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

THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

Dydd Mercher, 12 Gorffennaf 2023 Dydd Mercher, 12 Gorffennaf 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held in virtually via MS Teams, if you wish to attend this meeting please contact michelle.hicks@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk. on Dydd Mercher, 19eg Gorffennaf, 2023 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Damien McCann
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

Pages

1. **CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD**

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

2. **YMDDIHEURIADAU**

Derbyn unrhyw ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.

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. **DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU**

Derbyn unrhyw ddatganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

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5. **CYFARFOD ARBENNIG O'R CABINET** 11 - 12

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PORTFFOLIO CORFFORAETHOL A PHERFFORMIAD

6. **BLAENRAGLEN GWAITH ARFAETHEDIG 2023-24 Y CABINET** 13 - 26

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7. **GRANTIAU I SEFYDLIADAU** 27 - 28

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8. **ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL YR IAITH GYMRAEG 2022/23** 29 - 76

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9. **MONITRO'R GYLLIDEB REFENIW 2022/2023 – ALL-DRO DARPARIAETHOL** 77 - 102

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10. **MONITRO'R GYLLIDEB GAFAEL, ALL-DRO DARPARIAETHOL BLWYDDYN ARIANNOL 2022/23 (FEL AR 31 MAWRTH 2023)** 103 - 126

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11. **CYFLAWNI GOFYNIION PENODOL DEDDF CYDRADDOLDEB 2010: DATBLYGU POLISI CYDRADDOLDEB STRATEGOL** 127 - 132

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12. **SIARTER CYTUNDEB CYFFREDIN RHWNG
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BWRDEISTREF SIROL BLAENAU GWENT** 133 - 150

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Phartneriaethau.

13. **PREMIWM TRETH GYNGOR AR GARTREFI GWAG
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Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

PORTFFOLIO POBL AC ADDYSG

14. **GWYBODAETH PERFFORMIAD DIOGELU (YN
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IONAWR I 31 MAWRTH AC ADDYSG TYMOR Y
GWANWYN – 2023 A GWASANAETHAU
CORFFORAETHOL)** 185 - 318

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

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

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

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

SUBJECT: CABINET – 7TH JUNE, 2023

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

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

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

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

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

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

WITH: Chief Officer Resources
Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services
Head of School Improvement & Inclusion
Head of Democratic Services, Partnerships & Governance
Chief Officer Customer and Commercial
Interim Head of Childrens' Service
Communications Officer

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received:-</p> <p>Interim Chief Executive Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance Interim Corporate Director Social Services</p>
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>
	<u>DECISIONS</u>
No. 4	<p><u>CABINET</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the decisions of the Cabinet Meeting held on 19th April, 2023.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the decisions be received as a true record of proceedings.</p>
No. 5	<p><u>SPECIAL CABINET</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the decisions of the Cabinet Meeting held on 28th April, 2023.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the decisions be received as a true record of proceedings.</p>

<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>SPECIAL CABINET</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the decisions of the Cabinet Meeting held on 3rd May, 2023.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the decisions be received as a true record of proceedings.</p>									
	<p><u>GENERAL MATTERS</u></p>									
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>CONFERENCES, COURSES, INVITATIONS AND EVENTS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the following:-</p> <p><u>Leadership Programme for Councillors in Wales 2023/24</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that approval be given for 2 Members to attend the 2023/24 Leadership Programme for Councillors in Wales.</p>									
	<p><u>CORPORATE AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO</u></p>									
<p>No. 8</p>	<p><u>GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>The following grants to organisation were received further to the publication of the report:-</p> <p><u>ABERTILLERY</u></p> <p><u>Abertillery & Six Bells Ward - Councillor J. Holt</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Abertillery BG RFC</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Chillax</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Abertillery Workmen’s Institute</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> </table>	1.	Abertillery BG RFC	£100	2.	Chillax	£100	3.	Abertillery Workmen’s Institute	£100
1.	Abertillery BG RFC	£100								
2.	Chillax	£100								
3.	Abertillery Workmen’s Institute	£100								

Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor N. Parsons

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Knit and Natter | £100 |
| 2. | Abertillery Bluebirds AFC | £250 |
| 3. | Abertillery Operatic Society | £100 |

Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor H. Cunningham

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Soffryd Community Centre | £265 |
| 2. | Brynithel Community Centre | £265 |
| 3. | Llanhilleth Miners Institute | £265 |
| 4. | Aberbeeg Community Centre | £265 |

RESOLVED accordingly.

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

No. 9

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT UP TO MARCH 2023

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager – Performance and Democratic.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and suggestions were provided to the content of the Finance and Performance Report in order to make it more efficient and effective as a management tool (Option 1).

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

SUBJECT: SPECIAL CABINET – 21ST JUNE, 2023

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

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

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

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

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

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

WITH: Interim Chief Executive
Chief Officer Resources
Interim Corporate Director of Education
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance
Service Manager Children’s Services
Communications Officer

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

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

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received:-</p> <p>Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services Chief Officer Customer & Commercial</p>
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>
	<p><u>PEOPLE & EDUCATION PORTFOLIO</u></p>
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>OUTTURN REPORT - CONSULTATION ON ALN RESOURCE BASE CAPACITY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director of Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted, and the Outturn Report, associated documents and course of action, including proceeding to Statutory Notice be accepted (Option 1).</p>

Agenda Item 6

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **19th July 2023**

Report Subject: **Proposed Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023-24**

Portfolio Holder: **All Portfolio Holders**

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
June 2023		29.06.23			July 2023	19.07.23	20.07.23	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for 2023-24 (Appendix 1) and to seek approval from Committee.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Cabinet Work Programme is a key aspect of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and supports the requirements of the Constitution.
 - 2.2 The topics set out in the Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027, agreed by the Council in October 2022, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
 - 2.3 All Scrutiny Committees and the Council Forward Work Programmes have been aligned to the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.
 - 2.4 As the document is fluid there is flexibility to allow for regular review between the Chair and the Committee.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
 - 3.1 The Work Programmes have been endorsed by the relevant departments of the Council, and all Scrutiny Committees and the Council will agree their work programmes as part of the June / July 2023 cycle of meetings.
 - 3.2 **Option 1**
To agree the Forward Work Programme for Cabinet for 2023/24.
 - Option 2**
To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

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Cabinet

Forward Work Programme

2023/24

Chair: Cllr Steve Thomas

Vice-Chair: Cllr Helen Cunningham

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 7th June 2023

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Tuesday 16th May 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Grants to Organisations	Decision To agree the Grants to Organisations.	John Griffin	N/A
Joint Finance and Performance report	Performance Monitoring Members to receive quarter 3 for consideration.	Gemma Wasley	Corporate Overview and Performance – 27 th April 2023

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SPECIAL Cabinet Meeting Date: 21st June 2023

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Thursday 8th June 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: People and Education			
Outturn report – Consultation on ALN Resource Base Capacity	Decision To agree to proceed to Statutory Notice	Lynn Phillips / Joanne Watts	N/A

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 19th July 2023

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Wednesday 28th June 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Forward Work Programme 2023/24	Decision To approve the Forward Work Programme for 2023/24, recognising the fluidity of the programme.	Scrutiny & Democratic Officer	Scrutiny Committee FWPs - June / July 2023
Welsh language Annual Report	Performance Monitoring To consider the draft Welsh Language Annual report.	Sarah King	Corporate Overview and Performance – 22.6.23
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 - Provisional Outturn	Budget Monitoring To provide members with the provisional financial outturn position for the financial year 2022/23.	Rhian Hayden	Corporate Overview and Performance – 05.07.23
Capital Budget Monitoring Provisional Outturn 2022/23	Budget Monitoring To provide members with each portfolios capital expenditure as at 31 st March 2023.	Rhian Hayden	Corporate Overview and Performance – 05.07.23
Strategic Equality Policy Development	Decision To support the approach for development of new SEP.	Sarah King	Corporate Overview and Performance – 05.07.23
Charter of Common Agreement between the Town & Community Councils and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Decision Members to consider and approve for new liaison arrangements between Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) and each of the four Town and Community Councils (TCCs) from 2023/24.	Sarah King	N/A
Portfolio: People and Education			
Safeguarding Performance reporting	Performance Monitoring To provide members with Corporate, Children's and Adult Safeguarding Performance.	Lynn Phillips Tanya Evans	People – 18.7.23

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 27th September 2023

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Tuesday 5th September 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Grants to Organisations	Decision To agree the Grants to Organisations.	John Griffin	N/A
Welsh Language Compliance	Performance Monitoring To present progress on implementing the Action Plan in response to the open Welsh Language investigation.	Andrew Parker	Corporate Overview and Performance – 14.09.23
Digital Strategy	Decision To approve the policy.	Bernadette Elias	Corporate Overview and Performance – 14.09.23
Commercial Strategy	Decision To approve the policy.	Bernadette Elias	Corporate Overview and Performance – 14.09.23
Health and Safety Annual Review	Decision To agree the review.	Andrea Prosser	Corporate Overview and Performance – 14.09.23
Annual report of the Public Services Ombudsman	Performance Monitoring To receive the annual report of the Public Services Ombudsman.	Andrea Jones	Governance and Audit – 20.09.23
Portfolio: People and Education			
Objections Report from Statutory Notice – Consultation on ALN Resource Base Capacity	Decision To consider any objections.	Lynn Phillips / Joanne Watts	N/A
Portfolio: People and Social Services			
VAWDASV Strategy / Plan	Decision To approve.	Sarah King	People – 19.09.23

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
		VAWDASA – Regional Lead	
Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy To be published by 1st October	Decision To consider and approve the draft Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy 2023/24, prior to publication on 1/10/2023.	Lynn Phillips	People – 19.09.23
ALN Policy Review	Decision To consider review of ALN policies and recommend approval by Cabinet	Luisa Munro-Morris	People – 19.09.23
Joint Portfolio: People and Social Services & People and Education			
Safeguarding Performance Information Social Services and Education	Performance Monitoring To provide members with Safeguarding Performance and Self-Evaluation information	Tanya Evans/ Lynn Phillips	People –
Portfolio: Place and Regeneration			
Abertillery Placemaking Plan	Decision To approve the proposals for placemaking in Abertillery.	Amy Taylor	Place – 05.09.23
Joint Portfolio: Deputy Leader / Place and Environment and Place and Regeneration and Economic Development			
Community Services and Regeneration Directorate Performance End of Year report 2022/23	Performance Monitoring Members to monitor the performance of the Directorate.	Clive Rogers Ellie Fry Dave Thompson	Place – 05.09.23

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 29th November 2023

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Tuesday 7th November 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate and Performance Services			
Workforce Strategy Review and year 3 action plan	Decision To consider the review and year 3 action plan.	Andrea Prosser	Corporate Overview and Performance – 26.10.23
Sickness Absence Performance 2022/23	Performance Monitoring To consider the annual review of staff sickness absence.	Andrea Prosser	Corporate Overview and Performance – 26.10.23
Shared Resource Service	Performance Monitoring To ensure members have oversight of Governance Arrangements and monitor performance of SRS and to support the delivery plan for 2023/24.	Bernadette Elias	Partnership – 16.11.23
Portfolio: People and Social Services			
Children’s Residential Provision in Blaenau Gwent	Performance Monitoring To receive progress on the establishment of the Local Authority Children’s Residential provision in Blaenau Gwent.	Tanya Evans	People – 07.11.23
Portfolio: People and Education			
Self-evaluation (SE)	Performance Monitoring To ensure that Members contribute to the development of the self-evaluation report.	Lynn Phillips	People – 07.11.23
Improving Schools Programme	Performance Monitoring To provide Members with an update on any inspection report findings (when available) and progress within schools that are causing concern or subject to Council intervention.	Luisa Munro-Morris	People – 07.11.23

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Aneurin Leisure Trust Performance and Monitoring	Performance Monitoring Members to consider the content of the six monthly ALT performance report and to discuss areas for future monitoring arrangements.	Lynn Phillips	Partnership – 16.11.23
Portfolio: Deputy Leader / Places and Environment			
Community Asset Transfer	Performance Monitoring To provide progress to date on the Community Asset Transfer.	Clive Rogers	Place – 17.10.23
Waste and Recycling Annual Performance	Performance Monitoring Members to receive the annual performance report for Waste and Recycling.	Matthew Stent	Place – 17.10.23
Portfolio: Place and Regeneration			
Decarbonisations Annual Report	Performance Monitoring To monitor the performance.	Andrew Parker	Place – 05.09.23

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 3rd January 2024

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Monday 4th December 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Grants to Organisations	Decision To agree the Grants to Organisations.	John Griffin	N/A
Customer Service Strategy	Decision To approve the strategy.	Bernadette Elias	Corporate Overview and Performance – 14.12.23
Joint Portfolio: Place and Environment and Place and Regeneration			
Community Services and Regeneration Directorate Performance report	Performance Monitoring Members to monitor the performance of the Directorate.	Clive Rogers Ellie Fry Dave Thompson	Places Scrutiny Committee –
Portfolio: Deputy Leader / Place and Environment			
Waste and Recycling Fleet Renewal	Decision To approve.	Matthew Stent	Place – 05.12.23
Portfolio: People and Social Services			
Director of Social Services Quarter 1 and 2 update	Performance Monitoring Members to receive the quarterly update of the Director of Social Services Annual report.	Tanya Evans	People – 19.12.23
Portfolio: People and Education			
Director of Education Quarter 1 and 2 update	Performance Monitoring Members to receive the quarterly update of the Director of Education Annual report.	Lynn Phillips	People – 19.12.23

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

SPECIAL Cabinet Meeting Date: TO BE CONFIRMED

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas:

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Committee Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Revenue Budget 2024/25	Decision Members to consider the proposed Revenue Budget for 2024/25.	Rhian Hayden	TBC

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 21st February 2024

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Tuesday 30th January 2024

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Other Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Grants to Organisations	Approval To agree the Grants to Organisations.	Rhian Daly	N/A
Joint Finance and Performance report – Quarters 1 and 2 – 2023/24	Performance Monitoring Members to receive quarters 1 and 2 for consideration.	Gemma Wasley	Corporate Overview and Performance – 18.01.24
Portfolio: People and Education			
School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education Statutory deadline for the policy to be published by 15 th April	Decision To approve the School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2024/25.	Lynn Phillips	People – 30.01.24
Joint Portfolio: People and Social Services / People and Education			
Safeguarding Performance reporting	Performance Monitoring To provide members with Corporate, Children’s and Adult Safeguarding Performance.	Lynn Phillips Tanya Evans	People – 30.01.24
Joint Portfolio: Place and Environment and Place and Regeneration			
Community Services and Regeneration Directorate Performance – Quarters 1 and 2 – 2023/24	Performance Monitoring Members to monitor the performance of the Directorate.	Clive Rogers Ellie Fry Dave Thompson	Place Scrutiny Committee – 16.01.24
Portfolio: Place and Regeneration and Economic Development			
Local Area Energy Plan	Decision To consider the report.	Andrew Parker	Place Scrutiny Committee – 16.01.24

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: Wednesday 10th April 2024

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Monday 18th March 2024

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Other Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate and Performance			
Grants to Organisations	Approval To agree the Grants to Organisations.	Rhian Daly	N/A
Serious Violence Duty / Assessment and Plan	Pre-Decisions Policy development	Andrew Parker	Place – 05.03.24
Portfolio: Place and Environment			
Community Asset Transfer	Performance Monitoring To provide progress to date on the Community Asset Transfer.	Clive Rogers	Place – 05.03.24
Portfolio: People and Education			
Improving Schools Programme	Performance Monitoring To provide Members with an update on any inspection report findings (when available) and progress within schools that are causing concern or subject to Council intervention.	Luisa Munro-Morris	People – 19.03.24
Education Achievement Service (EAS) Business Plan 2024/25	Pre-Decision To consult Members on the draft EAS Business Plan for 2024/25.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Michelle Jones	Partnership – 22.02.24

Cabinet Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Cabinet Meeting Date: FWP 2024/25

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas:

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Other Meeting Date
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance			
Welsh Language Compliance	To present progress on implementing the Action Plan in response to the open Welsh Language investigation.	Andrew Parker	Corporate Overview and Performance – 25.04.23
Joint Finance and Performance End of Year report – 2023/24	Performance Monitoring Members to receive End of Year report for consideration.	Gemma Wasley	Corporate Overview and Performance – FWP 2024/25
Joint Portfolio: Place and Environment and Place and Regeneration			
Community Services and Regeneration Directorate Performance – End of Year – 2023/24	Performance Monitoring Members to monitor the performance of the Directorate.	Clive Rogers Ellie Fry Dave Thompson	Place Scrutiny Committee – FWP 2024/25
Portfolio: People and Education			
Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) Annual Return 2022/23	Performance Monitoring Members to consider the Annual Assessment from Welsh Government which highlights Blaenau Gwent's performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards.	Lynn Phillips	Partnership – TBC
Education Directorate End of Year report – 2023/24	Performance Monitoring To provide Members with the first annual strategic overview report from the Corporate Director on progress made and key areas for future development.	Lynn Phillips	People – FWP 2024/25

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF CABINET

REPORT SUBJECT: GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS – 19th July 2023

REPORT AUTHOR: RHIAN HAYDEN

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

ABERTILLERY

Abertillery & Six Bells Ward - Councillors R. Leadbetter

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | Six Bells Tenants & Residents Association | £100 |
| 2. | Abertillery Town Cricket Club | £100 |

EBBW VALE

Cwm Ward - Councillors D. Bevan & G. Humphries

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | Cwm Carnival | £300 |
| 2. | Stacy Caldwell (Logan's Leukaemia Appeal) | £300 |
| 3. | Friends of Cwm Playgrounds | £300 |

CHIEF OFFICER RESOURCES

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Agenda Item 8

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **19th July 2023**

Report Subject: **Welsh Language Annual Report 2022/23**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Steven Thomas, Leader / Cabinet Member for Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **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)
	01.06.23	29.06.23			22.06.23	19.07.23		

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the Report is to present the Welsh Language Annual Report 2022/23 for the Council.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 set out to modernise the legal framework regarding the use of the Welsh language in the delivery of public services.

