribute towards the regional well-being objectives and the eight Marmot principles.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

The Wellbeing Plan sets a strategic direction for the Gwent PSB. Specific projects to help achieve the wellbeing objectives will be developed once the plan is agreed. Where additional funding will be required, costed recommendations will be made to the appropriate decision maker.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Failure to develop a well-being plan would lead to the Gwent PSB members not complying with the collective duties set out in the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

5.3 ***Legal***

Failure to develop a well-being plan would lead to the Gwent PSB members not complying with the collective duties set out in the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The Policy and Performance Team supports the work of the PSB and BG Local Well-being Partnership and leads on supporting them on delivering their collective duties under the Act. The plan has been developed collaboratively with representatives from Gwent LAs and PSB partners.

Regional collaborative work on drafting the plan was carried out via the Gwent Strategic Well-being Action Group (GSWAG).

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

As the steps in the Gwent Well-being Plan suggest, the Gwent PSB is continuing to work with Professor Michael Marmot and the Institute of Health Equity, based at the University College London, as part of the Gwent Marmot pilot region. This work will be embedded through activity and delivery of the plan, which will be aimed at reducing inequality and inequity between populations guided by the eight Marmot principles which encompass the determinants of wellbeing:

- Give every child the best start in life
- Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention
- Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes
- Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

There are also four overarching principles for delivering against the plan as a partnership during 2023-28:-

- Effectively working together
- Communication and engagement
- Welsh language and culture
- Performance management

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

To ensure that the move to a regional PSB did not detrimentally impact on the local nature of well-being delivery that has been built up since the inception of the Act, the decision was made by the Gwent PSB to have the regional Plan underpinned by Local Delivery Groups (LDG) for each of the 5 Gwent Regions. The LDG for Blaenau Gwent is the BG Local Well-being Partnership.

It is expected each LDG will develop Local Action Plans to serve two purposes – to identify specific actions which will contribute at a local level to the achievement of the Regional Well-being Objectives and Steps; and to identify priorities and actions which are applicable to our communities in Blaenau Gwent. This will ensure the regional Well-being Plan is delivered in line with the local needs of Blaenau Gwent residents.

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

The Partnerships Scrutiny Committee was a statutory consultee of the draft regional Well-being Plan for Gwent during the 12-week statutory consultation period for draft Wellbeing Plans. This ran from 1st October – 31st December 2022.

The consultation period included feedback from PSB partners, stakeholder organisations, and residents. The Cost of Living crisis and housing were seen as the most important aspects of well-being, especially by communities, throughout the consultation process.

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

The Well-being Plan takes consideration of the data and future trend information including the Gwent well-being assessment and public engagement on what people consider would make the area a better place for the future and have most positive impact on their well-being.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Plan focuses on Prevention as one of the five ways of working, and outlines a series of Steps for taking preventative action to help achieve the each of the well-being objectives.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Well-being Plan has been developed using a collaborative approach with involvement from the 5 LAs and a variety of stakeholders and partner organisations across Gwent.

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

The Well-being Plan follows an integrative approach that considers each of the five ways of working (including integration), and notes opportunities for integration between the well-being objectives and with the Marmot principles. Council services and public service partners

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

Equality and Human Rights are specifically identified as key consideration in the statutory guidance Shared Purpose: Shared Future 3 - Collective role (public services boards). As a consequence, the process of developing the Plan has taken into consideration the equality requirements through the development of the supporting Gwent Well-being Assessment and statutory consultation.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

The Local Delivery Groups, through their local delivery plans, will ensure that any local issues and concerns are addressed and align to the Gwent Well-being Objectives. They will also extend membership of working groups to relevant local organisations. Any specific arrangements can be scrutinised at a local level by the appropriate local authority scrutiny committee.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1: [Gwent Well-being Plan 2023-28](#)*

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Well-being Plan for Gwent
17/02/2023



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Introduction

Welcome to the first Well-being Plan for Gwent, setting out how we are working together to respond to some of the key issues identified in our most recent Well-being Assessment. As part of planning for the next 25 years, and beyond, this five year plan sets out what we will be doing to improve well-being across the region, now and for future generations. Many of the issues we know that affect the well-being of a region will take more than a few months or even years to solve, so the plan has tried to look for longer term solutions which may take a bit longer to show results. There will, of course, be things we can do in the short term, but those will need to help deliver benefits in the years to come.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act established Public Services Boards, more commonly known as PSBs, for each local authority area to work together to improve well-being in their area. PSBs are made up of senior leaders from the Local Authority, the Health Board, the Fire and Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales. A number of other organisations are also invited to join the PSB, such as the Police Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the voluntary sector.