2.2 This Measure resulted in the Welsh Language Standards. The aims of the Standards are to:

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

2.3 Under Standards 158, 164 and 170, the Local Authority must produce a Welsh Language Annual Report that deals with the way in which the Council has complied with the service delivery standards, policy-making standards and the operational standards.

2.4 The Welsh Language Annual Report for 2022/23 (Appendix 1) sets out the highlights and key pieces of work, which demonstrate how we as a Council have endeavoured to meet the requirement set by the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued in September 2015.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 CLT considered the Welsh Language Annual Report 2022/23 (Appendix 1) in June 2023.

3.2 The Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee also considered the report on 22nd June 2023, and recommended Option 1 to Cabinet.

3.3 **Option 1**

Cabinet consider Welsh Language Annual Report 2022/23, as published on 30th June 2023.

Option 2

Cabinet to provide any comments for consideration for future reporting on the Welsh Language.

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

The Council has a statutory requirement to produce and publish an Annual Report from the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Corporate Plan recognises meeting our Welsh language requirements as a key policy area which will enable the Council to deliver its ambition.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Failure to comply with the requirement to produce an annual report could lead to financial penalties issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner. The quoted figure is £5,000 by breach. There is a small financial requirement for translation of the Annual Report into Welsh. This will need to be met from the Policy & Partnerships budget as there is no longer a corporate budget for Welsh language translation.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There is a reputational risk to the Council if the Annual Report is not published, or it is not published on time.

The Welsh Language Commissioner can investigate without warning and has the authority to gain power of entry. Any evidence of failure to comply with a Standard could lead to a penalty.

5.3 ***Legal***

The Council has a statutory requirement to produce and publish an Annual Report from the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

5.4 **Human Resources**

Organisational Development has provided the raw data for the staff analysis. The data shows that the Council has identified 45 members of staff from 2,959 staff who are fluent Welsh speakers which is an increase of 11 staff in comparison to 2021/22 figures. This increase is consistent across the Council with figures rising across all Directorates.

The total number of staff who have Welsh language speaking skills ranging from 'fluently', 'quite well', 'moderately' to 'a little' is 537 (18%). This is an increase of 67 members of staff from the 2021/22 reporting period.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Notable findings that emerged from the Annual Report:

- There was 1 Welsh Language Commissioner's Office Investigation opened (CS092) and 0 complaints received from the public.
- The number of employees who have Welsh language speaking skills as of 31st March 2022 amounts to 594 (18%) staff; they can speak 'fluently', 'quite well', 'moderately', or 'a little'. However, just under half of the total number of staff declare they have no Welsh language speaking ability (45%). A 5% positive reduction since the last reporting period.
- Education has the most fluent Welsh Speakers (30).

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The production and publishing of the report exemplifies the Council's commitment to the Welsh language speaking community within the area.

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

The Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network, a group made up of local Welsh language community groups and partner organisations considered the annual report and provided case study examples of work undertaken during the reporting period which contributed towards us achieving our Welsh language commitments.

The Council engages with all divisions to ensure that the Welsh Language Standards are understood. A dedicated intranet page is available with key guides for staff that are simple to use.

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

Blaenau Gwent has had a Welsh Language Strategy since 1993 demonstrating a long-term commitment to the Welsh language. Blaenau Gwent is committed to safeguarding and promoting the Welsh language within the borough and a Promotion Strategy has been produced in-line with Standard 145. Promoting the Welsh language is also in-line with the Welsh Government's Future Generations Bill goals, specifically, the goal to provide 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.'

- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
Meeting the requirements set by the Welsh Language Standards, which includes completing the Annual Report, will aim to prevent reputational and financial risk.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
Blaenau Gwent continues to work with neighbouring and regional local authorities to support the promotion of the Welsh Language, including regional partnership forums and networks (for example, Rhwydiaith, Deddff etc).
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
By considering a corporate approach to Welsh Language the Council is demonstrating it is taking an integrated approach.
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
This report has no direct implications towards decarbonisation or reducing carbon emissions.
- 6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IAA)***
The report considers Equalities throughout and seeks to ensure the Welsh language is valued and not treated less favourably across the Council.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The Welsh Language Annual Report for 2022/23 is presented to the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Welsh Language Annual Report 2022/23 presented in Appendix 1.



Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-23

Prepared in accordance with
the requirements of the Welsh
Language Commissioner

Section	Title
1.0	Introduction
	1.1 Regulatory framework
	1.2 Governance and accountability
2.0	Meeting our Welsh Language Standards
	2.1 Service delivery standards
	2.2 Policy making standards
	2.3 Operational standards
	2.4 Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27
	2.5 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/32
3.0	Complaints
4.0	Staff language skills
5.0	Welsh medium training provision
6.0	Next steps



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

1.1 Regulatory framework

This is the eighth Welsh Language Standards Annual Report Blaenau Gwent Council has published. The report was written under **the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011** covering the financial period of April 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets out the legal framework regarding the use of the Welsh language in the delivery of public services. Furthermore, under Standards 158, 164 and 170, all Local Authorities must publish a Welsh Language Annual Report that captures how the Council has been compliant with the service delivery, policy making, and the operational standards. As such the purpose of this report is to provide an evaluation of how our organisation has promoted and facilitated opportunities to use the Welsh language, and ensure we are compliant with our statutory duties to treat the language no less favourably than the English language.

1.2 Governance and accountability

Blaenau Gwent Council, as a public body, has a key role in helping to support and encourage the promotion of the Welsh language and is committed to meeting its Welsh Language Standards by being 'a fair, open, and welcoming to all by working with and for our communities' as outlined in our **Corporate Plan 2022/27**.

The Corporate Plan 2022/27 recognises the Welsh language as being a key policy area which helps us deliver against our priorities which are centred on improving the well-being of local people and communities.

Implementing the standards

All staff are responsible for helping to support the organisation in meeting the Welsh Language Standards and for supporting and encouraging the promotion of the Welsh language.

The Policy & Partnerships Team provides advice, guidance, and professional support across the organisation to ensure the Council is meeting its Welsh language commitments and statutory requirements.

During this reporting period development work has been undertaken to strengthen the Council's existing performance monitoring arrangements via business planning. For example, all directorates and service areas will be required to provide updates on contributions made to supporting Welsh Language Compliance and the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27.

Political and Professional Leadership

The Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member for Corporate Services continues to hold portfolio responsibility for the Welsh Language. The Welsh Language Annual Report is considered by Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet, and when appropriate the Council.

Each year the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report is presented to our Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). CLT is made up of the Managing Director, Directors, and all Heads of Service, and includes all the senior officers and is the decision-making body for the corporate element of the Council.

Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network

The Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network, an external partnership group facilitated by Menter Iaith BGTm, was re-established in the past 12 months.

The network is made up of local Welsh language organisations and agencies and Blaenau Gwent Council service areas whose work directly centres on promoting the use of the Welsh language across the authority. The purpose of this group is to work collectively to help support the delivery and monitoring of the **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27** our **Welsh Language Compliance Notice** and to share resources, learning, and good practice. The group will also work alongside the Council's Corporate Equality Welsh Network.

Examples of activities the group has supported this year includes mapping current and planned activities which contribute towards helping us achieve the 3 objectives within our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27 and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/32 (please see Section 2.4 and Section 2.5 for further information).

Corporate Policy & Performance Workshops

During this reporting period the Corporate Leadership Team have agreed the establishment of quarterly, organisation-wide Corporate Policy & Performance Workshops. We aim to use the workshops as a community of practice to support the implementation of key statutory policy areas (E.g. Welsh, Equality etc.).

The Education Transformation Team

The Education Transformation Team review and monitor the **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)** monthly; providing termly reports to the Welsh in Education Forum (WEF) and provides annual reports to Welsh Government. In addition, WEF development and progress reports are taken via the Council's political processes annually. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is also a key focus of the 21st Century Schools Programme Board and Admissions Forum.

Since 2016 Blaenau Gwent Council has had a statutory requirement to work in accordance with the **Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice** issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. It is the responsibility of all staff to consider the Welsh language and ensure it is treated no less favourably than the English.

Therefore, while consideration and inclusion of the language is a consistent thread through the Councils day-to-day activity below are several examples of how we have reinforced compliance over the past year in relation to our service delivery, policy and operational standards.

2.1 Service delivery standards

Standards 1-7

Correspondence sent by a body

All email accounts ending **@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk** must include a statement noting that we welcome correspondence in Welsh and assurance that it will not lead to a delay in response.

Regular internal communications campaigns have been promoted to ensure staff are made aware to include the Welsh language statement below within their email signature:

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.

Blaenau Gwent - lle sy'n deg, agored a chroesawgar i bawb drwy weitho gyda a thros ein cymunedau:

Blaenau Gwent - a place that is fair, open and welcoming to all by working with and for our communities

Furthermore, staff access to the **cymraeg@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk** mailbox was extended to ensure we provide an effective Welsh Language service for those who wish to correspond with the Council in Welsh.

Standards 8-22

Calls made and received by a body

Since our last Annual Report, we have continued to review our Welsh language telephone procedure using insights received from our Customer Experiences Service Manager. For example, whilst the guidance for staff included audio files to assist staff, with lower Welsh language speaking ability, with the pronunciation of key phrases (a slowly recited version to emphasise key sounds and pronunciation; the phrase at a normal pace) it was felt that some of the words were still proving to be challenging for some staff. Therefore, changes have been made to ensure more simplified phrases are included. Furthermore, Welsh language training for customer-facing staff has been arranged, for more details please see Section 5 'Welsh Medium Training Provision'.

Standards 64-68

A body receiving visitors in its building

Standard 64-68 set the requirements relating to displaying a sign and wearing badges at reception to make it clear that the persons are welcome to use the Welsh language at reception and that staff are available to provide a Welsh language service. In June, self-assessments were undertaken by Facility Managers regarding compliance and to review any areas for improvement. This resulted in the Welsh Language Active Offer being across all Council building reception areas and within our Community Hubs to increase the use of the Welsh language. For example, better signage to promote our Welsh language service and reception staff to wear either the Welsh language speaker or learning Welsh lanyards.

Our receptionist at the General Offices, Sian (pictured below) is a dedicated learner who frequently practices words and phrases necessary for receiving Welsh speaking visitors.



'I first learnt a little Welsh because of the few occasions where a Welsh speaking person came into Reception I felt ashamed that I knew absolutely no Welsh vocabulary whatsoever, not even a simple greeting. When the Welsh Language Standards came into place I decided to do a 10 week course. I would now feel confident to have a limited interaction going forward if a Welsh speaking person visits the building'.

Promotion of the use of Active Offer Lanyards and Badges

The poster on page 11 was shared with all service areas and staff are offered free lanyards and badges that indicate they are Welsh speakers or are learning Welsh.

Also, to promote the use of Welsh during online meetings held either internally or externally Microsoft Teams backgrounds have been made available to staff who wish to indicate they have Welsh language ability. The templates below are available to all staff via the intranet.



Badges and lanyards for Welsh speakers and learners available for all staff!



Get yours from reception at Anvil Court and the General Offices!



Teams backgrounds that show you speak Welsh, or are learning, can be found on the Welsh language Intranet page.

For free Welsh language training please contact Katherine.watkins-hughes@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

Beaufort Hill Primary School – ‘Helpwr y Dydd’

Promotion of the lanyards also went out to all Blaenau Gwent schools. This prompted engagement from the Welsh lead at Beaufort Hill Primary School to use the lanyards as part of the ‘Helpwr a Dydd’ scheme.

The- ‘Helpwr a Dydd’ scheme is where a pupil is picked each day as a Welsh language champion to ensure the Welsh language is being used. The ‘Helpwr y Dydd’ is responsible for role-modelling the use of Welsh by promoting the Welsh phrase of the week, writing the date and weather in Welsh at the beginning of class and using the language generally with staff and students.



2.2 Policy making standards

Standard 88 - 97 Relating to considering the effects of a body's policy decisions on the Welsh language

Integrated Impact Assessment

Standard 88 states that a body must consider what effects, if any (whether positive or adverse), a policy decision would have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. A body must consider the effects when it formulates a new policy, or reviews or revises an existing policy.

All Council decisions, policy reviews or new policy developments require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The IIA has been reviewed and includes consideration of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 regulations to guarantee effective consideration of the Welsh language.

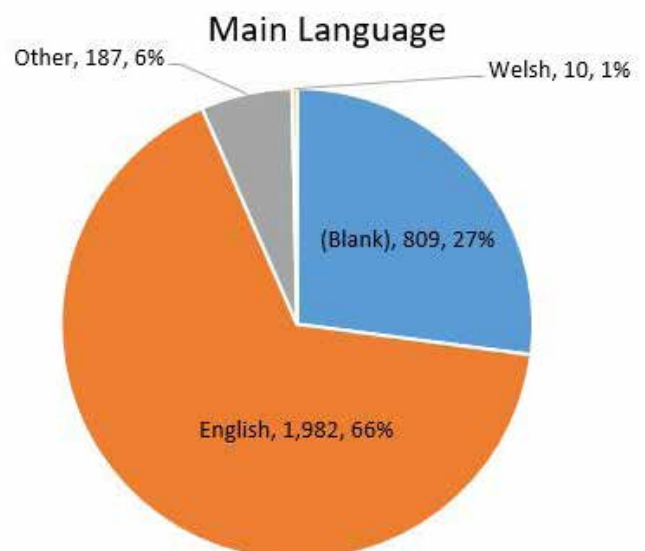
2.3 Operational standards

Standards 99 -104 relating to the use of the Welsh language within a body's internal administration

Integrated Impact Assessment

When an individual is offered a new post their correspondence preference for the contract of employment or contract for services is noted on iTrent by Organisational Development. iTrent is an online platform and database for workforce information (e.g., sensitive information relating to the Equality (Wales) Act 2010 as well as Welsh Language speaking, understanding, listening, and reading.

Currently there are 19 members of staff who wish to receive their correspondence in Welsh or bilingually. This is a significant increase of 14 members of staff since the last reporting period to disclose Welsh as their main language which shows a positive trend in staff embracing the language.



Standard 136 - Recruiting and Appointing

Managers are required to complete a Welsh Language Skills Job Assessment form when recruiting for a new or vacant post. This information shapes the job description, advertisement requisition, interview procedure and subsequently any employment. It is the Council's policy that all posts advertised, internally and externally must note Welsh as a 'desirable' skill as a minimum requirement. As such all 335 jobs advertised this reporting period have noted Welsh as a 'desirable' skill.

While only one position was advertised as Welsh language 'essential' the position itself of Welsh Language Support Officer is key in ensuring use, promotion and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. As was noted in our last Annual Report the Policy & Partnerships Team had successfully participated in the Kickstart apprenticeship programme with creating the role of Trainee Welsh Language Support Officer. This apprenticeship led to the member of staff securing fixed-term employment in the Electoral Registration Team following its completion. This year having secured further funding to extend the role of Welsh Language Support Officer for a further 12 months.

The recruitment policy is undergoing an end-end review as part of the CS092 Action Plan covered in Section 3.

2.4 Meeting our Promotional Standards / Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27

Standard 145 states that every local authority must produce a strategy detailing how they intend on promoting the Welsh language every five years. Our second **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27** was published during the period of this report and focuses on the following three strategic objectives:

Objective 1 - Family and Community

'Working with our partners we will promote and encourage the use of the Welsh language within families and the community.'

Objective 2 - Children and Young people

'To increase the provision of Welsh language education and informal activities for children and young people.'

Objective 3 - Welsh in the Workplace

'To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace.'

Our Target

Within the promotion strategy the council must set out a target, Blaenau Gwent have aligned its target with the Government Million Speakers by 2050 strategy.

The 2021 Census identified 4,035 Welsh speakers living within Blaenau Gwent, which equates to 6.2% of its population.

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

To meet the Welsh Governments goal of one million speakers in the next 28 years Blaenau Gwent would need a 46% increase. 46% being an additional 1,856 speakers, equating to 66 additional speakers annually.

Below are some examples of work that has taken place this year that feed into the Promotion Strategy's objectives.

Objective 1

Objective 1 of the strategy centres on the promotion and encouragement of the use of the Welsh language within families and community by working with our partners.

As noted in Section 1.2 'Governance and Accountability' of this report the Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network has been re-established to support this work. This group is made up of our partner organisations and relevant Council service area representatives. Meeting quarterly to share best practice and monitor the progress of Welsh Language Compliance, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/32 and the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27.

Partnership working is key to the delivery of Objective 1. Below are three examples of what are local Welsh language partners have delivered during the reporting period to support it.

Mudiad Meithrin

Established in 1971 **Mudiad Meithrin / Mudiad Meithrin** is a voluntary organisation passionate about celebrating and encouraging the use of the Welsh language. The organisation offers numerous Welsh-medium play and learning experiences for children from birth to school-age.

Cylch Meithrin Brynithel has held a series of activities with families this year to generate interest in Welsh and Welsh Education including Welsh courses for parents; a Martyn Geraint Show at Abertillery's Metropole Theatre and a free trip to the Dewin and Doti Festival

In July 2022 working with Blaenau Gwent Welsh-medium primary Ysgol Bro Helyg Mudiad Meithrin published a video regarding transport to the school.

The video 'My journey to School' shows the journey for local children on a bus to school, which aims to reassure parents who have been worried about sending their young children on a bus to travel to school.

The video was promoted on the Councils social media pages and website and is used to encourage families who send their children to Cylch Meithrin in Brynithel to continue their Welsh-medium education by sending them to this local Welsh School after they leave the cylch.

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

Menter iaith

Menter iaith / Menter iaith was established in 2007 making it one of the youngest Welsh Language Initiatives, or 'Mentrau iaith' amongst the 22 that exist across Wales. The Menter serves three counties – Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, and Monmouthshire.

The 'Mentrau iaith' were established to arrange a variety of events for people of all ages, background, and linguistic ability to enjoy and socialise in Welsh including parents, families, children and young people, adults, and learners.

Menter iaith BGTm have held numerous community events and activities throughout the reporting period that promote the use of the Welsh language. Below are a few examples:

MENTER IAITH BGTm
#HafOHwyl
#SummerOfFun


Dydd Mercher 10/8/22, 17/8/22
Wednesday 10/8/22, 17/8/22
11am - 2:30pm

Ymunwch â ni am sesiwn llawn hwyl, stondin gwybodaeth adloniant i'r teulu a sesiwn ffitrwydd gan Elin Wyn yn Nhy Bedwelty, Tredegar.
Join us for a Welsh language Family Fun day- information stalls, family fitness with Elin Wyn and entertainment at Bedwelty House, Tredegar.

Bwciwch o flaen llaw drwy Eventbrite
Book in advance via Eventbrite
<https://hwylbb.eventbrite.co.uk>

Mentor iaith Blaenau Gwent logo, Welsh Government logo, and Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number 1191194.

Rownd Bloenau Gwent / Gwent
Y Cwis Mawr

RTB Ebbw Vale Bowls Club
Newchurch Rd,
Glyn Ebwy / Ebbw Vale
NP23 5AZ
30/06/2022
6.30yh/pm
Am fey n wybodaeth -
gwel@menterbgtm.cymru

Dim mwy na 4 ym mhob tîm. Mae cyfle i'r tîm buddugol fynd i'r rownd derynol yn Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Tregaron a chael tawel am y diwrnod am ddiwr.

Mentor iaith Blaenau Gwent logo, RTB Ebbw Vale Bowls Club logo, and Welsh Government logo.

Cymdeithas Gymraeg
Blaenau Gwent



DEWCH I YMUNO GYDA NI AM BRYD O FWYD I AIL-LAWNSIO CYMDEITHAS GYMRAEG BLAENAU GWENT!
COME JOIN US FOR A MEAL TO RELAUNCH THE BLAENAU GWENT WELSH SOCIETY!

LLEOLIAD/LOCATION
8 KING ST, BRYNMAWR, EBBW VALE NP23 4RE
NOS FERCHER 18AIN O FAI 6PM
WEDNESDAY 18TH OF MAY 6PM

Bwciwch o flaen llaw / Booking essential
sioned@menterbgtm.cymru

Mentor iaith Blaenau Gwent logo, Welsh Government logo, and Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number 1191194.

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

Aneurin Leisure Trust

Aneurin Leisure Trust is a not-for-profit organisation which delivers leisure, learning and cultural services across Blaenau Gwent. Aneurin Leisure Trust offer a range of leisure activities through the medium of Welsh and courses to learn Welsh for adults.

Excitingly during their 'Haf o Hwyl' / 'Summer of Fun' the Welsh author Huw Davies presented free writing workshops and storytelling sessions at Tredegar and Abertillery libraries as pictured below:

The poster features the following text and graphics:

- Logos for Llyfrgelloedd Blaenau Gwent Libraries, Project TECLYHWYR, and Project GADGEJEERAS.
- Stylized title: **Haf o Hwyl Summer of Fun**
- Author name: **Huw Davies**
- Event title: **Writing Workshop & Storytelling Session**
- Invitation: **Come and join us for a FREE workshop with renowned children's author Huw Davies**
- Photo of Huw Davies.
- Event details: **Tredegar Library, Wednesday 17 Aug 2.30pm, Call 01495 357869 to book**
- Age suitability: **Suitable for ages 6-11**
- Book covers for 'SŵPHERIDLO' and 'BEN LLESTRI'.
- Logos for 'Haf o Hwyl Summer of Fun', 'DAN LLEN', 'READING', and 'THE READING HUB'.



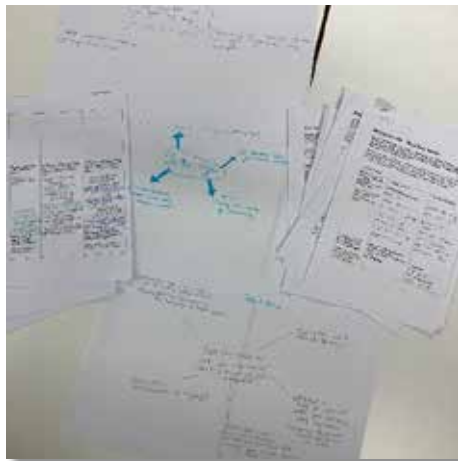
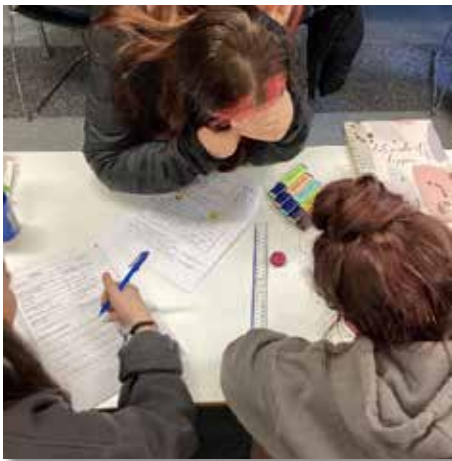
Objective 2

The second objective within the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy aims to increase the provision of Welsh language education and informal learning activities for children and young people. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/32 is aligned with the delivery of Objective 2. Please see Section 2.5 of this report for further information about the plan and its progress during the reporting period. Below are a few examples of work delivered by Coleg Gwent's Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone that has contributed towards Objective 2 during the past year.

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

Incorporating the language in courses at Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone - Coleg Gwent

The Welsh Language Facilitator for Health and Social Care in Coleg Gwent has been working with both Level 2 and 3 students to develop their Welsh language ability and confidence. The Welsh language has been incorporated into the general content of the course as well as running sessions on the More Than Just Words Framework (please see objective 3 for further information). Also, the Head of Welsh for Aneurin Bevan Health Board has frequented the college to deliver sessions on the importance and structure of implementation for More Than Just Words. Below are some images of the students' hard work surrounding the Welsh language within the Health and Social Care sector.



Dydd Gŵyl Dewi at Coleg Gwent

In addition to work within the classroom Coleg Gwent have also run Welsh events such as the Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Fair. This included playing Welsh music in the auditorium on Well Music Day. Events such as this give opportunity for the colleges' Welsh ambassadors to help out as well as raise the profile of the Welsh language and awareness about opportunities to learn Welsh to students attending the college.



Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

Objective 3

Objective 3 aims to increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace.

Welsh language training is key aspect in helping to achieve Objective 3. Opportunities to learn Welsh have been extensively promoted during the past 12 months as is detailed in section 5 of this report.

As exemplified in Section 2 of this report this year we have taken a number of extra measures to ensure Welsh language visibility within the workplace to ensure those who speak Welsh encouraged to use the language.

Regular reviews and updates of the Welsh language guidance available to all staff on the intranet are made throughout the course of the year. Frequent posters, GIFS and videos surrounding Welsh Language Standards compliance are promoted to all staff. As can be seen below a logo and theme have been developed by the graphics department that has become synonymous with reminders of standard practice that apply to all staff within the Council.



Welsh Government's More than just words 2022/27

Our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy also sets out our commitments against Welsh Government's **More than just words 2022/27** Strategy More Than Just Words Plan 2022/27 and is focused on increasing the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Welsh Government's More than just words 2022/27 is a Welsh language plan for health and social care which aims to ensure people can access the care they deserve and require in the preferred language choice. It aims to improve and promote Welsh language services across all health settings. It aims to improve well-being outcomes for individuals in-line with the Social Services and Well-being- of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2014. Under the Act's Code of Practice, local authorities are required to ensure Welsh language services are included within service planning and delivery and that services are offered in Welsh, to Welsh speakers, without them having to request it as required by the 'Active Offer'. For example, taking steps to increase the Welsh Language skills of Social Services staff to improve our Welsh language services.

More than just words resources along with Learn Welsh courses as can be seen below are included in Blaenau Gwent's Social Care services weekly bulletin. Further awareness sessions are being commissioned as part of the 2023/24 work programme.

Mwy na geiriau More than just words

Resources available:

[Using Welsh at work | Social Care Wales](#)

[Understanding language needs | Social Care Wales](#)

Plus sign up to a free Welsh taster course

[SHORT ONLINE TASTER COURSES | Learn Welsh](#)



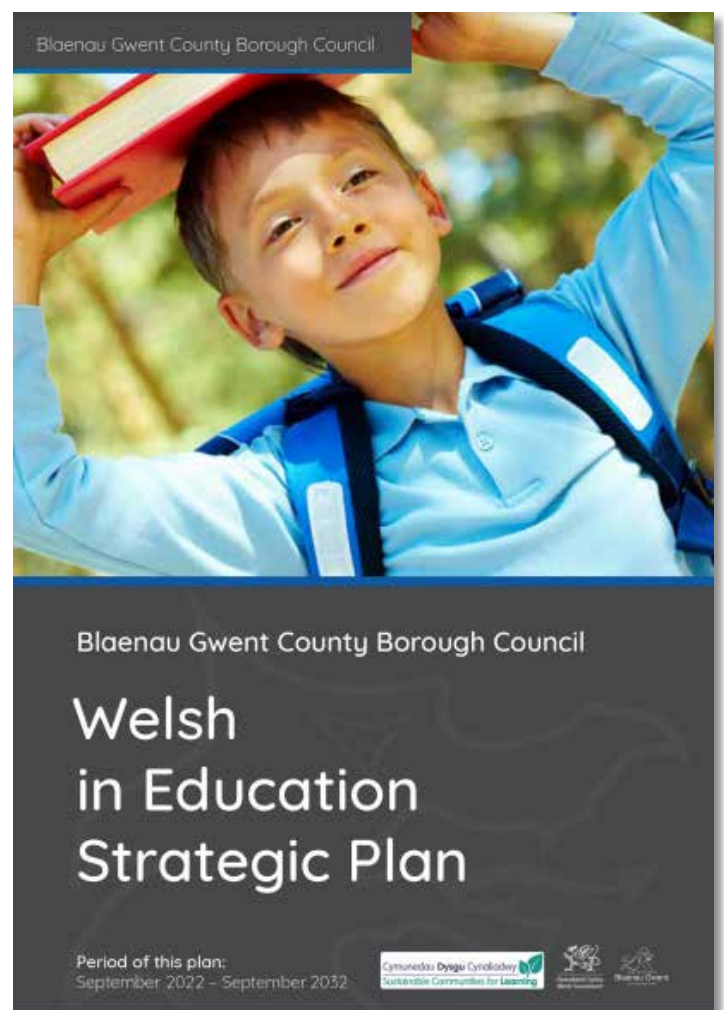
2.5 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/32

Objective two of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy states:

“To increase the provision of Welsh language education and informal activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language”.

Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Strategic 10-Year Plan 2022-2032 was approved in July 2022 by Welsh Ministers for implementation in September 2022. The plan is directly aligned to both the Welsh Government’s and the Council’s Welsh Language strategic frameworks. The strategic priorities highlighted in the WESP 10-year document can be summarised as follows:

- Raise the profile and levels of participation for Welsh-medium education across the County Borough by 2032 by 11% to contribute to the vision for one million speakers by 2050.
- Increase the early year’s provision offer to stimulate parental demand to enable growth across the County Borough.
- Continue to increase transition rates from Welsh-medium nursery provision to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.
- Open a Seedling Welsh-medium Primary provision in Sirhowy Tredegar on Chartist Way for September 2024 with Nursery and Reception Pupils being admitted September 2023 on a temporary school site in Ty Bedwellty.
- Work regionally with Southeast Wales Local Authorities to secure places for Blaenau Gwent learners in Welsh-medium secondary provision.
- Improving Welsh medium learner outcomes so learners raise aspirations and improve their life chances.



Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

The Blaenau Gwent WESP 10-year plan came into force in September 2022 with Welsh Government Approval. Blaenau Gwent has been able to set ambitious but realistic targets for the short, medium and long term developments. Alongside a review of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, the Blaenau Gwent Welsh Education Forum (WEF) structure, membership and associated documentation are reviewed and strengthened on an annual basis, there is a robust monitoring form and delivery plan to support the success of promoting Welsh-medium education. Such as the posters below that are displayed in the Integrated Children's Centre explaining the journey of Welsh medium education.



Welsh in Education Forum

The WEF meetings are now termly and have been referenced with Welsh Government and colleagues as good practice with strong partnership working. There are also dedicated workshops around Communication plans and Subgroup outcomes as per the WESP 10-year plan.

These Communication plans including working collaboratively with Health Visitors and the Council's Family Information Services (FIS). Flying Start Health Visitors work in areas of deprivation as designated by Welsh Government, they encourage children to attend Flying Start childcare and inform parents of the availability of Flying Start childcare through the medium of Welsh.



A hard copy of the 'Parent / Carer School Information Booklet' is sent out from the FIS to every parent in Blaenau Gwent in the months leading up to when admissions process opens, within the booklet Welsh medium education as well as early years' nursery settings like Mudiad Meithrin. The booklet also addresses the concerns of non-Welsh speaking parents' ability to support their child through their education.

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

Welsh in Education Forum Impact

Partners commented on the effectiveness of the Forum, which in turn has had a positive impact upon membership, attendance, and outcomes. In addition, the Service Manager for Education Transformation and Business Change is the chair of the Regional Planning of School Places and Demand Sub-group of the WEF Strategic Forum. The group meets quarterly and considers the following areas of work:

- Regional Promotion and Communication Strategy Development
- Monitoring the Demand for and Uptake of Welsh-medium Education Places
- Regional Review of Welsh-medium Secondary School Provision
- Welsh Medium Grant and Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposals and Projects
- WESP and WEF Updates
- Immersion

The Council has updated its webpages to inform the wider community of the advantages of being Bilingual to support the WEF collaborative booklet called 'Becoming Bilingual' 'Becoming Bilingual' which promotes the benefits of speaking Welsh and English.

Blaenau Gwent
Dynged Bannwrolol Gwent
Dumfries Borough Council

Bod yn ddwyieithog
Ydych chi'n ystyried anfon eich plentyn i ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg?

Becoming bilingual
Thinking about sending your child to a Welsh medium school?

Gweler rhagor o wybodaeth y tu mewn!

Find out more inside!

www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/schools-learning/beingbilingual

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

The document is reviewed annually and shared with the families of prospective pupils. The booklet is also linked to the admissions process and is shared via health professionals, early year's settings, schools, and other relevant partners and professionals, to promote Welsh language opportunities and education locally.

Blaenau Gwent 2021-22 self-assessment against key progress was sustained at Amber, with the rate of completion against the 2021-22 action plan as follows:

- 84% (or 49 actions) are complete
- 7% (or 4 actions) ongoing; and,
- 9% (5 actions) actions in development

Continued management and monitoring are required to ensure that the plan and targets are reflective of need, and that the key objectives are achieved within each delivery plan period. 5 of the main achievements in the last academic session include:

1. Blaenau Gwent has successfully delivered against the Welsh Government Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme for remodelling works at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg in Autumn term 2022. The education transformation team are awaiting an official opening date for Ministers which is scheduled for May 2023. In addition, Education is taking forward a project to create a 210 place Welsh-medium primary school and associated childcare facility within the Tredegar/Sirhowy valley in September 2024. This will be open for pupils of Nursery and Reception age for September 2023 on a temporary location which is Ty Bedwellty for the first year until the school is completed in September 2024.
2. Numbers of pupils on roll, along with those applying for a place at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg has continued to increase, with a positive trend noted over the last 3 years in relation to both nursery and reception pupil numbers. In addition, transition rates between primary and secondary for 2019/20 were 100%.
3. Blaenau Gwent Council has developed a strong marketing and communication plan, targeting and promoting the benefits of being bilingual, whilst also establishing appropriate methods of engagement and consultation with stakeholders, in order to inform key strategic priorities. Throughout December 2022 and Early January 2023, a mass postal campaign was launched which seen over 36,000 bookmarks (as can be seen below) being delivered to every household in Blaenau Gwent promoting the benefits of being bilingual and the new seedling provision in Sirhowy Tredegar.



Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

4. Partner representation, attendance and frequency of the Blaenau Gwent Welsh Education Forum continues to be strong, with partners firmly committed to and recognising the effectiveness of the Blaenau Gwent Forum. Partners have hailed the work of BG WEF as an example of good practice. Also, the WESP POSP Sub-group continues to meet regularly to support proposals for growth and development on a regional basis and again, to inform strategic planning.
5. Sabbatical Welsh figures are increasing annually with school staff uptake of courses increasing year on year demonstrating a continued commitment to the Welsh language.

Blaenau Gwent's Welsh in Education 10 Year Strategic Plan

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

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

The strategic aim of which will be to create:

'A community who embrace the Welsh language and culture with confidence and pride'. We will seek to achieve our vision by promoting, developing, and enhancing Welsh-medium education provision and services. We will do so by working closely with the Welsh in Education Forum, along with other key strategic partners including Welsh Government, and other Local Authorities. Our strategic objectives include:

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

Meeting our Welsh Language Standards

The Council seeks to achieve the following outcomes as set out by Welsh Government, which reflect the learner's education journey, and are consistent with the policy areas of **Cymraeg 2050** and **Education in Wales: Our National Mission**.

Outcome 1

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

Outcome 2

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

Outcome 3

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

Outcome 4

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

Outcome 5

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

Outcome 6

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

Outcome 7

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

To achieve our vision and objectives, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to working towards the ambitious Welsh Government target, to increase the Year 1 cohort taught via the medium of Welsh to 75 pupils. When compared with the 2019/20 baseline data used by Welsh Government, this would equate to 10% (an increase of 6 percentage points) of the total Year 1 cohort being taught via the medium of Welsh by 2032.

Immersion Grant

Education, in partnership with a specialist contractor, the school and Welsh Government, has developed dedicated immersion provision within Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, to accommodate late comers to Welsh-medium education. The 2021/22 pilot was a success and Welsh Government extended the programme for a further 3 years inviting Local Authorities to submit expressions of interests. Blaenau Gwent secured additional funding for a class teacher for 3 years with some small capital expenditure to promote immersion over both Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg and the seedling school in Sirhowy, Tredegar.