In September 2021 the five PSBs in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouthshire, and Torfaen came together to form the Gwent PSB, working across the region, and locally. This decision was made to simplify and strengthen the existing partnership arrangements by bringing all the public services together. The move to a regional PSB, with collective responsibility for improving well-being, makes it easier for partners to actively get involved, to add value and avoid doing the same thing several times.

The Well-being Assessment for Gwent, published last year, showed that inequality and deprivation in our communities and the need to take action on the climate and nature emergencies were having an impact on well-being. This Well-being Plan outlines how we, the PSB, will work together to tackle the social, economic, environmental and cultural issues which can affect well-being in Gwent.

Public Services Board Membership



WPEB

How our plan was developed

We used the new Well-being Assessment to identify the issues which had the most effect on well-being, and where we could achieve more by working together than working alone and making better use of the resources we have. This is often known as 'added value'. We identified these issues:

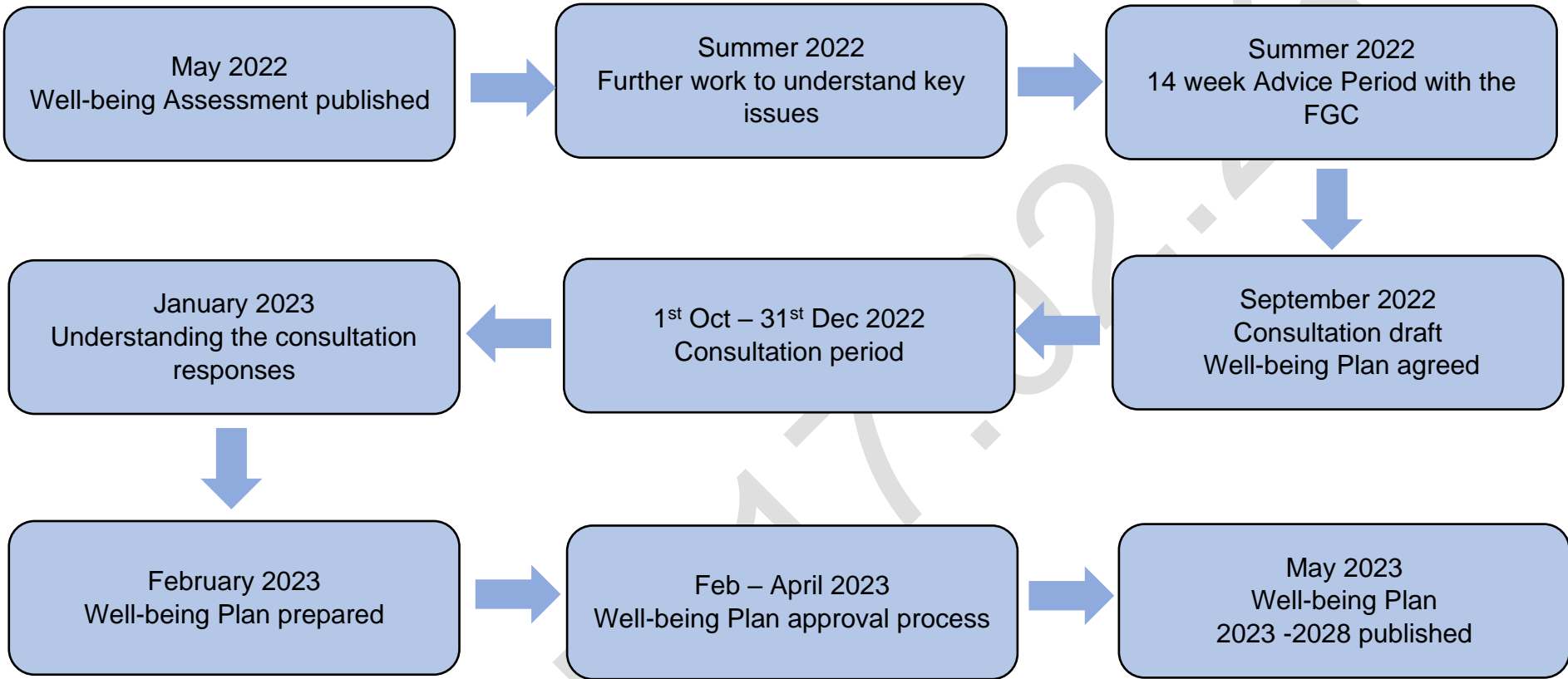
- Health inequalities and well-being (including housing)
- Community cohesion (including community safety and substance misuse)
- Environment (including climate and nature emergencies)

Over the summer of 2022 more work was done to get a better understanding of these issues and how they affected our communities. This involved pulling on a wide range of knowledge and experience, including from the Future Generations Commissioner's office, learning from others and examples of good practice from across Wales and beyond. The Future Generations Report was another source of information about what the future might mean for things like jobs or flooding.