In line with the delivery of the project the Council worked closely with neighbouring authorities to compare models of immersion provision, identify, and address any gaps, whilst also gauging and developing best practice. In addition, the project has contributed to the development of the communication and promotion plan working in partnership with the BG WEF, in turn supporting implementation of the new provision in line with the BG WESP.

In addition, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Primary School are planning on implementing a special needs resource base (SNRB) for up to 15 ALN pupils, subject to consultation. As part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme the Council can provide capital expenditure in 2023/24 to enable a classroom to be converted into a resource base to support a wider ALN direction of providing ALN support for Welsh-medium learners in 2024.

3.0 Corporate Compliments & Complaints Procedure

The **Corporate Compliments & Complaints** procedure is available for anyone who wishes to make a complaint related to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and is used to help us identify and make any required service delivery changes. The procedure provides information on how people can refer a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales as well as the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office.

Complaints can be made in any format (e.g., email, letter, in person, telephone, social media etc.).

During this reporting period a total of 0 complaints were received via Corporate Compliments & Complaints regarding service delivery standards; policy making standards; or operational standards.

Standard Compliance Investigation CS092

The Welsh Language Commissioners Office (WLCO) opened the CS092 investigation in November 2021 following concerns raised when assessing Blaenau Gwent Councils compliance with the Welsh Language Standards surrounding telephone service.

The initial response the Council provided raised further concerns regarding standard compliance that widened the terms of reference. The terms of reference included the promoting of Welsh services, assessing the language skills of staff, providing training opportunities and the recruitment processes surrounding the language skills required.

In September 2022 the WLCO provided the Council with a final determination that outlines the steps required to reach standard compliance and expected delivery timeframes. This determination notice, also requested that the Council created an Action Plan that sets out these steps and establishes both timeframes and accountability.

The Council's Leadership Team made the decision to establish an organisation wide 'CS092 Core Officers Group' to support the Policy Team with the development and subsequent delivery of the Action Plan.

The group are responsible for:

- Holding a root and branch review of the arrangements for complying with the Service Delivery Standards that are included within the investigation
- Preparing a plan for how the organisation will ensure compliance with the Operational Standards across the organisation
- Identifying human resource requirements on how the Council is going to ensure adequate resources to comply with the Telephone Standards;
- Increasing the level of understanding across the organisation of the requirements of the standards relevant to the investigation (with reference to the language skills assessment, Welsh language training and assessing the language needs of posts)
- Preparation, development, and subsequent implementation of the CS092 Action Plan.

Several online meetings were held as a group to discuss the requirements of the investigation and to develop a draft Action Plan. This was complemented by further individual meetings between the Professional Lead for Engagement, Equality and Welsh, Welsh Language Support Officer, and Action Leads to finalise the key details of the draft plan.

A Microsoft Teams Channel was created for the Core Officer Group to be able to regularly share files, information and to provide progress updates as well as support preliminary implementation work.

The Council submitted the Action Plan to the WLCO on the 31st of January 2023.

The CS092 Action Plan was approved in March 2023 and is currently being implemented with all actions set to be completed by March 2024.

Welsh Language Commissioner's Office Annual Monitoring Visit - March 2023

Every year the Welsh Language Commissioners Office (WLCO) focuses on several areas of Welsh language compliance and undertakes a review of the Council's effectiveness, along with identifying areas for improvement.

WLCO praised the Council for their work surrounding the recent investigation and the Action Plan which had been developed to address the matters raised.

However, the following areas were identified for improvement:

- Website information (Standard 49, 52 & 56)
- Social media posts (Standard 48)
- Requirement to develop an Internal Welsh language policy (Standard 98)

Standards raised during monitoring:

Standard 49

If you produce a Welsh language version and a separate English language version of a document, you must ensure that the English language version clearly states that the document is also available in Welsh.

Standard 52

You must ensure that –

- a. the text of each page of your website is available in Welsh,
- b. every Welsh language page on your website is fully functional, and
- c. the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language on your website.

Standard 56

You must provide the interface and menus on every page of your website in Welsh.

Standard 58

When you use social media, you must not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

Standard 98

You must develop a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language, and you must publish that policy on your intranet.

Actions taken within the report period to address the matters raised:

Standard 49

The following poster was sent out to all staff to ensure that documents made available to the public must be available in both Welsh and English, including the official statement which must be used.

Welsh Language Document Statement

Standard
49



English versions of documents made available to the public must include a statement that they are also available in Welsh.

Please be sure to use the statement available under 'Welsh Guidance' on the Intranet.



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Complaints

Standard 52, 56 and 58

The Communications team have amended all non-compliant web pages in-line with the Welsh language standards. Regular monitoring of web content will be undertaken to ensure the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English on the Council's website and social media accounts.

Standard 98

Drafting of the policy on using the Welsh language internally began in March, and is being taken into consideration when completing the actions within the CS092 Investigation Action Plan. The policy will continue to be reviewed following publication to ensure that all content is up to date with any developments in relation to the Council's internal operations (i.e., recruitment processes, post-entry training policy etc).

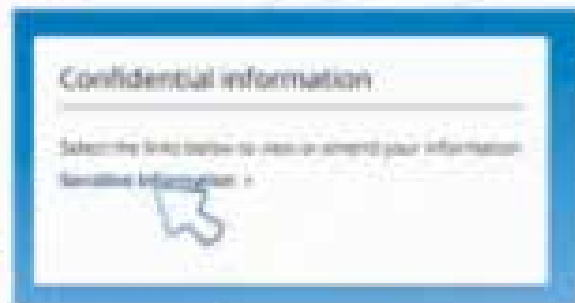
Is your iTrent info up to date?

Please tell us about your Welsh Language skills.



1) Log in to iTrent
Click 'View Profile'.

2) Click
'Sensitive
Information'.



3) Fill in your Welsh
language skills.

4) Don't forget to
click 'Save'.



4.0 Staff language skills

All councils must keep a record of the Welsh language skills of its staff under Standard 127. Blaenau Gwent Council record this via our human resources platform, iTrent. All staff are made aware that they need to complete a Welsh language skills self-assessment upon employment. Reminders to keep this information up to date have been sent out to all staff as can be seen below, as well as including reminders in managers' updates.

The information in this section has been provided via the Organisational Development Team using the Council's iTrent system and represents staff Welsh language ability as of 31st March 2022.

The base figure for the data is 2,959 staff on the Council's establishment list (an increase of 20% in comparison to 2021-22 records).

As of the 31st of March 2023 the number of employees who have Welsh language speaking skills ranging from 'fluently', 'quite well', 'moderately' to 'a little' is 537. This is an increase of 67 members of staff from the 470 identified in the 2021-22 reporting period.

The number and percentage of staff that can understand, speak, write, and read Welsh varies slightly between each comparator, which is illustrated in the graphs on page 37 and 38.

Chart 1 - Speak Welsh

Ability to speak Welsh	Number of Staff
Fluently	33 (1%)
Moderately	123 (5%)
Quite Well	17 (1%)
A Little	297 (12%)
No ability	1312 (53%)
No response	701 (28%)
Total	2,464

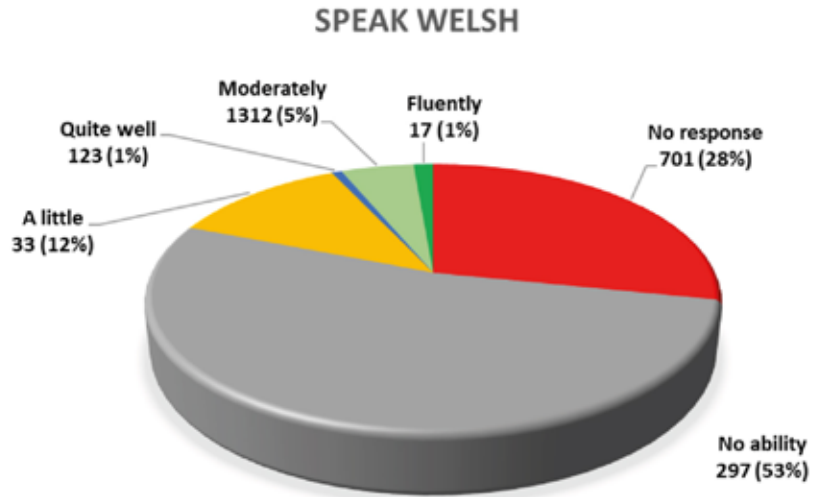
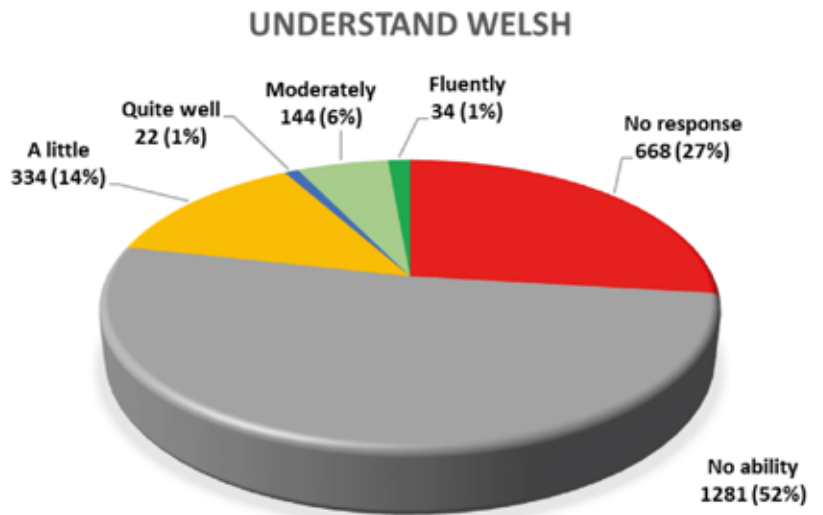


Chart 2 - Understand Welsh

Ability to understand Welsh	Number of Staff
Fluently	34 (1%)
Moderately	144 (6%)
Quite Well	22 (1%)
A Little	334 (14%)
No ability	1281 (52%)
No response	668 (27%)
Total	2,464



Staff Language Skills

Chart 3 - Write Welsh

Ability to write Welsh	Number of Staff
Fluently	29 (1%)
Moderately	100 (4%)
Quite Well	19 (1%)
A Little	242 (10%)
No ability	1344 (55%)
No response	748 (30%)
Total	2,464

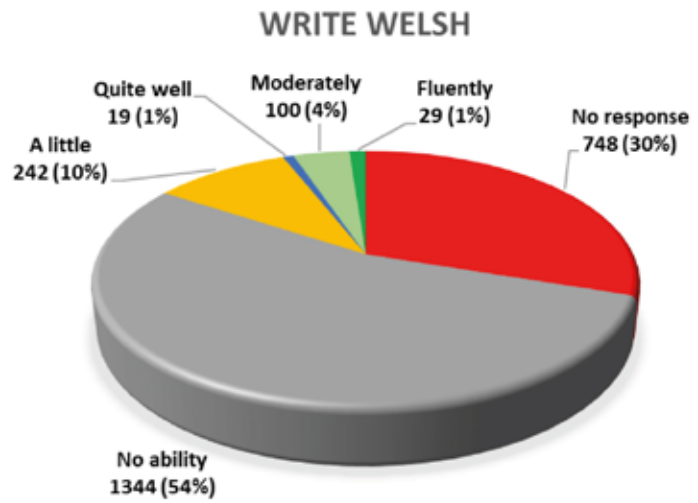
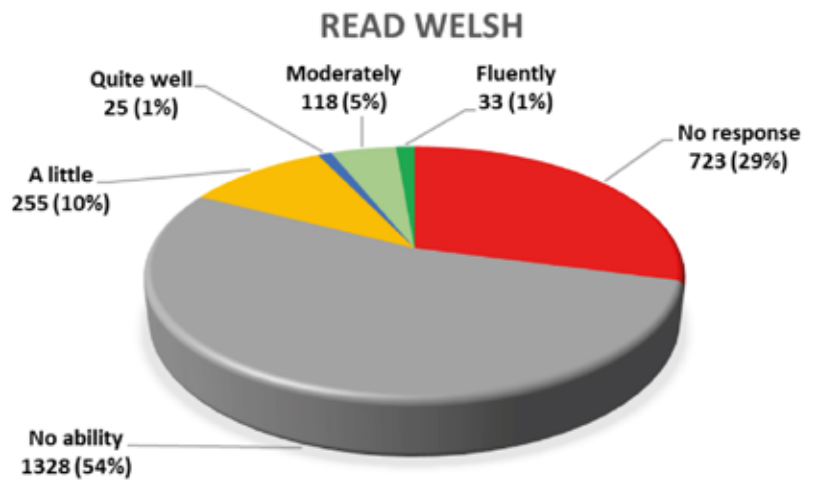


Chart 4 - Read Welsh

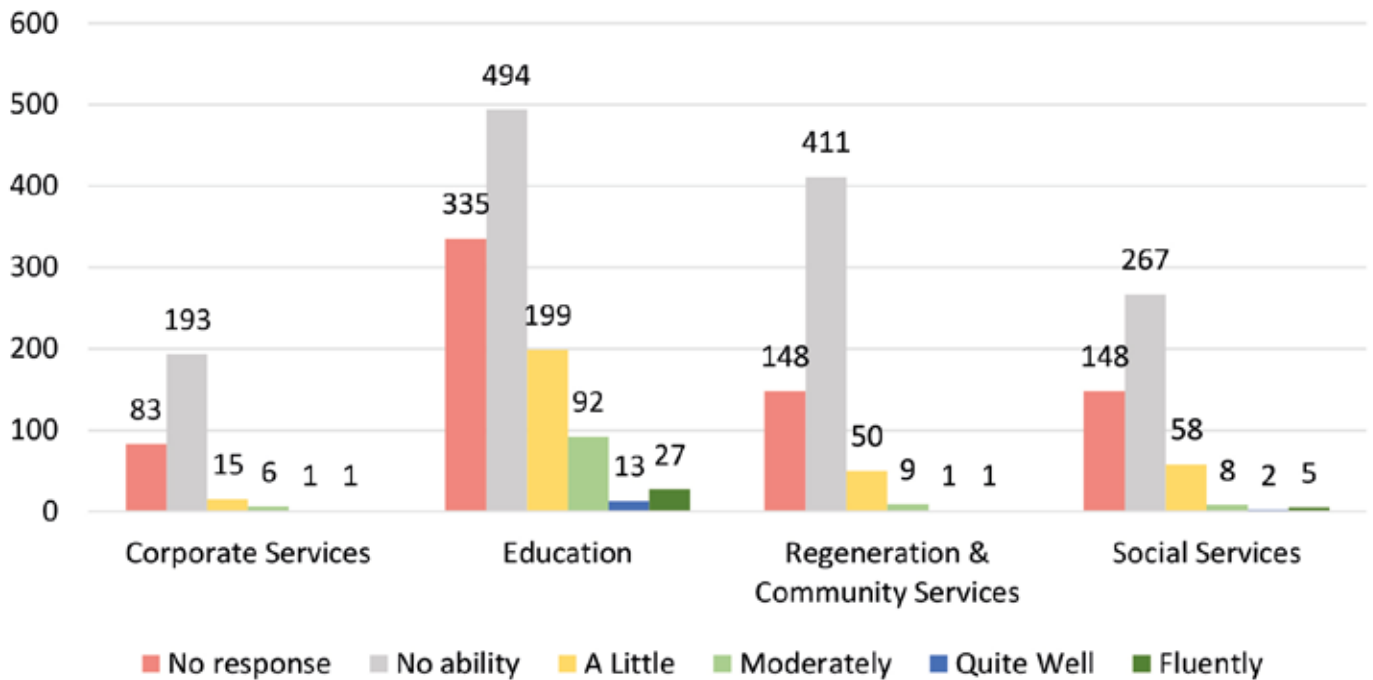
Ability to read Welsh	Number of Staff
Fluently	33 (1%)
Moderately	118 (5%)
Quite Well	25 (1%)
A Little	255 (10%)
No ability	1328 (54%)
No response	723 (29%)
Total	2,464



Welsh Speakers by Directorate

The following bar chart breaks down Welsh speaking ability by directorate.

Ability To Speak Welsh By Directorate



A total of 45 members of staff declare their ability as fluent under Welsh speaking skills, this is an increase of 11 members of staff in comparison to 2021-22 figures. This increase is consistent across the Council, with figures rising in all directorates.

Directorate	Number of fluent speakers gained against the 2021-22 Annual Report
Corporate Services	1
Education	3
Regeneration & Community Services	4
Social Services	3

As reported last year the Education directorate has the highest number of fluent speakers with 30 members of staff having gained a further 3 fluent speakers from the 27 reported in 2021-22.

STANDARD

130

 **Siarad Cymraeg**
Speak Welsh

Training Opportunity

Learning Welsh is a valuable skill.

Cymraeg

Would you like to learn Welsh as part of your role? Or just fancy the idea of learning a little Cymraeg?

All Blaenau Gwent employees are entitled to receive free training during work hours.

Speak to your line manager about the Dysgu Cymraeg / Learn Welsh courses available today.

<https://learnwelsh.cymru/work-welsh/work-welsh-courses/work-welsh-taster-courses/>


Blaenau Gwent

5.0 Welsh medium training provision

Staff Training

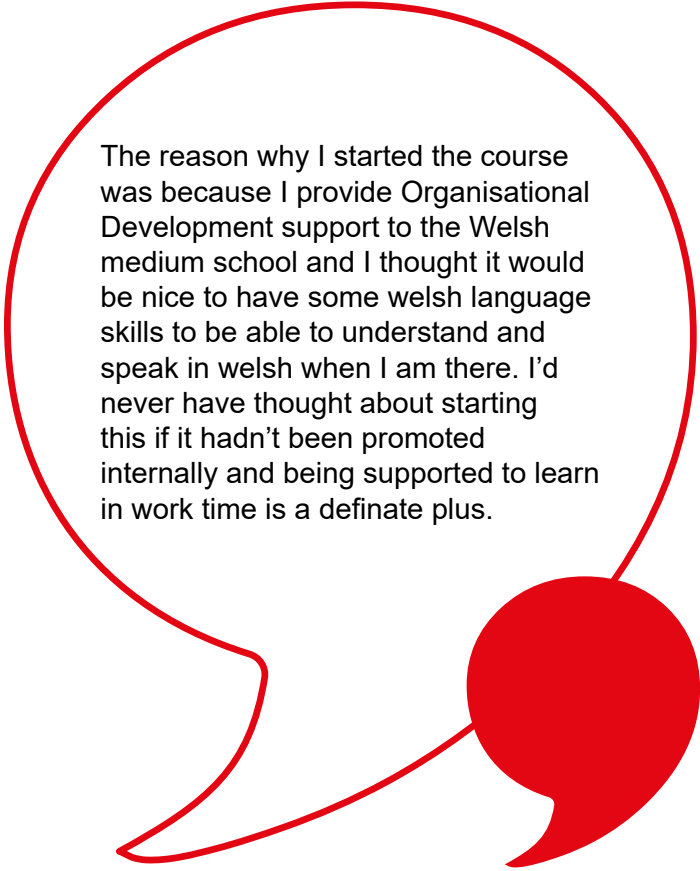
0 courses (available online) were delivered through the medium of Welsh, although this option is made available to staff if requested.

Welsh Language Training

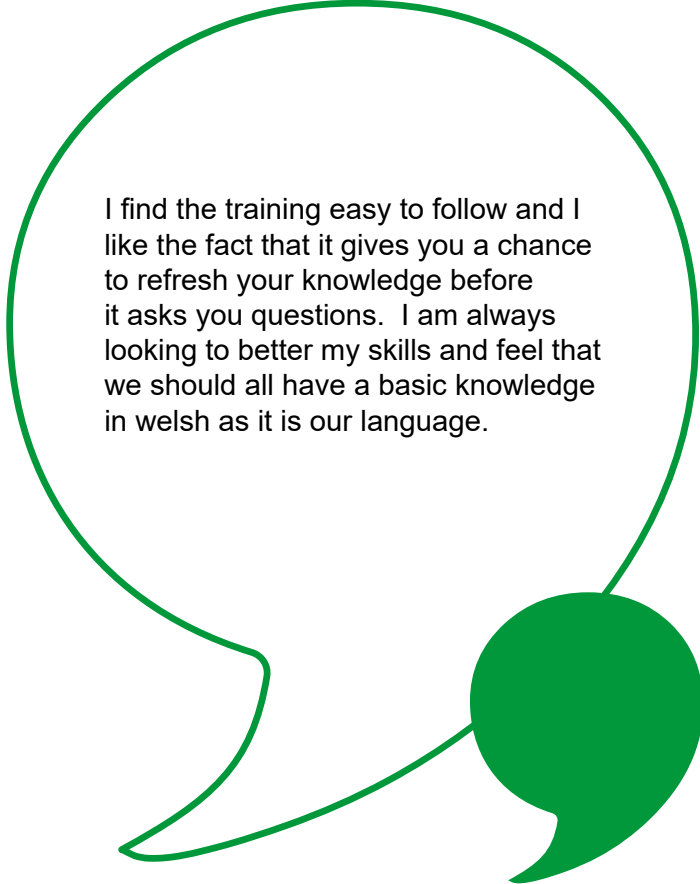
Training is consistently promoted to all Blaenau Gwent staff highlighting to all service areas the opportunity to receive Welsh Language training during working hours as per Standard 130.

We have seen a positive increase in engagement with the online recourses promoted with 31 additional members of staff utilising Dysgu Cymraeg/Learn Welsh online courses.

Staff feedback:



The reason why I started the course was because I provide Organisational Development support to the Welsh medium school and I thought it would be nice to have some welsh language skills to be able to understand and speak in welsh when I am there. I'd never have thought about starting this if it hadn't been promoted internally and being supported to learn in work time is a definate plus.



I find the training easy to follow and I like the fact that it gives you a chance to refresh your knowledge before it asks you questions. I am always looking to better my skills and feel that we should all have a basic knowledge in welsh as it is our language.

Welsh Medium Training Provision

Tutor led sessions for customer-facing staff

To ensure we are providing the best telephone service for Welsh speaking residents contacting the Council, arrangements have been made for 10 members of staff to begin a training course. This course will run from May 2023 until February 2024, meeting with a tutor virtually for two hours per week. The staff members attending these sessions deal with phone calls made to the Councils 'Connect 2 Blaenau Gwent' and benefits telephone lines, and those working in the Community Hubs. This course is being delivered as part of the Work Welsh Scheme provided by **Learn Welsh / Dysgu Cymraeg**. These sessions will run for 35 weeks accumulating 70 hours of training, with provisional in-person sessions in place for the final weeks of the training timetable.



Councillor Sue Edmunds (Cabinet Member for People and Education) - Learning Welsh

(Cabinet Member for People and Education)

Having lived in Wales for 30 years Councillor Edmunds has always enjoyed listening to the Welsh language and has found in recent years that it has become more apparent in her life. Councillor Edmunds was particularly inclined to learn Welsh to be able to use it when visiting schools, following receiving the email we sent out to staff was encouraged to try using Dysgu Cymraeg/Learn Welsh's online courses. Although due to her busy schedule found Duolingo to suit her schedule as an agile worker better, and is beginning to pick up the language. Here's what Councillor Edmunds had to say:



I work in the community and Welsh is always present. I want to be part of that, I want to be able to sing the National Anthem and greet people in their own tongue for example. My life is really busy so classes don't really suit, I found DuoLingo really works for me, I can spend a few minutes several times a day, may be when I'm waiting for the kettle to boil or between meetings.

6.0 Next steps

Blaenau Gwent Council will remain committed to meeting the duties set out under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and further promote and support compliance with the standards with the aim to continually better our Welsh language services.

As part of our work in the forthcoming year we will continue to take forward the following key actions:

- Implementation and monitoring of Welsh Language Promotion Strategy ensuring we continue to utilise our partners and share best practices at frequent Blaenau Gwent Welsh Network forums and external networks
- Delivering the CS092 Investigation Action Plan
- Continue to promote standard compliance internally to ensure we are providing high quality Welsh language services in line with the Code of Practice for the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015
- Consistent reviewing and updating of internal operations in relation to the Welsh language
- Further promotion of Welsh language training among staff and Members and ensuring staff who are committed to training are fully supported

Over the forthcoming period we aim to continue our progress, in relation to meeting our Welsh language duties, and make any necessary improvements to ensure we deliver the best possible services for our staff, residents, partners and stakeholders.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

The General Offices

Steelworks Road

Ebbw Vale

NP23 6DN

Tel: 01495 311556

Website: www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Blaenau Gwent
County Borough Council

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Agenda Item 9

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**
Date of meeting: **19th July 2023**
Report Subject: **Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/2023 – Provisional Outturn**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas – Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member Corporate Overview & Performance**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	08/06/23	29.06.23			05/07/23	19/07/23		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with the provisional financial outturn position across all portfolios for the financial year 2022/2023.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

- Provisional financial position to the end of March 2023 across all portfolios
- Provisional outturn for Fees & Charges
- Net use of Reserves applied during the financial year

- 2.2 This report forms part of the Council's financial reporting framework to members.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 The report will be considered by the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 5th July 2023, and any feedback will be provided verbally to Cabinet.

3.2 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

- Members to consider and provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report.
- Note the net use of specific reserves.

3.3 Option 2

Members do not accept the report.

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

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

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 The overall provisional outturn across all portfolios as at 31 March 2023, is a favourable variance of £180,000 before net transfers from specific reserves (of £1.04m) and £1.2m favourable variance after net transfers from specific reserves.

5.1.2 The outturn position is provisional as it is subject to External Audit review.

5.1.3 The overall provisional financial position across all portfolios is shown in the table below:

Table 1 – Portfolio Summary

Portfolio/Committee	2022/2023 Revised Revenue Budget	2022/2023 Provisional Outturn	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance (after Net transfers from Specific Reserves)	Append Ref:
	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	17.92	16.97	0.95	1.71	1a
Social Services	49.94	50.83	(0.89)	(0.24)	1b
Education & Leisure	68.31	67.84	0.47	0.04	1c
Economy	1.81	1.66	0.15	0.18	1d
Environment	29.63	30.44	(0.81)	(0.73)	1e
Planning	1.44	1.13	0.31	0.25	1f
Licensing	0.13	0.13	0	0	1f
Total	169.18	169.00	0.18	1.21	

5.1.4 The provisional favourable variance of £1.2m is mainly due to the cross cutting budgets within Corporate Services not being utilised during the financial year and the underspend against the Council Tax Reduction Scheme:

Table 2 – Significant Favourable Variances

	Provisional Favourable Variance £'000
Transformation Fund	500
Commercial & Contract Management	250
Contingency – Community Care	250

Council Tax Reduction Scheme	533
Total	1,533

- 5.1.5 Whilst overall the Council's outturn for the year is favourable, there are significant adverse variances across portfolios, and these are detailed in the Portfolio Analysis section below.
- 5.1.6 **Transfers To/From Reserves**
- 5.1.7 Any variance against the revenue budget will impact on the overall level of the Council's general and specific reserves.
- 5.1.8 Throughout the year, the forecast has indicated that a net draw from specific reserves to individual portfolios would be required. At the year end this is currently assessed to be £1.04m
- 5.1.9 The impact the provisional outturn has had on specific reserves is attached at Appendix 2 and reduces specific reserves (provisional) to £31.4m at 31 March 2023.
- 5.1.10 Based on the provisional outturn (including the movement of specific earmarked reserves), the Council's General reserve is forecast to increase by £1.2m. However, given the better than anticipated outturn position a further review of reserves will be undertaken as part of the statutory final accounts process and the full impact on reserves and balances will be shown in the 2022/2023 Statement of Accounts, which will be presented to the Governance & Audit Committee when finalised.
- 5.1.11 **Draw from Reserves**
- 5.1.12 The provisional outturn includes a draw from specific reserves totalling £2.73m, the most significant being:
- £685,000 for the Discretionary Cost of Living Scheme – grant funding received in 2021/2022 and utilised in 2022/2023.
 - £228,000 from the Supporting Additional Capacity Reserve (which includes additional resources for areas such as Health & Safety, Civil Contingencies, Payroll, Decarbonisation and Digital)
 - £110,300 from the Election Reserve to cover the cost of the May 2022 Local Elections
 - £48,690 from the Community Safety & CCTV Reserve (to support a new Policy Officer for CCTV until the SLA with Caerphilly CBC is established)
 - £72,480 in relation to the Test, Trace and Protect Service (Environmental Health Officers) – part funded from balance on TTP Reserve £4,514 and £67,970 from Covid19 Response & Recovery Reserve
 - £55,130 from the Infrastructure Staffing Reserve (to support new Welsh Government Legislation requirements)
 - £623,000 from Social Services (relating to displaced grant expenditure, cost of living increase in excess of grant allocation in relation to Early Years Childcare and Legal Fees)

- £450,000 from the Inflation and Service Cost Pressure Reserve in respect of the 20% uplift in Home to School Transport costs
- £235,000 from the ISB reserve to support school expenditure
- £147,500 from the Transport Oncost reserve to fund the cost pressure resulting from increased fuel costs.

5.1.13 New/Increases in Reserves

5.1.14 The provisional outturn includes an increase in specific reserves of £1.69m.

5.1.15 During the financial year, income/grant funding was received which either displaced the Council's in year budget or was awarded to fund expenditure in 2023/2024, therefore it has been necessary to establish/increase specific reserves to earmark this funding for use in 2023/2024 including:

- Education and Leisure Grants of £796,000 (Youth Service, LEA Grant, All Through Schools & Heads for Arts)
- Homes for Ukraine Scheme of £379,000

5.1.16 Other increases in specific reserves includes:

- £61,400 increase in the Re:Fit Loan Repayments charged to services in advance of the loan repayment
- £71,650 sink fund for Regional Fleet Vehicles
- £200,000 increase in the Education PRC Reserve relating to school contributions not being required during 2022/2023
- £852,600 increase in the Future Interest Rate reserve to mitigate future interest rate increases
- £865,550 interest received on the Rail loan – to be reinvested or potential repayment to WG.

5.1.17 School Balances

5.1.18 School balances have reduced by £1.3m to £4.88m at 31 March 2023, an improved outturn when compared to the in year forecasts.

5.1.19 Portfolio Analysis

5.1.20 An analysis of significant adverse variances above £100,000 is detailed below, and Appendices 1a to 1e shows all variances both favourable and adverse across all services.

5.1.21 Corporate Services – £1.71m favourable variance

5.1.22 **Council Tax Collection** - £225,500 adverse variance

The adverse variance is a result of the Surplus on Collection budget not achieving as estimated due to an increase in the level of irrecoverable debt requiring write off during the financial year.

5.1.23 The adverse position has been offset by an underspend within Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the cross cutting budgets as detailed in Table 2 in paragraph 5.1.4.

5.1.24 **Social Services - £0.24m adverse variance**

5.1.25 **Children's Services – Children Looked After - £1,122,000 adverse variance**

The adverse variance is due to Children's Homes, Payments to Foster Parents and Legal Fees.

Children's Homes – £816,000 adverse variance

Although the number of placements has remained relatively stable at an average of 12, there has been inflationary increases and the activity within placements has seen a rise in the length of individual placements resulting in the number of weeks of active placements increasing from 639 weeks in 2021/22 to 675 weeks for 2022/23, plus a secure placement for 26 weeks of the year.

In House Foster Carers & independent Fostering Agencies – £139,000 adverse variance

The overall number of Foster carers have remained relatively stable with Independent Fostering Agency placements increasing by 3 from March 2022 to March 2023. However, there has been an increase in activity of placements throughout the year, with the number of placement weeks increasing from 1,106 in 2021/2022 to 2,489 weeks during 2022/2023.

Legal Fees – £336,000 adverse variance (after applying £400,000 reserve funding)

Legal Fees is due to the requirement of using the external provider to finalise existing cases once these cases have been finalised all new cases will be dealt with by Caerphilly CBC and funded by the Service Level Agreement.

The adverse variances have been partially offset by the overall underspend within Adult Services, and Support Services.

5.1.26 **Adult Services**

Although adults are showing a favourable variance overall of £763,000, there are some adverse variances within adults as follows: -

Cwrt Mytton – £435,000 adverse variance

Supported Living Bungalows – £124,000 adverse variance

There are significant challenges in relation to vacant posts and sickness absences across both these budget areas. Staffing restructures and recruitment drives are ongoing within the service, to address the issues being encountered.

5.1.27 **Education – £0.04m favourable variance**

5.1.28 Assuring Access to Schools

Home to School Transport – £612,000 adverse variance

The adverse variance is as a consequence of the 20% uplift awarded to contractors as a result of the fuel crisis, additional routes being required for ALN learners and prior year invoices being higher than expected.

This overspend has been partially offset by an appropriation from the Inflation and Cost Pressure reserve of £450,000, with the balance being offset by underspends within the Education Portfolio.

5.1.29 **Environment – £0.73m adverse variance**

5.1.30 **Waste Services - £566,000 adverse variance**

This is mainly due to an increase in agency costs due to an increased number of staff required to collect the recycling after the increase in participation during the lockdown period continuing. It is also due to an overspend on the treatment costs for disposal of residual waste where the new contract price has increased by £8 per tonne and additional unexpected leachate costs.

5.1.31 **Winter Maintenance - £155,000 adverse variance**

Although it seems that the 2022/23 winter period was mild and produced little snow, the winter maintenance service was quite busy with an additional 22 mobilisations of the service for ice conditions on the same period in the previous year 2021/22.

This has resulted in

- Increased staff costs (also includes an uplift in standby payments following a review in 2021/22)
- 1500 tonne of salt delivered (1000t previous year)
- Salt costs have increased from £40 per tonne in 2021/22 (1000t = £40,000) to £48 per tonne (1500t = £72,000) in 2022/23
- Vehicle hire costs increased by 4%
- Fuel cost have increased by 35% (additionally the council has been paying a higher rate for fuel through the use of a local supplier)

5.1.32 **Cwmcrachen Caravan Site – £100,000 adverse variance**

The adverse variance is due to:

- an increase in water charges because of a water leak which went undetected for 12 months and then took a number of site excavations to identify the location of the leak. The leak has now been repaired and water usage is closely monitored.
- and an increase in maintenance costs due to a backlog of repairs following Covid and a flood coupled with an unprecedented tenancies turnover which has resulted in clean up costs and repairs to the amenity blocks.

5.1.33 **Fees & Charges**

5.1.34 The 2022/2023 portfolio estimates include income budgets in relation to fees & charges (excluding Council Tax) of £14m across all portfolios. Attached at Appendix 3 is an analysis of actual income against budget for the financial year for individual portfolios. The provisional outturn is reporting a favourable variance of £0.4m, an improved position when compared to the quarter 3 forecast of £0.5m adverse variance.

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

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

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

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

5.2.4 Within the overall positive financial position for 2022/2023, a number of overspends have continued throughout the financial year despite action plans being developed and implemented. There is a risk that these could continue into 2023/2024.

5.3 ***Legal***
N/A

5.4 ***Human Resources***
N/A

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.1 A summary page for each portfolio is contained in Appendices 1a to 1g.

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

6.2.1 The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing services to the communities of Blaenau Gwent.

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

6.3.1 CLT have considered the provisional outturn for 2022/23.

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

6.4.1 A number of ongoing cost pressures identified during 2022/2023 have been addressed as part of the budget setting process for 2023/2024.