The draft Well-being Plan for Gwent went out for consultation in October 2022. It had three objectives, each with several supporting steps. Full details of the consultation process can be found in Appendix 1. (To come)

Following the consultation the responses were assessed and analysed. The responses came from five sources: the survey, community events, stakeholder events, statutory consultee responses and individual written responses. To understand what the most important issues were for people the issues raised in the consultation were then ranked according to how many of the response sources commented on each one. These became the objectives and steps in this Well-being Plan. We will continue to use the information from the consultation as we develop each step's delivery plan in the Plan as well as continuing to engage communities and groups in our work going forward.

Timeline



Five Ways of Working

Just as when we were preparing the Well-being Assessment, we have used the five ways of working, collaboration, integration, involvement, long-term, and prevention, to guide our work. This means that while considering how to improve well-being in our communities now, we've also looked at how well-being could be affected in the future and how we can prevent issues becoming worse. We will need to work together to see what we're each doing in a community and how this affects what we do, individually and in partnership. Finally, but most importantly, we want our communities, professionals, businesses, and others to identify the issues which are most important to them. As we develop how we will be delivering the Objectives and Steps (regional and local delivery plans) we will continue to use these principles to guide our work.



Figure 1: The 5 ways of working from the Well-being of Future Generations Act

Seven Well-being Goals

The actions in this Well-being Plan must contribute to the Well-being Goals for Wales. Together they show the Wales we'd like for the future and cover all aspects of well-being. Each of the goals are as important as each other, although this plan may do more for one goal than for another.

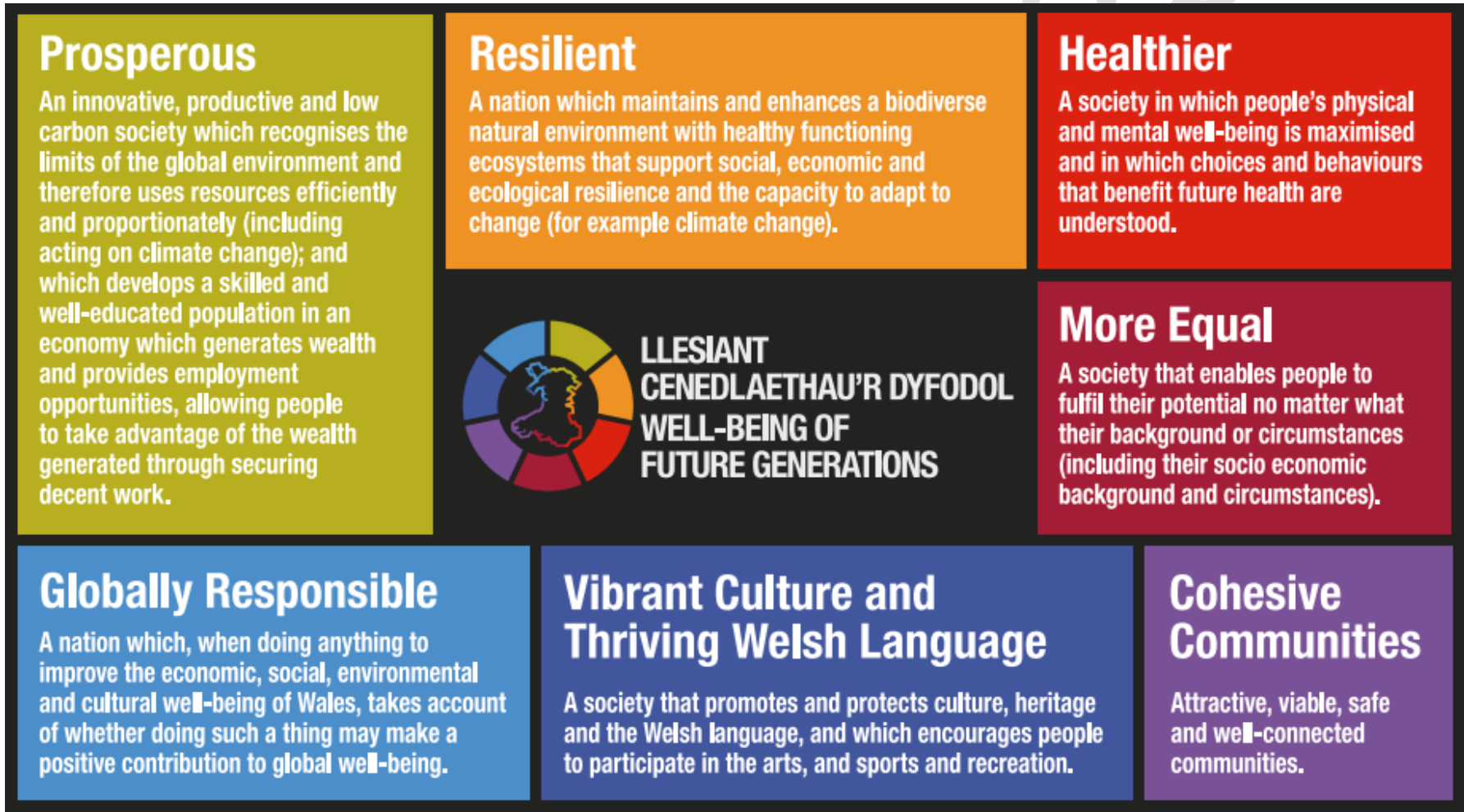


Figure 2: The 7 Well-being Goals from the Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Marmot Principles – Building a Fairer Gwent

Recognising the inequality that exists in our communities, identified in the Well-being Assessment, the Gwent Public Services Board has agreed to become a 'Marmot region' using this collaborative approach to undertake evidence-based action to reduce inequalities in Gwent. The Marmot Principles provide a framework to inform the actions to respond to the challenges faced across Gwent. This will re-focus and accelerate progress towards reducing the root causes of health and related inequalities across Gwent. As part of this, the PSB will use the eight Marmot Principles, alongside the Objectives and Steps, to shape the delivery of this Well-being Plan.

Eight Marmot Principles

1. Give every child the best start in life
2. Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. Create fair employment and good work for all
4. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention
7. Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

The Institute of Health Equity is producing a report for the PSB detailing the actions needed to tackle inequity across Gwent. As the delivery plans are developed this report will help to guide our work. The report, Appendix 2, is due to be published in June 2023.



Overarching principles

As a new PSB we have agreed that there are some things that we would all want to sign up to. These aren't Objectives or Steps but they are the things that will make us work more effectively together and make the positive changes we want for Gwent. They are our Overarching Principles, our ways of working, and reflect the five ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Effectively working together

Public Services Boards were established to promote better joined up working and a better understanding of how the different organisations contribute to the well-being of an area. We must make sure that what we do isn't making it more difficult for others to do what they need to. We should be sharing knowledge, expertise, and resources whenever possible and avoid doing the same thing many times over. There will be things that are best done by one or two partners, but where working together is the best option, we will do this. This Well-being Plan is about the things we can do better together, the 'added value'.

Communication and Engagement

While we have been developing the Well-being Assessment and Plan we have tried to engage with people and communities. We know we haven't always been as successful as we would have liked to be, and the Covid-19 restrictions have made it even harder to meet you. As we continue to develop and deliver this plan we want to keep talking with you, to understand your concerns and ideas. We also want to work with our communities, when we can, to create local solutions that contribute to the regional ones.

A full report about the Plan's consultation is available here [hyperlink]. If you'd like to be involved in the future, either just to be kept informed, or to be more involved where possible, please contact: GwentPSB@caerphilly.gov.uk

Welsh language and culture

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language is one of the goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Each of the seven well-being goals describes an aspect of the Wales we want for the future, and they are all interlinked. The Welsh language forms a part of, and plays a part in all aspects of employment, education, culture, health and social care, community cohesion, the economy and more.

Being able to use the Welsh language is a valuable skill in all parts of life across Wales. It is also a key part of Wales' cultural heritage. Each of the PSB members have a statutory duty to promote the Welsh language, but together we will encourage the increase in the use Welsh by; using it more with each other, consulting more in Welsh and producing more of our information bilingually, rather than just our main documents.

The PSB organisations are major employers and together we can promote opportunities for our staff and workforce to learn and use the language. Schemes like 'Helo Blod,' can be used by the PSB to promote the Welsh language together as members. The Welsh language is also a central part of the community services such as health, social and primary care. 'More than Just Words' aims to improve the service for social services, health, and social care. The PSB will continue to use media and social media through both languages and look at how else it can encourage the use of the Welsh language in all its activities.

Performance management

We need to know whether what we're doing is making a difference. We have agreed to have a single 'performance management' process, which will show us how well-being is improving. The indicators will be included in the Step Delivery Plans to make sure that we're looking at the right things. The annual reports will include how much progress we've made against these key measures. The PSB will need to take responsibility for ensuring that we're making the progress we've agreed we need to make.