6.4.2 For continuing, new and emerging cost pressures identified during 2023/2024, budget holders will be required to produce Action Plans which will address the cost pressure during the year. These Action Plans will form part of the quarterly budget reports and will be submitted to the Cost Pressure Sub Group for scrutiny, challenge and monitoring.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

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

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

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

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

N/A

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

6.8.1 The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment*** (the screening template should be completed for any decisions to identify if a full integrated impact assessment (IIA) is needed. A full IIA will need to be completed if the decision is part of the socio-economic duty to consider how the decision might help to reduce the inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage).

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Financial reporting to Corporate & Performance Scrutiny and the Cabinet is carried out on a quarterly basis. Where services are reporting significant cost pressures, there will be a requirement for Budget Holders to develop and implement Action Plans these will be reported on a quarterly basis.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Summary

Appendix 2 – Summary of Reserve Movements

Appendix 3 – Fees and Charges

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CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER RECHARGEABLE SERVICES</u>				
Corporate Services Department	(88,770)	(4,417)	(84,353)	(135,490)
Resources Department	1,850	51,036	(49,186)	(73,921)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(86,920)</u>	<u>46,619</u>	<u>(133,539)</u>	<u>(209,411)</u>
<u>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</u>				
Archives	148,670	153,844	(5,174)	(5,174)
Festival Park	102,570	108,557	(5,987)	(5,987)
Housing Benefit	(116,270)	(172,155)	55,885	(14,542)
ICT Service	0	(56,933)	56,933	0
Cross Cutting	(59,310)	(84,113)	24,803	20,042
Community Hubs	196,320	202,104	(5,784)	(6,590)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>271,980</u>	<u>151,304</u>	<u>120,676</u>	<u>(12,251)</u>
<u>LEGAL & CORPORATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES</u>				
Registration of Electors	17,860	1,155	16,705	82
Conducting Elections	0	0	0	0
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	48,100	56,593	(8,493)	(35,553)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>65,960</u>	<u>57,748</u>	<u>8,212</u>	<u>(35,471)</u>
<u>GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES</u>				
Corporate Management (inc Audit Fees)	109,510	109,717	(207)	(12)
Democratic Representation and Management	1,323,130	1,265,890	57,240	34,591
CCTV Cameras	208,680	148,608	60,072	0
Civil Contingencies	106,890	71,963	34,927	30,718
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,748,210</u>	<u>1,596,178</u>	<u>152,032</u>	<u>65,297</u>
<u>RESOURCES SERVICES</u>				
Corporate Management	355,790	346,409	9,381	73,130
Non Distributed Costs	931,850	769,052	162,798	160,045
Apprenticeship Levy	358,430	374,014	(15,584)	(490)
Council Tax Collection	(1,165,020)	(939,517)	(225,503)	(12,383)
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	10,004,370	9,470,841	533,529	531,103
N.N.D.R. Collection	(106,820)	(118,410)	11,590	3,275
Grants and Subscriptions	88,410	88,410	0	0
Cross Cutting Budget	1,085,640	0	1,085,640	1,085,640
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>11,552,650</u>	<u>9,990,799</u>	<u>1,561,851</u>	<u>1,840,320</u>
<u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u>				
Corporate Recharges	4,366,000	4,366,002	(2)	(6)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>4,366,000</u>	<u>4,366,002</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(6)</u>
CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u><u>17,917,880</u></u>	<u><u>16,208,650</u></u>	<u><u>1,709,230</u></u>	<u><u>1,648,478</u></u>

SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u>				
Children's Services - Commissioning and Social Work	3,939,340	3,875,052	64,288	(163,961)
Looked After Children	7,487,490	8,609,527	(1,122,037)	(1,035,939)
Family Support Services	192,370	194,999	(2,629)	(6,108)
Youth Justice	237,580	235,305	2,275	(13,350)
Other Children's and Family Services	2,432,020	2,412,755	19,265	(13,805)
Older People Aged 65 or Over	7,154,970	7,053,411	101,559	117,504
Adults Aged Under 65 with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	18,290	22,599	(4,309)	380
Adults Aged Under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,684,090	3,677,922	6,168	5,578
Adults Aged Under 65 with Mental Health Needs	571,660	566,100	5,560	(1,562)
Other Adult Services	463,570	356,729	106,841	(38,195)
Community Care	17,338,860	16,791,815	547,045	573,359
Support Service and Management Costs	934,170	865,786	68,384	31,372
Corporate Recharges	5,487,140	5,460,331	26,809	5
Social Services COVID-19 Costs	0	64,570	(64,570)	0
SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	49,941,550	50,186,901	(245,351)	(544,721)

EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
SCHOOLS BUDGET				
Individual Schools Budget	50,430,260	50,430,259	1	0
Education Improvement Grant	267,730	259,859	7,871	0
Other Costs	725,420	720,845	4,575	(11,444)
Supporting Special Education Needs	1,730,430	1,591,761	138,669	39,460
<i>Schools Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>53,153,840</u>	<u>53,002,723</u>	<u>151,117</u>	<u>28,016</u>
LEA BUDGET				
Strategic Management	2,264,410	2,139,552	124,858	(920)
Assuring Access to Schools	2,439,820	3,029,111	(589,291)	(608,479)
Facilitating School Improvement	396,350	393,327	3,023	(6,281)
Supporting Special Education Needs	380,730	284,797	95,933	83,163
<i>LEA Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>5,481,310</u>	<u>5,846,787</u>	<u>(365,477)</u>	<u>(532,516)</u>
OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES				
Further Education and Training	135,960	124,323	11,637	4,213
Youth Service	345,390	345,390	0	1,727
Other Expenditure	143,850	97,724	46,126	26,617
Education Departmental Budget	195,970	20,251	175,719	108,236
<i>Other Education Services Total Expenditure</i>	<u>821,170</u>	<u>587,688</u>	<u>233,482</u>	<u>140,793</u>
CORPORATE CHARGES				
Corporate Support Recharges	4,671,690	4,661,827	9,863	1
<i>Corporate Charges Total Expenditure</i>	<u>4,671,690</u>	<u>4,661,827</u>	<u>9,863</u>	<u>1</u>
Education Total Expenditure	<u>64,128,010</u>	<u>64,099,025</u>	<u>28,985</u>	<u>(363,706)</u>
LEISURE TRUSTS				
LEISURE TRUSTS				
Aneurin Leisure Trust	2,875,550	2,880,084	(4,534)	(9,283)
Awen Leisure Trust	198,900	205,725	(6,825)	(2,145)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>3,074,450</u>	<u>3,085,809</u>	<u>(11,359)</u>	<u>(11,428)</u>
RETAINED SERVICES				
Corporate Recharges	1,102,170	1,078,078	24,092	8,202
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,102,170</u>	<u>1,078,078</u>	<u>24,092</u>	<u>8,202</u>
Lesire Trusts Total Expenditure	<u>4,176,620</u>	<u>4,163,887</u>	<u>12,733</u>	<u>(3,226)</u>
EDUCATION PORTFOLIO TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>68,304,630</u>	<u>68,262,912</u>	<u>41,718</u>	<u>(366,932)</u>

ECONOMY PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES				
Economic Strategy and Development - Departmental Budget	117,450	35,729	81,721	20,984
Estates Management - Rechargeable	12,030	68,686	(56,656)	(113,136)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>129,480</u>	<u>104,415</u>	<u>25,065</u>	<u>(92,152)</u>
ECONOMY SERVICES				
Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0
Aspire	0	0	0	0
Community Benefits Investment	0	0	0	0
CSCS	(10,200)	402	(10,602)	(9,660)
Destination Management	10,200	379	9,821	841
DRiVE	0	0	0	0
Financial Support to Business	4,410	(2,650)	7,060	0
General Offices	(24,360)	(51,484)	27,124	38,745
Industrial Land	7,390	4,593	2,797	(3,250)
Inspire	0	0	0	0
Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	(793,750)	(867,429)	73,679	82,487
Pentagon	0	0	0	0
Regeneration Projects	5,100	6,179	(1,079)	(1,079)
Resilient Project	0	0	0	0
Estates Management Non Rechargeable	(96,590)	(149,231)	52,641	23,813
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(897,800)</u>	<u>(1,059,241)</u>	<u>161,441</u>	<u>131,897</u>
Corporate Recharges	2,583,380	2,583,380	0	0
Total Expenditure	<u>1,815,060</u>	<u>1,628,554</u>	<u>186,506</u>	<u>39,745</u>

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Environment Department - Corporate Division	179	(76,000)	76,179	68,121
Environmental Services Division	16,402	39,828	(23,426)	(1,932)
Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	4,740	(101,540)	106,280	44,880
Enforcement	25,280	37,941	(12,661)	14,743
Sub Total	46,601	(99,771)	146,372	125,812
<u>WASTE COLLECTION</u>				
Household and Trade Waste Collection	666,771	671,054	(4,283)	5,547
Recycling Collection	2,504,803	3,270,235	(765,432)	(714,480)
Bulky Waste Collection	5,948	13,953	(8,005)	(8,409)
Sub Total	3,177,522	3,955,242	(777,720)	(717,342)
<u>WASTE TRANSFER</u>				
Civic Amenity Sites	248,009	278,487	(30,478)	70,955
HWRC Roseheyworth	319,653	283,918	35,735	37,778
Transfer Station	1,033,557	1,017,617	15,940	5,273
Sub Total	1,601,219	1,580,022	21,197	114,006
<u>WASTE DISPOSAL</u>				
Disposal Of Waste	1,211,830	1,338,725	(126,895)	(223,374)
Recycling Disposal	382,649	75,361	307,288	338,109
Trade Waste Collection, Transfer & Disposal	(13,845)	(24,361)	10,516	(10,387)
Sub Total	1,580,634	1,389,725	190,909	104,348
<u>WASTE SERVICES</u>	6,359,375	6,924,989	(565,614)	(498,988)
<u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>				
County Borough Cleansing	1,190,016	1,173,054	16,962	(13,462)
Cemeteries / Crematorium	(159,578)	(166,547)	6,969	(27,186)
Grounds Maintenance	1,065,642	1,074,477	(8,835)	33,517
Countryside Recreation Sites	37,419	32,351	5,068	0
General Entertainment	2,489	3,654	(1,165)	(2,201)
Sub Total	2,135,988	2,116,989	18,999	(9,332)
<u>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</u>				
Corporate Landlord	1,820,175	1,895,863	(75,688)	(103,818)
Corporate Property	30,073	44,002	(13,929)	(29,285)
Building Cleaning	317,924	416,060	(98,136)	7,658
Catering Account	311,105	357,036	(45,931)	(103,111)
Appetite For Life	44,585	6,181	38,404	(50)
School Breakfast Club	429,385	404,040	25,345	1
Sub Total	2,953,247	3,123,182	(169,935)	(228,605)
<u>HIGHWAYS & ROADS SERVICES</u>				
Highways - Street Care Team	9,010	(6,106)	15,116	16,695
Non Operational Land	1,490	0	1,490	1,490
Licensing (Highway Permits)	(52,211)	(49,048)	(3,163)	(118)
Shopping Arcade, Abertillery	2,834	2,214	620	2,744
Road and Street Works Acts	(16,589)	(45,433)	28,844	9,460
Multi-Storey Car Parks	262,183	245,637	16,546	(581)
On Street Parking	1,122	0	1,122	0
Surface Car Parks	32,421	29,581	2,840	(61)
Public Transport Co-Ordination	924	(268)	1,192	34
Bridges	79,145	89,133	(9,988)	0
Structural Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	184,190	201,717	(17,527)	2,604
Environmental Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	19,831	18,309	1,522	0
Safety Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	73,349	72,342	1,007	103
Routine Repairs (Principal and Other Roads)	909,831	957,117	(47,286)	(31,449)
Street Lighting	1,260,143	1,227,831	32,312	0
Winter Maintenance	402,162	557,372	(155,210)	(14,774)
Sub Total	3,169,835	3,300,398	(130,563)	(13,853)

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
<u>TRANSPORT SERVICES</u>				
Traffic Orders	(46,841)	(67,358)	20,517	8,028
Highways Adoptions	(9,950)	(8,550)	(1,400)	(1,400)
Traffic / Accident Research	16,001	6,900	9,101	12,201
Traffic Management	6,895	3,751	3,144	2,041
Civil Parking Enforcement	2,100	(6,350)	8,450	19,117
Road Safety Education	22,943	25,171	(2,228)	4,094
Crossing Patrols	177,838	174,536	3,302	2,571
Concessionary fares and Support to Operators	259,883	217,216	42,667	10,182
Local Transport Plans	2,680	788	1,892	1,892
Home to School Transport	0	0	0	0
Transport and Heavy Plant	139,656	171,907	(32,251)	0
Sub Total	571,205	518,011	53,194	58,726
<u>CULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
General Administration and Markets	(25,868)	(10,211)	(15,657)	(13,040)
Countryside Programme and Management	(5,339)	(42,943)	37,604	3,754
Landscaping and Afforestation	27,773	27,773	0	0
Reservoirs, Tips, Quarries and Mines	10,333	25,108	(14,775)	(26,955)
Flood Defence And Land Drainage	56,488	(69,209)	125,697	21,762
ENRaW	0	0	0	0
City Deal	99,144	56,271	42,873	0
Sub Total	162,531	(13,211)	175,742	(14,479)
COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	15,398,782	15,870,587	(471,805)	(580,719)

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
<u>PUBLIC PROTECTION</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Environmental Health	29,691	92,559	(62,868)	(49,919)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>29,691</u>	<u>92,559</u>	<u>(62,868)</u>	<u>(49,919)</u>
<u>CARAVAN SITES</u>				
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(41,092)	58,688	(99,780)	(16,165)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(41,092)</u>	<u>58,688</u>	<u>(99,780)</u>	<u>(16,165)</u>
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u>				
Food Safety	14,974	12,694	2,280	(3,985)
Control of Pollution	9,578	8,280	1,298	(583)
Dog Wardens	0	0	0	0
Animal Health and Welfare	23,827	23,142	685	0
Pest Control	63,240	59,989	3,251	3,267
Littering and Dog Control Orders	0	0	0	0
Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	1,540	(2,229)	3,769	2,780
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>113,159</u>	<u>101,876</u>	<u>11,283</u>	<u>1,479</u>
<u>HOUSING SERVICES</u>				
Homelessness	275,616	329,147	(53,531)	9,388
20 Church Street	16,116	21,010	(4,894)	74
General Properties	(8,160)	(4,576)	(3,584)	(1,518)
Housing Access	69,258	52,253	17,005	15,160
Works in Default	(255)	(5,884)	5,629	1,318
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,061	0	1,061	1,061
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>353,636</u>	<u>391,950</u>	<u>(38,314)</u>	<u>25,483</u>
<u>TRADING STANDARDS</u>				
Trading Standards	16,012	35,957	(19,945)	(7,193)
Inspection and Enforcement	4,437	981	3,456	3,107
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>20,449</u>	<u>36,938</u>	<u>(16,489)</u>	<u>(4,086)</u>
PUBLIC PROTECTION TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>475,843</u>	<u>682,011</u>	<u>(206,168)</u>	<u>(43,208)</u>
<u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u>				
Fire Service	3,551,477	3,547,672	3,805	3,805
Coroner's Court	125,123	174,971	(49,848)	(16,437)
Corporate Recharges	10,080,865	10,080,865	0	0
CORPORATE CHARGES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>13,757,465</u>	<u>13,803,508</u>	<u>(46,043)</u>	<u>(12,632)</u>
Overall Portfolio Total	<u>29,632,090</u>	<u>30,356,106</u>	<u>(724,016)</u>	<u>(636,559)</u>
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	3,424	(3,424)	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>29,632,090</u>	<u>30,359,530</u>	<u>(727,440)</u>	<u>(636,559)</u>

PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) As at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
PLANNING COMMITTEE SUMMARY				
<u>BUILDING CONTROL</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Building Control	10,240	10,206	34	2
<u>BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES</u>				
Building Regulations	19,220	19,252	(32)	1
Dangerous Structures	23,100	11,080	12,020	1
<i>Building Control Total Expenditure</i>	<i>52,560</i>	<i>40,538</i>	<i>12,022</i>	<i>4</i>
<u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Development Management	16,890	12,122	4,768	7,465
<u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u>				
Dealing with Applications	(202,310)	(255,636)	53,326	3
Planning Appeals	3,320	0	3,320	0
Enforcement	(10)	144	(154)	(19)
<i>Development Management Total Expenditure</i>	<i>(182,110)</i>	<i>(243,370)</i>	<i>61,260</i>	<i>7,449</i>
<u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Development Plans	5,080	(86,069)	91,149	256
<u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVICES</u>				
Development Plans	100,460	12,931	87,529	0
<i>Development Plans Total Expenditure</i>	<i>105,540</i>	<i>(73,138)</i>	<i>178,678</i>	<i>256</i>
Corporate Recharges	1,465,230	1,465,230	0	0
PLANNING COMMITTEE TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,441,220	1,189,260	251,960	7,709

PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) As at Dec 22
	£	£	£	£
LICENSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY				
Licensing	83,590	77,254	6,336	672
Internal Recharges	51,170	51,166	4	4
LICENSING COMMITTEE TOTAL EXPENDITURE	134,760	128,420	6,340	676

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Summary of Reserve Movements 2022-2023