Because the PSB is all about partnership working, we will also need to share the information we each have around issues. Each of our organisations is collecting data all the time, and there's also research and information coming from universities, Government agencies, the Census and a range of other places. All this information will be useful to the PSB, and the individual member organisations and we need to find a way of being able to share that safely and efficiently.

Our Well-being Objectives

Using the evidence in the Well-being Assessment, the PSB has identified two interconnecting objectives (what we want to achieve). These will set the direction for our work for the next five years and beyond.

We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all.

The latest Well-being Assessment showed that although our communities are strong with many people feeling connected to their neighbourhoods and proud of their surroundings, the inequalities that exist in our communities have the potential to impact on all aspects of well-being both at a personal and community level. There are also a range of challenges that could potentially widen these inequalities in the future and impact negatively on well-being. People who live in more deprived communities have fewer years of life that are free from ill health and are more likely to have shorter lives. Children from deprived households get poorer school results; limiting their opportunities and increasing the risk that poverty will be passed from one generation to the next. Some people in our communities are experiencing in-work poverty with the amount of spare money they have after paying their bills making it difficult to afford food, transport, energy and to be digitally connected – especially as costs increase.

Many people still feel unsafe, lonely or alone. Widening economic, health, well-being and other inequalities have affected community cohesion, safety and empowerment. The assessment tells us that home ownership is already unaffordable for many low-income households, and as house prices rise more pressure is put on our social housing stock. Future Gwent will also need more housing stock that meets the needs of an ageing population and changing family structures and is resilient to a changing climate.

The Covid-19 pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the UK's exit from the EU, the war in Ukraine, and the increasing impacts of climate change, make the lives, livelihoods, health, safety and well-being of the people of Gwent even more challenging. If action isn't taken, this will lead to poorer health and well-being because of increased deprivation, substance misuse, mental health problems, civil disorder and crime, and antisocial behaviour. Evidence is already showing this will impact the health and well-being of already disadvantaged people and communities the most, who will need additional focus and support.

We want a climate-ready Gwent, where our environment is valued and protected, benefitting our well-being now and for future generations.

The latest Well-being Assessment showed that Gwent's countryside, coastline, rivers and urban greenspaces are not all in good condition, Many of our plants and animals are in decline. This drop is, in turn, making it more difficult to deal with challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality. The 'green economy' could provide jobs in the industries of the future such as renewables, energy efficiency and decarbonisation and supporting good health. Many of the unsustainable approaches that are putting pressure on our natural resources are also causing the climate to change. We need Gwent's natural resources to be resilient to the impacts of a changing climate including more extreme weather events. There will also be challenges associated with transitioning to a low carbon future, and we will need to consider the whole energy system – heat, power and transport. Whilst projections of milder winters associated with a changing climate may help to reduce fuel poverty, we know that much of our housing stock has poor thermal efficiency and will be challenging to retrofit.

For us to enjoy the benefits that nature can provide, our natural areas must be healthy and able to withstand threats and disturbance, such as climate change, urban development and pollution. This will require us all to work differently and really understand how we interact with our environment and the impacts we're having.

To do this we need to change our food, energy and transport systems so they work better for nature and for us, reducing climate change and protecting the resources our future generations will rely on. Developing the 'green economy' could provide local jobs in the industries of the future such as renewables, energy efficient housing and decarbonisation. Increasing the supply of locally grown food is better for nature, our health and reduces pollution. If we change how we travel around Gwent we can reduce carbon emissions, benefit local wildlife and our well-being.

Steps

We have identified five steps that will help us to achieve our two well-being objectives. Delivery plans for each step explaining what will be done in the short, medium and longer term, who will do it and by when, will be developed during the first year of the plan using the five ways of working as a framework. These will be published as part of the first annual report. Work may begin on delivering some steps before the delivery plans are completed if it can be, especially if we already have the information we need to take action. The delivery plans will be complemented by local action plans at a county level. These will be written by Local Delivery Groups, which mirror the membership of the PSB but at a more local level.

Take action to reduce the cost of living crisis in the longer term

Although the cost of living crisis began after the Well-being Assessment was completed, we know that it is likely to make the poverty, deprivation and inequity in our communities worse and can increase crime and antisocial behaviour. Voluntary and community groups, councils and others are already providing support to many and will continue to do what they can.

While dealing with the immediate issues we must make sure that what we do now doesn't make things even harder in the future. The right training and skills will enable people to get decent work with pay that helps them to provide for their families. The growth in local renewable energy production and use, could provide better jobs, a cleaner environment and potentially cheaper energy for everyone. The need to make our homes and businesses more energy efficient and better insulated, will offer opportunities for local social enterprises and traditional businesses.

Technological changes will mean that services can be provided differently, as we saw during the pandemic, with services provided virtually or closer to home, offering alternative travel options and reducing pollution. We will need to make sure that any changes in the way people access services is designed around their needs and uses new technology to support those. Local food production will help people be able to eat healthy, more affordable food as well as providing opportunities to share their knowledge, and failures, with others. More local food production also helps to reduce the impact on the environment and is less prone to supply disruption.

Links to the other steps



Homes



Environment



Health



Communities

Contribution to the national Well-being Goals

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global

Provide and enable the supply of good quality, affordable, appropriate homes

Having a home is central to a person’s well-being. It means they can get a job, an education, the help and support they may need and allows them to feel part of a community or neighbourhood. Homes can be owned by the person living in them, rented from the council, a housing association, or a private landlord. How many homes are rented or owned is different across the region, as are the costs of buying or renting a home. The Well-being Assessment showed that the average house price in Monmouthshire is around three times that in Blaenau Gwent. Being able to afford to pay the rent or mortgage is only part of the story.

The cost of living in that home has also been increasing and many homes could be much more energy efficient, tackling both climate change and fuel poverty. As Wales moves towards being carbon neutral the need to make homes more energy efficient and better insulated is becoming more important. Insulating homes should help people to stay healthier for longer, help to reduce energy use and therefore costs, provide good quality local jobs as well as helping to protect the natural environment around the world.

Homes need to be in the right place to support individuals and the community, with access to local shops, workplaces, schools, health care, cultural and leisure activities, and transport. We know that as the climate changes there are likely to be more floods, storms, heatwaves and other weather events and homes need to be able to cope with those. Communities are changing, with more blended families, older people and people living alone, so housing needs to be adaptable and suitable for those changes.

The consultation showed that having good quality, affordable housing was an important issue for our communities. How housing is provided is very different across the region. The PSB wants to work together to improve the quality of homes in Gwent, but it will take some time to identify work we can do together because of the different rules and funding available to the different organisations.

Links to other steps



Cost of living



Environment



Health



Communities

Contribution to the national Well-being Goals

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global

Taking action to reduce our carbon emissions, help Gwent adapt to climate change, and protect and restore our natural environment

Protecting the environment for future generations is one of the greatest challenges of our time. The land, air, water, trees, plants, animals, and insects provide us with everything we need to live. However, our need for new homes and workplaces, renewable energy, recreation, and food production are putting nature under pressure. Without a healthy environment across Gwent there can be no well-being benefits for our communities.

The effects of climate change are being felt in our communities through flooding and heat waves. The Welsh public sector is committed to become carbon neutral by 2030. We must reduce Gwent’s carbon emissions by increasing our use of renewable and sustainable energy sources, increasing availability of local food, reducing waste, and changing how we travel around Gwent. We want to support our communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change, recognising that some communities are more exposed to floods, heatwaves, air pollution and other climate risks to health.

We need to better manage the demands on Gwent’s natural environment and protect, connect and restore nature. We’ll support community green/blue space initiatives which bring communities together, especially in areas of Gwent which have least access to local, quality outdoor spaces for health and well-being. Whilst focusing on the immediate needs across Gwent, we’ll also ensure our decisions consider future trends, and don’t make things even harder for future generations.

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Links to other steps



Cost of living



Health



Homes



Communities

Contribution to the national Well-being Goals

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global
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Take action to address inequities, particularly in relation to health, through the framework of the Marmot Principles

People’s health and well-being is affected by many things, clean air, water, and food, being able to get decent work, a suitable home, having local shops, access to culture and leisure activities, a quality education, good transport and social networks as well as health information and care. Where someone lives and how much money they have impacts on their health and happiness, it can lead to poorer health and less opportunity to thrive in life.

The Gwent PSB has agreed to use the framework of the eight Marmot Principles, developed by Prof. Sir Michael Marmot and his team at the Institute of Health Equity, which focus on the central issues that affect fairness, health and well-being. This approach will help to identify how to address the root causes of poor health and inequity across Gwent. The Institute of Health Equity is writing a report, using the evidence from the Well-being Assessment, the consultation responses, and their experience of working in other areas across the UK, to make recommendations for how the Gwent PSB and other regional partnerships, can take action to reduce inequities across Gwent. This report will form the basis of the action plan for this step.

Links to other steps



Cost of living



Environment



Homes



Communities

Contribution to the national Well-being Goals

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global

Enable and support people, neighbourhoods, and communities to be resilient, connected, thriving and safe

During the Covid-19 pandemic, communities across Gwent pulled together to support each other in times of need. But the cost of living crisis and the war in Ukraine have made existing inequities and poverty worse, with crime and antisocial behaviour increasing as people find life harder. We also know that there are some people, or communities, living in the region that don't feel as welcome, safe, or supported as they should. This could be because they are old, sick, at risk from flooding, domestic violence, drug misuse or racism. Many of these issues have been there for decades, with poor housing, health, and jobs, making it harder for people to improve their well-being.

Thriving communities need safe, affordable, suitable homes, access to sports, leisure, and cultural activities, with opportunities to get involved through paid work or volunteering, and in the language of their choice. There are historical buildings and areas across Gwent that could be used as community resources for local arts programmes and other activities, providing an opportunity to promote and share knowledge about the local heritage, history, and culture.

Communities need decent, reliable transport that enables people to access services, get to decent work, attend events, or visit family and friends, safely, cheaply and in a low carbon way. The beautiful countryside provides the space for exercise and recreation for people of all ages, benefiting their physical and mental health and providing opportunities to reduce the effects of extreme weather events, caused by a changing climate.

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Links to other steps



Cost of living



Environment



Health



Homes

Contribution to the national Well-being Goals

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global

What happens next?

During the first year of this Plan we will be preparing detailed delivery plans at a regional and local level. Working with our Local Delivery Groups, other partnerships, communities, Community Councils, voluntary groups, and others, we will get a better understanding of what needs to be done and how best to do it. These delivery plans will form the basis of the first annual report, along with updates. There may be things we can do in the short term, such as finding out more about how something similar has been done before or declaring a nature emergency or promoting fair pay within our organisations. But we must make sure that these support our long-term objectives and the steps we have identified.

WPPB 17.02.28

How the Marmot Principles link to the steps

	Cost of living	Housing	Environment	Health equity	Community
Give every child the best start in life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives	✓			✓	✓
Create fair employment and good work for all	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure a healthy standard of living for all	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention	✓	✓		✓	✓
Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes					✓
Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together	✓	✓	✓		

Connections with other Partnerships and Plans

Across the Gwent region, and beyond, there are a number of other partnerships and initiatives which will make a difference to people and rather than repeat what these groups are doing, the Gwent PSB will look to work with them to deliver its objectives for Gwent.

Local Delivery Groups

In each of the local authority areas which make up the Gwent region, Local Delivery Groups (LDGs) have been set up to deliver the PSB's objectives at the local level. Their membership is similar to that of the PSB, with additional local representation. Activity to deliver the objectives may look different in different areas and the LDGs will be able to better connect with and draw on local expertise and groups to provide a local flavour. In time these groups may want to deliver their own action plans creating a link between local and regional priorities and action.

Regional Partnership Board (RPB)

The Gwent RPB brings together the health board, local authorities and the voluntary sector to ensure effective services, and care and support is in place to best meet the needs of the people of Gwent. The priority areas they need to work on are services for: older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia; people with learning disabilities; carers, including young carers; Integrated Family Support Services; children with complex needs due to disability or illness. The RPB must write a Population Needs Assessment and an Area Plan. These complement the Well-being Assessment and this Well-being Plan. The PSB will support the work of the RPB, and they will support our work, but we will make sure that we're not duplicating each other's work.

Building a Fairer Gwent – a Marmot Region

A Marmot Region is a network of local stakeholders committed to tackling inequity through action on the social determinants of health – the social and economic conditions which shape our health with action framed within eight principles. Becoming a Marmot Region demonstrates that we want to work together at a senior level to improve equity across Gwent, and improve the lives of all our communities.

Safer Gwent - Community Safety Partnership

Safer Gwent, is a regional multi-agency Community Safety Partnership (CSP), made up of statutory bodies under the Crime & Disorder Act, and wider partners who have a key role in addressing the community safety portfolio. Safer Gwent aims to carry out, on behalf of the Gwent PSB, the oversight of regional community safety issues and quality assure the coordination of regional activity to support local CSP delivery. In addition, Safer Gwent is uniquely positioned to take forward the Gwent PSB community safety & cohesion priorities, whilst ensuring that the PSB is fully cited on and able to respond to issues identified within the annual community safety strategic assessment.

Cardiff Capital Region

The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) is a collaborative partnership comprising the ten Local Authorities that make up South East Wales and represents almost half the population of Wales. The CCR delivers a wide range of regeneration and investment projects, managed by a dedicated team and a ring-fenced £1.2bn investment fund, through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, which aims to deliver 25,000 new jobs and generate an additional £4bn of private sector investment by 2036. The CCR's high-profile projects include: the £50m Innovation Investment Capital fund, supporting business to scale up; the £50m Sites and Premises Fund, developing new sites to support the delivery of their Industrial and Economic Plan; the £10m Challenge Fund, supporting Local Authority innovation to accelerate decarbonisation and transform communities; the Homes for the Region programme to deliver 2,800 new homes; and several Metro projects transforming public transport infrastructure across the region.

Strategic Corporate Plans

These are the plans each of the organisations that make up the PSB have for what they are going to do over the next 3 – 5 years. These have different names in different organisations but they all set the high level direction for that organisation including their own Well-being Objectives which need to align to those of the PSB.

Area Statements

The South East Wales Area Statement (SEAS) informs internal and external planning across Gwent and helps stakeholders (including the PSB) consider different ways of working together.

The Area Statement process helps explore and shape aspirational ways of working. It has 4 themes: Linking Our Landscapes, Climate Ready Gwent, Healthy Active Connected and Ways of Working. The collaborative actions identified under each theme are underpinned by best available evidence, local knowledge and understanding gathered throughout the development of the SEAS. The outcomes under each of the four strategic themes will deliver the Area Statement vision for South East. This vision has been developed collaboratively over the course of the Area Statement process and is underpinned by what specialists and wider stakeholders want to see in Gwent.

Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan (GGNRAP)

The GGNRAP is a strategic framework, aiming to halt and reverse negative biodiversity trends, aligning national policy and legislation, informed by evidence including the Greater Gwent State of Nature Report 2020 Greater-Gwent-State-of-Nature-4-002.pdf (monlife.co.uk), the South East Wales Area Statement and Gwent Well-being Assessments. It is intended to be used by public bodies and organisations which operate at a regional level across the Greater Gwent area, including those on the Gwent PSB, to support better involvement that drives positive change and collaborative action together, long term. It is also a guide for the Local Nature Recovery Action Plans which focus more on local action to promote biodiversity in each Local Nature Partnership area found within Gwent.

Third Sector Partnership Agreement

The Third Sector Partnership Agreement between the Gwent PSB and the wider third sector recognises the mutual benefits that can be gained from close co-operation between the statutory partners and third sector across the Gwent PSB landscape. It builds on previous local versions and sets out guidelines for how all parties should work together. Partnership Agreements with the third sector have been identified by Welsh Government as good practice.

Participatory budgeting

Funding has been made available to the five Gwent Local Authorities to lead participatory budgeting programmes in their areas. The authorities are currently at different stages of development and with differing levels of investment. Some local authorities have now completed one or more programmes. Initial feedback has suggested participatory budgeting is effective in distributing funding to community groups, can help achieve wellbeing objectives, can generate high levels of participation and is well received. Public Health Wales are leading a review of participatory budgeting undertaken across Gwent, to inform and improve future use of this approach.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Consultation and engagement – chapter

Appendix 2 Marmot Report

Appendix 3 RPB Area Plan

Appendix 4 PSBs in Gwent's Well-being Objectives 2018 – 2023

WFPB 17.02.23

Appendix 4

PSBs in Gwent's Well-being Objectives 2018 – 2023

Blaenau Gwent PSB	Caerphilly PSB	Newport PSB	Monmouthshire PSB	Torfaen PSB
Blaenau Gwent wants to forge new pathways to prosperity	Positive Change -a shared commitment to improving the way we work together	People feel part of their community and have a sense of belonging	Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.	Develop a functional, connected network of natural areas that support the current and future well-being needs of local populations
Blaenau Gwent wants everyone to have the best start to life.	Positive Start- giving our future generations the best start in life	Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life	Provide Children and young people with the best start in life.	Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
Blaenau Gwent wants safe and friendly communities.	Positive People-empowering and enabling all our residents to achieve their own potential.	Ensuring people feel safe in their communities.		Create safe, confident communities and promote community cohesion
Blaenau Gwent wants to encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in places that they live, learn, work and play.	Positive Places-enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable	Long and healthy lives for all		Support healthy lifestyles and enable people to age well.
Blaenau Gwent wants to look after and protect its natural environment.		Newport has a clean and safe environment for people to use and enjoy.	Protect and enhance resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.	Develop mitigation and adaptation responses to the impacts of climate change
		Improve the perceptions of Newport		Tackle the intergenerational patterns

		as a place to live, work, visit and invest		of poverty and develop economic resilience.
		Drive up skill levels for economic and social well-being.	Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.	Improve local skills through work-force planning, training, apprenticeships, and volunteering opportunities.
		People feel part of their community and have a sense of belonging		
		Participation in arts, heritage and history is important for people's well-being		
		Improve air quality across the city		
		Communities are resilient to climate change		
		Participation in sports and physical activity is important for people's well-being		
		People have access to stable homes in a sustainable supportive community		