Appendix 2

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>B.Fwd</u>	<u>Utilised March provisional out turn</u>		<u>Other Not Included in Management</u>		<u>Balance</u>
		<u>As per Management A/cs</u>		<u>A/c's</u>		
		<u>Actual</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Earmarked for Capital Purposes						
Capital Inflation & Service Cost Pressure	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00
Corporate Landlord	150,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150,000.00
Deminimus Capital Works	101,575.46	0.00	0.00	25,450.00	0.00	127,025.46
Facilities	118,769.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118,769.00
Energy Centre	270,383.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	270,383.20
Industrial Units	240,000.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00	0.00	440,000.00
IT Infrastructure	225,811.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	225,811.79
New Operating Model	492,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	492,000.00
The Hive	419,715.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	419,715.00
WRAP Regional Vehicles	253,359.85	71,654.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	325,014.33
Total Earmarked for Capital Purposes:	3,271,614.30	71,654.48	0.00	225,450.00	0.00	3,568,718.78
Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves						
Budget Contingency Fund / Invest to Save	64,351.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	64,351.89
Business Support Hybrid Model	53,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	53,000.00
Corporate Landlord Building Rationalisation	73,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	73,000.00
Covid19 Response & Recovery	1,526,920.00	(67,964.88)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,458,955.12
Customer Services	95,892.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	95,892.05
Discretionary Housing Payments	111,865.87	38,507.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	150,373.63
Displaced Expenditure - Social Services	201,700.52	(114,471.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	87,229.52
Downsizing & Redundancy	183,038.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	183,038.71
Election Costs	176,228.83	(109,260.22)	0.00	0.00	0.00	66,968.61
Financial Planning / Resilience	3,554,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,554,000.00
Future Interest Rate	644,055.89	0.00	0.00	852,605.00	0.00	1,496,660.89
General/ Voluntary Sector Grants	27,680.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,680.00
ICT	1,388,225.46	(10,000.00)	0.00	(262,500.00)	0.00	1,115,725.46
ISB Reserve	117,469.81	(93,577.03)	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,892.78
Inflation & Service Cost Pressure	1,361,000.00	(450,000.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	911,000.00

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>B.Fwd</u>	<u>Utilised March provisional out turn</u>		<u>Other Not Included in Management</u>		<u>Balance</u>
		<u>As per Management A/cs</u>		<u>A/c's</u>		
		<u>Actual</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	
Insurance Liabilities	3,198,250.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,198,250.21
Invest to Save	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00
Local / Strategic Development Plans	143,512.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	143,512.54
Match Funding Regeneration Projects	114,386.57	(10,807.50)	0.00	0.00	0.00	103,579.07
Members Local Grants	22,468.79	12,702.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,170.79
Payroll Project Management	23,529.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,529.97
PRC Funding	100,000.00	200,001.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	300,001.00
Rail Loan Interest	38,188.00	0.00	0.00	865,548.38	0.00	903,736.38
Re-fit Loan Repayments	263,878.66	61,434.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	325,312.66
Specialist Commercial Advice (Silent Valley)	72,816.50	(23,904.50)	0.00	0.00	0.00	48,912.00
Social Services - Legal Costs	400,000.00	(400,000.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Social Services - RIF (ICF)	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00
Stock Conditions Survey	12,137.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,137.34
Strategic Business Reviews	168,553.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	168,553.27
Superannuation	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00
Supporting Additional Capacity	369,300.00	(309,183.83)	0.00	0.00	0.00	60,116.17
Taxation	133,913.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	133,913.08
Technology Park Feasibility Study	26,017.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	26,017.00
Test, Trace, Protect Service	4,514.40	(4,514.40)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.00)
Transport Oncost	147,470.00	(147,470.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Waste Services Reserve	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00
Winter Maintenance	200,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00

Total Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves:	17,337,365.36	(1,428,508.60)	0.00	1,455,653.38	0.00	17,364,510.14
Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves						
Building Control Fees	38,239.34	18,517.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	56,756.45
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	670,361.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	670,361.00
Deposits and Bonds	3,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,200.00
Land & Property Charges	117,199.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	117,199.90
LMS Balances	6,213,861.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	(1,331,395.00)	4,882,466.65
Section 106 Agreements	191,988.51	37,752.00	0.00	(69,557.00)	0.00	160,183.51
SEW Adoption Collaboration	712,028.21	(104,339.25)	0.00	0.00	0.00	607,688.96

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>B.Fwd</u>	<u>Utilised March provisional out turn</u>		<u>Other Not Included in Management</u>		<u>Balance</u>
		<u>As per Management A/cs</u>		<u>A/c's</u>		
		<u>Actual</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u>	
Social Services - Gwent Regional Development (SP)	40,110.30	(1,493.64)	0.00	0.00	0.00	38,616.66
Workforce Development Collaboration	340,124.00	(72,816.60)	0.00	0.00	0.00	267,307.40
Total Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves:	8,327,112.91	(122,380.38)	0.00	(69,557.00)	(1,331,395.00)	6,803,780.53
Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied						
All Age School Forum	131,659.01	72,270.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	203,929.01
Aneurin Bevan Health Board - Education	18,225.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18,225.89
Community Safety & CCTV	71,606.15	(48,694.16)	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,911.99
Contribution to Crematorium Infrastructure Works	63,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63,000.00
Discretionary Cost of Living Scheme	897,428.00	(685,024.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	212,404.00
Early Action Together Programme	3,196.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,196.38
Early Years Grant	298,277.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	298,277.83
Education - Gypsy Travellers	40,804.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40,804.42
Flood Risk Management	132,729.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	132,729.00
Head 4 Arts	71,062.00	37,564.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	108,626.48
Homelessness Transitional Funding	140,917.78	(9,684.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	131,233.78
Individual Electoral Register	46,494.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	46,494.30
Infrastructure Staffing	186,600.00	(55,128.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	131,472.00
LEA / ALN Grant	141,379.16	119,955.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	261,334.42
Participatory Budget	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Period Poverty	77,687.05	(26,163.52)	0.00	0.00	0.00	51,523.53
Planning WAG Grant - Planning Committee	2,103.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,103.66
Environment General Contributions	51,172.25	100,789.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	151,961.25
Rights of Way Diversions	20,255.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,255.00
Scrutiny Development	7,867.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,867.15
Small & Rural Schools Grant	7,601.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,601.00
SMIFFs	2,688.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,688.84
Syrian Resettlement Programme	184,530.38	(7,407.52)	0.00	0.00	0.00	177,122.86
Homes for Ukraine Scheme	0.00	379,329.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	379,329.09
Tai Calon Highways Maintenance (Commutated Sums)	396,058.80	(21,183.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	374,875.80
Youth Service	256,433.34	582,798.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	839,231.83

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Balance B.Fwd</u>	<u>Utilised March provisional out turn</u>		<u>Other Not Included in Management</u>		<u>Balance</u>
		<u>As per Management A/cs</u>		<u>A/c's</u>		
		<u>Actual Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated Expenditure</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure</u>	<u>Anticipated Expenditure</u>	
<i>Total Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied:</i>	3,249,777.39	439,422.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,689,199.51
Total:	32,185,869.96	(1,039,812.38)	0.00	1,611,546.38	(1,331,395.00)	31,426,208.96

Fees and Charges Provisional Outturn 2022/2023

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Provisional Outturn 2022/2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	
				£	£	£	
Fees & Charges							
Corporate Services	Communications	Advertising	Fees & Charges	3,000	1,728	(1,272)	
Corporate Services	Business Support	External Printing and photocopying charges.	Fees & Charges	8,160	0	(8,160)	
Corporate Services	Legal Fees	Legal Charges	Fees & Charges	14,330	9,916	(4,414)	
Corporate Services	Corporate Support	Land Charges	Fixed - Set Locally	32,150	32,370	220	
Economy	General Offices	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	810	84,778	83,968	
Economy	Departmental	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	SLA	70,469	31,410	(39,059)	
Environment	Enforcement Team		Fees & Charges	2,030	29,592	27,562	
Environment	Trade Waste	Trade Waste Collection & Disposal	Fees & Charges				
		Income - Commercial Customers		298,818	335,187	36,369	
Environment	Bulky Waste Collection	Bulky Waste Collection	Fees & Charges	71,690	62,333	(9,357)	
Environment	Recycling Disposal	Sale of Recyclate Materials	Fees & Charges	879,384	906,076	26,692	
Environment	County Borough Cleansing	C&CR - External Cleansing Works	Fees & Charges	220	0	(220)	
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Burial Fees	Fees & Charges	494,814	449,138	(45,676)	
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	General Properties	Fees & Charges	3,000	3,000	0	
Social Services	Meals On Wheels	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	175,280	153,813	(21,467)	
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Income from Letting of Playing Fields, Ground Rent & Way Leaves	Fees & Charges	76,395	95,263	18,868	
Environment	General Properties	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	8,160	4,576	(3,584)	
Environment	Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	Rental	Fees & Charges	113,948	110,733	(3,215)	
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Civic Centre - Rental of Land	Miscellaneous	184	0	(184)	
Environment	School Catering Service	Sale of Meals		954,054	874,939	(79,115)	
Corporate Services	Accountancy Division	Administration charges for administering Appointeeships	Fees & Charges	26,030	17,241	(8,789)	
Environment	Technical Services - Engineering & Property Manacement	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	Fees & Charges	427,317	435,087	7,770	
Environment	Licensing (Highway Permits)	Skips & Scaffolding Permits	Fees & Charges	52,369	49,345	(3,024)	
Environment	General Administration and Markets	Rental income	Fees & Charges	30,351	10,211	(20,140)	
Environment	Traffic Orders	Income from contractors, Welsh Water etc. for road works inspection fees	Fees & Charges	55,307	98,654	43,347	
Environment	Road and Street Works Acts	Inspection fees, section 74's, FPN, coring, Dropped kerbs etc.	Fees & Charges	52,850	129,796	76,946	
Environment	Highways Adoptions	Highway Searches	Fees & Charges	9,950	8,550	(1,400)	
Environment	Multi-storey Carparks	Charge to Coleg Gwent	Fees & Charges	30,000	30,000	0	
Environment	Civil Parking Enforcement	FPN's	Fees & Charges	105,000	62,662	(42,338)	
Environment	Public Transport Co-Ordination	Charge to bus companies for use of Brynmawr Bus Station	Fees & Charges	234	268	34	
Licensing	Hackney Carriages	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	46,931	48,401	1,471	
Licensing	Private Hire Vehicles	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	1,830	840	(990)	
Licensing	Scrap Metal	Sale of Scrap Metal	Fees & Charges	600	3,254	2,654	
Planning	Enforcement	Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	610	0	(610)	
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Cwrt Mytton, Home Care, Extra Care & Joint Dav Care Unit)	Fees & Charges	598,350	620,138	21,788	
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Augusta, Supported Living Bungalows & Community Options)	Fees & Charges	341,150	75,346	(265,804)	
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Mental Health Needs	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Vision House & Ysbyty'r Tri Chwm)	Fees & Charges	25,420	1,125	(24,295)	
				Sub - Total	5,011,195	4,775,770	(235,425)
Fees & Charges - Set Nationally							
Corporate Services	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Fixed - Set Nationally	94,770	99,232	4,462	
Environment	Food Safety	Hygiene ratings & Health Certificates	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,162	6,699	4,537	
Environment	Control of Pollution	Environmental Permits	Fixed - Set Nationally	17,228	12,507	(4,721)	
Licensing	Licence Fees	Various (Gambling, Premises/ Clubs & Street Trading)	Fixed - Set Nationally	56,968	55,904	(1,064)	
Planning	Dealing with Applications	Planning Application Fees	Fees & Charges	213,360	290,877	77,517	
Planning	Building Regulations	Building Regulation Fees	Fixed - Set Nationally	95,620	93,613	(2,007)	
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	CHC Income (Home Care)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	11,382	11,382	
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	CHC Income (Augusta House; Supported Living Bungalows; Community Options)	Fixed - Set Nationally	50,000	195,522	145,522	
Social Services	Community Care	Fees & Charges in respect of Care	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,896,975	3,119,229	222,254	
Social Services	Community Care	Sale of Property	Fixed - Set Nationally	292,340	83,918	(208,422)	
Social Services	Community Care	CHC Income	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	97,323	97,323	
				Sub - Total	3,719,423	4,066,206	346,783

Fees and Charges Provisional Outturn 2022/2023

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Provisional Outturn 2022/2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£
Fees & Charges - In Line with Local Agreements						
Economy	Industrial Land	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,750	2,900	150
Economy	Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	Rental income for industrial units	Fixed - Set Locally	808,200	1,008,396	200,196
Economy	Estates - Non Rechargeable	Ground Rent	Fixed - Set Locally	145,110	152,738	7,628
Economy	Financial Support to Business	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,650	2,650	0
Economy	CSCS	Charges for Construction Skills Certificates	Fixed - Set Locally	10,200	891	(9,309)
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Little Stars Nursery - Rent (Recovery of	Miscellaneous	8,839	13,287	4,448
Education	Inter Authority Recoupment	Charges to other Local Authorities for SEN placements within Blaenau Gwent Schools	Fixed - Set Locally	672,290	815,614	143,324
			Sub - Total	1,650,039	1,996,476	346,437
			TOTAL - FEES & CHARGES	10,380,657	10,838,453	457,795
SLA						
Aneurin Leisure Trust	SLA Income	Provision of Support Services	SLA	213,410	225,762	12,352
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	SLA	SLA	168,220	186,793	18,573
Corporate Services	Accountancy Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	185,480	185,480	0
Corporate Services	Organisational Development, Payroll & Health & Safety	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	319,620	319,620	0
Corporate Services	Legal Fees & GDPR	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	41,980	40,632	(1,348)
Corporate Services	Communications	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	3,250	3,251	1
Corporate Services	Performance (SIMS Support)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	77,270	77,269	(1)
Corporate Services	Business Support (Courier)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	5,770	5,770	0
Corporate Services	Creditors Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	6,480	6,480	0
Environment	School Catering	SLA with Schools (excludes Corporate Landlord)	SLA	1,179,391	1,179,391	0
Environment	Cleaning Services	SLA with Schools	SLA	1,124,130	1,124,130	0
Environment	CPM - Schools Biodiversity SLA	SLA with Schools	SLA	14,566	21,225	6,659
Environment	Winter Maintenance	SLA with LA's for salt Storage	SLA	13,260	13,000	(260)
			Sub - Total	3,352,827	3,388,803	35,976
Court Fees/Fixed Penalty Notices/Fines						
Corporate Services	Corporate Services and Strategy	Legal income and land charges. Advertising.	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Leqal	10,000	153	(9,847)
Education	Welfare Service	Fixed Penalty Notices	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Leqal	2,190	2,619	429
Corporate Services	Payroll Division	Attachment Orders	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Leqal	1,020	336	(684)
Corporate Services	Council Tax Collection	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Leqal	162,680	146,839	(15,841)
Corporate Services	NNDR	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Leqal	1,800	0	(1,800)
Corporate Services	Housing Benefits Account	Admin Penalties	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Leqal	25,000	0	(25,000)
			Sub - Total	202,690	149,947	(52,743)
Consortium Arrangements						
Economy	General Offices	Annual Service & Rental Charge to Torfaen CBC in relation to Archives	Consortium Arrangements	49,970	71,981	22,011
Environment	Disposal Of Waste	Contribution from SVWS	Consortium	110,000	0	(110,000)
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Crematorium Income - Reallocation of surplus at year end	Consortium Arrangements	41,925	71,502	29,577
Environment	20 Church Street	Housing Advice Centre Contribution	Consortium	12,454	13,550	1,096
Environment	Housing Access	Income from Housing Associations in relation to Administration of the Common Housing Register	Consortium Arrangements	110,760	126,496	15,736
			Sub - Total	325,109	283,529	(41,580)
Miscellaneous						
Education	Supporting Special Educational Needs	Internal Income - Recovery of pupil lead funding from schools.	Internal Income	104,040	80,100	(23,940)
Corporate Services	Cross Cutting	Rebates - Energy & Randstad	Miscellaneous	32,500	83,321	50,821
Corporate Services	Cross Cutting	Purchase Card Income	Miscellaneous	26,810	7,466	(19,344)
Environment	L&A - Invasive Weeds	Contribution from Caerphilly for Treatment of Knotweed	Miscellaneous	10,200	4,213	(5,987)
			Sub - Total	173,550	175,100	1,550
			OVERALL TOTAL	14,434,833	14,835,832	400,999

Agenda Item 10

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**
Date of meeting: **19th July 2023**
Report Subject: **Capital Budget Monitoring, Provisional Outturn 2022/2023 Financial Year (As at 31 March 2023)**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas – Leader & Cabinet Member Corporate Overview & Performance**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	15/06/23	29.06.23			05/07/23	19/07/23		

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide Members with an overview of each Portfolio's actual capital expenditure against funding approvals for the 2022/2023 financial year, as at 31st March 2023.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 This report provides details on the following:

- Provisional financial position to 31st March 2023 across all portfolios (subject to External Audit)
- Details of any significant adverse and/or favourable variances

2.2 This report forms part of the Council's financial reporting framework.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The report will be considered by the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 5th July 2023, and any feedback will be provided verbally to Cabinet.

3.2 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members consider the information included within the report and

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

Option 2

Do not accept the report.

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

4.1 This report supports the Forward Looking Corporate Plan 2022/27 as it ensures effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience. This is a key element to achieving "An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place".

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

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

5.1.1 The current capital programme is approximately £152m and is funded by: -

Welsh Government Grant - £114m
 Other grant funding - £15m
 Council Resources — £23m

Expenditure of £47.85m was incurred on capital projects / schemes during 2022/23, with £105m allocated for use in future years.

The overall financial position at 31st March 2023 indicates a favourable variance of £0.33m against a total in year capital budget of £48.18m

The overall position across all Portfolios is shown below: -

Total Approvals Q4 (March 2022)	Future funding	In year funding	Actual Expenditure to 31/03/2023 (Month 12)	Forecast Variance underspent / (overspent)
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
152,906	104,722	48,184	47,852	334

5.1.2 Previous reports have identified overspends against the Childcare Offer – Swffryd Scheme project, totalling £72,248. A variation request has been submitted to Welsh Government for virement of funding from an existing approved scheme, that no longer requires the funding. It is anticipated that a decision will be made by Welsh Government Panel in June. In anticipation of the variation request being approved, the project has been shown as fully funded. Officers will update members of the outcome in due course.

5.1.3

This report has identified three significant underspends within the Capital Programme.

Coal Tip Safety - £ 44,115

The scheme is due to be fully completed during 2023/24. However, the total cost of the works is forecast to be less than approved grant funding, Welsh Government made aware of this. Consequently, the remaining funding will not be drawn down from Welsh Government.

LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure - £ 242,882

The underspend relates to the LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure scheme with a variance of £242,822, the underspend has incurred as the Contractor was unable to deliver the project within the funding timeframe.

Childcare Offer - Small Grants Scheme - £ 40,781

The underspend has occurred due to the funding being received very late in the financial year. Despite advertising the scheme to the childcare settings very quickly, some childcare settings didn't apply at all, some were unable to supply quotes to submit with applications or they were unable to find Contractors to complete the work in the time period required, Welsh Government were made aware the full grant allocation was not going to be utilised.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

- 5.2.1 Expenditure against external funding approvals needs to be maximised in order to avoid loss of funding. If significant delays in capital expenditure are anticipated or contract costs rise due to the impact of Covid-19, inflation pressures and the cost of living crisis, liaison with funding bodies will be required at the earliest opportunity in order to secure approval for funding re-profile.
- 5.2.2 There is a high level of uncertainty surrounding the impact inflation will have on construction costs, particularly where contracts have yet to be let / awarded. For those contracts which have been let and are on site, Technical Services have been proactive in value engineering such as substitution of materials and methods with less expensive alternatives, without sacrificing functionality to ensure contracts are kept within budget. Where budgets are forecast to be exceeded, project officers are either exploring funding variations or re-profile.
- 5.2.3 If funding re-profile cannot be agreed and capital schemes are not kept within budget, then capital reserves may be committed beyond affordable levels, with the consequence that projects that have not yet commenced may be deferred or not undertaken, so impacting upon future Capital Programmes.
- 5.2.4 If capital schemes do not achieve the required level of expenditure within the correct financial year and further peaks of inflation results in projects facing significant delay, funding may be lost to the Authority and be detrimental to the Authority's chances of securing future funding.

- 5.2.5 The aforementioned risks are mitigated as far as possible through close working relationship with Budget Holders, Technical Services and external funding bodies such as Welsh Government. This ensures that where possible, funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise
- 5.2.6 Where overall funding approvals are likely to be exceeded and additional compensatory funding sources cannot be identified, budget holders will initially report the consequences to the Corporate Leadership Team, including proposals to defer/delete other approved schemes.

5.3 **Legal**
N/A

5.4 **Human Resources**
N/A

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.2 The Capital Expenditure Report is attached at Appendix 1.

6.1.3 Appendix 2 provides information of funding changes since the third quarter report.

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

The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing capital investment for the communities of Blaenau Gwent.

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

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

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

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

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

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

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

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

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

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

N/A

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

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

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***

N/A

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

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

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Capital Programme – Summary

Appendix 2 – Capital Funding Changes

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Management Reports

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates Summary Outturn

<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure To:</i> <i>March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio	1,695,943	845,767	850,176	845,767	0
Social Services Portfolio	8,018,118	3,645,660	4,372,458	3,608,878	36,782
Economy Portfolio	25,775,360	5,042,221	20,733,139	5,046,433	(4,212)
Education and Active Living	37,643,378	5,808,760	31,834,618	5,808,760	0
Environment Portfolio	4,856,325	1,269,300	3,587,025	1,265,176	4,124
Infrastructure Portfolio	70,517,577	31,033,000	39,484,577	30,736,175	296,825
All Portfolios	4,399,160	539,496	3,859,664	539,496	0
Total Capital Funding	152,905,861	48,184,204	104,721,657	47,850,685	333,519

End of Report

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio						
Corporate Services						
327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wo	116,414	116,414	0	116,414	0
327103	Civic Centre Decommissioning	666,506	429,049	237,457	429,049	0
327104	Democratic & Community Hubs	44,412	3,701	40,711	3,701	0
327106	ICT Roadmap	763,611	262,500	501,111	262,500	0
328090	CCTV Upgrade	105,000	34,103	70,897	34,103	0
Corporate Services		1,695,943	845,767	850,176	845,767	0
Corporate Services Portfolio		1,695,943	845,767	850,176	845,767	0

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
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Social Services Portfolio

Childrens Services

323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	38,978	33,404	5,574	33,404	0
323155	Childrens Residential Home - Mons Calpe	924,022	491,247	432,775	491,247	0
323156	Childrens Residential Home - Madison Ho	945,979	513,204	432,775	513,204	1
324719	Flying Start - Cwm 2	30,000	0	30,000	0	0
324721	Flying Start - Ebbw Vale North	2,082	551	1,531	551	0
324724	Flying Start - Sirhowy Primary	3,840	337	3,503	337	1
324728	Flying Start - Blaina ICC	235,000	0	235,000	0	0
324735	Flying Start Brynithel FS Centre	606	0	606	0	0
324736	Flying Start Additional Works	85,153	71,091	14,062	71,091	0
324737	Flying Start Capital (Covid-funding)	12,863	0	12,863	0	0
324738	FS Covid Recovery - Cwm Dev. Garden S	109,150	520	108,630	520	0
324739	FS Covid Recovery - Scout Hall	49,671	493	49,178	493	0
324771	Childcare Offer - Badminton Scheme	1,950,000	0	1,950,000	0	0
324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	1,001,552	104,233	897,319	104,233	0
324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	1,082,131	1,082,131	0	1,082,131	0
324774	Childcare Offer - Small Grants Scheme	280,000	280,000	0	239,220	40,781
	Childrens Services	6,751,027	2,577,211	4,173,816	2,536,429	40,782

Adult Services

323003	Health & Safety	35,121	34,590	531	34,590	0
323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	34,279	7,875	26,404	7,875	0

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
323120	Disabled equipment	201,950	189,645	12,305	189,645	0
323144	ICF Main Capital Programme	75,789	2,205	73,584	2,205	0
323147	Intermediate Care Fund	3,133	0	3,133	0	0
323149	Better Care Capital Project	13,862	13,770	92	13,770	0
323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	490,676	453,083	37,593	453,083	0
323154	WLGA - Care & Support Equipment & Ada	270,383	270,383	0	274,383	(4,000)
323165	Community Meals Electric Vehicles	141,898	96,898	45,000	96,897	1
	Adult Services	1,267,091	1,068,449	198,642	1,072,449	(4,000)
	Social Services Portfolio	8,018,118	3,645,660	4,372,458	3,608,878	36,782

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
Economy Portfolio						
Tredegar Regeneration						
326163	Tredegar HLF	680,122	0	680,122	0	0
	Tredegar Regeneration	680,122	0	680,122	0	0
Ebbw Vale Town Centre						
326191	TRI - Urban Centre Commercial Property I	505,570	460,984	44,586	460,984	0
	Ebbw Vale Town Centre	505,570	460,984	44,586	460,984	0
Valleys Regional Park						
326200	VRP Ebbw Fach Trail	899	0	899	0	0
326205	VRP - Discovery Gateway	39,364	19,586	19,778	19,586	0
326207	Parc Bryn Bach - Co Working Space	298	0	298	0	0
	Valleys Regional Park	40,561	19,586	20,975	19,586	0
The Works Site						
325097	Big Arch	960,057	913,778	46,279	913,778	0
325103	Learning Works	37,985	0	37,985	0	0
325220	Site Investigation Works	19,001	0	19,001	0	0
	The Works Site	1,017,043	913,778	103,265	913,778	0
Other Regeneration						
326006	Tech Valley s Initiative	403,604	12,624	390,980	12,624	0

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
326180	Lime Avenue Business Park	427,485	62,025	365,460	62,025	0
326182	Box Works	8,475	8,475	0	8,475	0
326183	Regain 2	6,522,177	2,763,388	3,758,789	2,763,388	0
326184	Brexit Schemes	267,071	0	267,071	0	0
326193	TRI - Town Centre COVID-19 recovery ad:	488,710	6,506	482,204	6,506	0
326194	TT - Trinity Chapel & Abertillery Librar	1,150,388	66,994	1,083,394	66,994	0
326225	Heat Networks Project	17,385	0	17,385	0	0
326227	Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID	237,145	216,559	20,586	216,559	0
326251	Constrained Units	215,787	38,091	177,696	38,091	0
326252	Constrained Units - Roseheyworth	260,581	109,212	151,369	109,212	0
326253	Constrained Units - Blaenant Industrial	36,360	36,360	0	36,360	0
326254	Constrained Units - Cwm SBC	2,130	2,130	0	2,130	0
326255	Constrained Units - Cwmdraw Industrial E	27,244	27,244	0	27,244	0
326265	Victoria Business Park - Development	8,747	13	8,734	13	0
326266	Brynmawr Retail Development	747,928	209	747,719	209	0
326267	Blaenau Gwent Digital	36,218	36,218	0	40,431	(4,213)
326268	Covid Recovery for Town Centres	55,902	40,617	15,285	40,617	0
326269	HiVE – Hi Value Engineering Centre - Mor	12,311,095	127,995	12,183,100	127,995	0
326271	Land Release Fund - Pithead Baths	223,166	8,747	214,419	8,747	0
327050	Constrained Units - Pond Road Industrial	84,466	84,466	0	84,466	0
	Other Regeneration	23,532,064	3,647,873	19,884,191	3,652,085	(4,212)
	Economy Portfolio	25,775,360	5,042,221	20,733,139	5,046,433	(4,212)

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
Education and Active Living						
Education Services						
324125	Education Minor Works	15,776	15,776	0	15,776	0
324138	Education Capital Maintenance	1,220,993	266,745	954,248	266,745	0
324141	Bryn Bach - Kitchen Rep & Classroom ren	30,000	0	30,000	0	0
324142	Georgetown Windows & Boiler Replaceme	7,000	7,000	0	7,000	0
324143	Rhos-y-fedwyn - Refurbishment	19,110	19,110	0	19,110	0
324144	St Marys - Refurbishment	187,270	16,205	171,065	16,205	0
324145	Tredegar Comp - Food & Technology	30,070	6,579	23,491	6,579	0
324146	Deighton - Kitchen	57,851	0	57,851	0	0
324147	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Services and Ac	3,450	0	3,450	0	0
324148	Coed y Garn Roof & Remedial Works	58,261	29,312	28,949	29,312	0
324149	Brynbach Primary Disabled Adaptations	60,061	15,312	44,749	15,312	0
324151	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Electrical Supply	10,625	0	10,625	0	0
324152	Brynmawr Refurbishment	171,198	127,897	43,301	127,897	0
324154	Abertillery Learning Community	79,225	79,225	0	79,225	0
324156	River Centre Boiler	3,367	0	3,367	0	0
324157	Tredegar Comprehensive Kitchen Electric	704	704	0	704	0
324158	Beaufort Hill Kitchen	367	367	0	367	0
324161	Pen Y Cwm - Refurbishment Works	54,133	48,275	5,858	48,275	0
324166	Beaufort Hill Boiler	98,274	88,876	9,398	88,876	0
324167	Soffryd Boiler	100,000	82,670	17,330	82,670	0
324168	St Marys Boiler	49,213	5,075	44,138	5,075	0

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
324170	Deighton Fire Alarm	22,609	22,609	0	22,609	0
324171	Abertillery LC Doors	49,145	49,145	0	49,145	0
324172	Brynmawr Foundation Doors	39,975	39,975	0	39,975	0
324174	River Centre Windows/Ventilation	95,895	95,895	0	95,895	0
324175	River Centre Classroom and Toilets	66,383	66,383	0	66,383	0
324177	Cwm Roof	3,705	3,705	0	3,705	0
324179	Ebbw Fawr Internal Remodelling	100,000	69,874	30,126	69,874	0
324180	Tredegar Urgent Works IT suite staff roo	75,000	47,534	27,466	47,534	0
324182	CFS - Brynmawr Running Track	120,000	6,630	113,370	6,630	0
324183	Swffryd	120,000	0	120,000	0	0
324184	Tredegar Path	35,000	25,765	9,235	25,765	0
324185	Glanhowy Ramp	850	850	0	850	0
324186	Roseheyworth Primary - Reboiling	100,000	79,154	20,846	79,154	0
324187	CFS - Pen y Cwm - Outdoor Provision	65,000	56,445	8,555	56,445	0
324188	Ebbw Fawr Primary CFS	13,786	13,786	0	13,786	0
324193	All Saints Fire Alarm, Water Heater plus	8,509	8,509	0	8,509	0
324194	School Estate Fencing - Safeguarding	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	0
324201	Class Size - Willottown	75,001	65,263	9,738	65,263	0
324203	Period Poverty	5,028	0	5,028	0	0
324205	St. Marys CIW MUGA	1,300	1,300	0	1,300	0
324207	St. Josephs s106	35,000	16,604	18,396	16,604	0
324250	Electrical Upgrade - Blaen y Cwm	135,156	107,731	27,425	107,731	1
324251	Electrical Upgrade - Georgetown	141,162	50,574	90,588	50,574	0

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

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
324252	Electrical Upgrade - Glanhowy	29,401	25,245	4,156	25,245	0
324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment	371,370	292,977	78,393	292,977	0
324255	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Brynmawr RC	124,379	4,350	120,029	4,350	0
324256	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Ystruth Prima	74,473	3,247	71,226	3,247	1
324257	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Roseheyworth	15,000	590	14,410	590	0
324258	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Willowtown Pr	15,000	1,720	13,280	1,720	0
324259	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Illtydds P	15,000	205	14,795	205	0
324260	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Sofrydd Prima	80,787	98	80,689	98	0
324261	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Tillery Campu	14,861	66	14,795	66	1
324262	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Marys CIW	19,346	9,663	9,683	9,663	0
324263	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Josephs Pr	15,000	4,875	10,125	4,875	0
324264	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Ysgol Bro Hel	15,000	11,641	3,359	11,641	0
324266	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Deighton Prim	77,581	960	76,621	960	0
324267	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-All saints RC	15,000	13,638	1,362	13,638	0
324268	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Rhosyfedwen I	15,000	6,943	8,057	6,943	0
324519	Digital 2030 Capital Grant - Post 16	4,621	0	4,621	0	0
324530	ALN	22,299	0	22,299	0	0
324532	Ebbw Fawr ASD	3,890	0	3,890	0	0
324534	ALN - Penycwm	7,756	7,756	0	7,756	0
324535	ALN - River Centre	373,943	373,943	0	373,943	0
324560	Schools IT Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0
324580	Brynmawr 3G Pitch	173,004	141,171	31,833	141,171	0
324743	21st Century Schools Six Bells Project	326,624	256,263	70,361	256,263	0

Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	13,116,988	37,333	13,079,655	37,333	1
324751	Band B - New Primary Ebbw Fawr Valley	8,569,508	2,309,556	6,259,952	2,309,556	0
324752	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Brynma	3,110,503	5,787	3,104,716	5,787	0
324753	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Abertille	3,197,316	0	3,197,316	0	0
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredega	3,196,970	0	3,196,970	0	0
324755	Band B - Welsh Medium Remodelling Bro	751,111	369,041	382,070	369,041	0
324756	Band B - Rhosyfedwen	137,572	137,572	0	137,572	0
	Education Services	37,459,755	5,656,499	31,803,256	5,656,499	0
	Active Living Services					
329088	Bryn Bach Park Roof	12,439	0	12,439	0	0
329089	Abertillery LC Demolition	952	0	952	0	0
329092	ALC - Changing Room Refurbishment	20,000	8,952	11,048	8,952	0
329095	AWPOG - Play Equipment	49,850	49,850	0	49,850	0
329097	Play Equipment	30,568	30,568	0	30,568	0
329100	Six Bells Tennis Court Refurbishment	38,000	31,077	6,923	31,077	0
329101	Brynmawr LAC - PV & Battery Storage Sys	8,712	8,712	0	8,712	0
329103	Tredegar LAC - PV & Battery Storage Sys	23,102	23,102	0	23,102	0
	Active Living Services	183,623	152,261	31,362	152,261	0
	Education and Active Living	37,643,378	5,808,760	31,834,618	5,808,760	0

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Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
Environment Portfolio						
Environmental Services						
327035	Central Depot - New Fire Escape	48,548	0	48,548	0	0
327036	WPT Business Resource Centre (SS)	100,000	100,000	0	100,000	0
327039	Kerbside Collections	2,052	0	2,052	0	0
327044	AHP Waste Collections	52,380	0	52,380	0	0
327045	BRC Decommissioning Project	191,777	0	191,777	0	0
327046	Repair Cafe	1,066	0	1,066	0	0
327061	CATS	80,000	15,811	64,189	15,811	0
327065	Re:Fit	2,070,071	29,971	2,040,100	29,971	0
327067	Market Hall - Asbestos Removal	18,606	0	18,606	0	0
327068	Cemeteries Investment Programme	9,137	0	9,137	0	0
327070	WRAP Cymru Capital Funding	3,792	0	3,792	0	0
327071	Education Centre	297,265	240,200	57,065	240,200	0
327074	New Vale HWRC Refurbishment Works	145,439	0	145,439	0	0
327080	Cemetery Capacity - Cefn Golau Tredgar	327,000	4,763	322,237	4,763	1
327081	Cemetery Capacity - Dukestown Tredgar	218,834	2,779	216,055	2,779	0
327082	Cemetery Capacity - Brynmawr	133,334	2,049	131,285	2,049	0
327083	Cemetery Capacity - Brynithel Abertiller	96,334	3,250	93,084	3,250	0
327090	Fly Tipping CCTV	961	0	961	0	0
327110	Allotment Support Grant	30,698	25,576	5,122	21,454	4,122
Environmental Services		3,827,294	424,399	3,402,895	420,275	4,124

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**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23**

Management Reports	Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12</i>	

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: March 2023	Variance (Adv)/Fav
Housing Environmental Health						
328221	Remediation of Contaminated Land/Dereli	102,564	0	102,564	0	0
350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	655,344	655,344	0	655,344	0
350550	Support for Independent Living	112,193	89,557	22,636	89,557	0
350560	Empty Property Grants	158,930	100,000	58,930	100,000	0
Housing Environmental Health		1,029,031	844,901	184,130	844,901	0
Environment Portfolio		4,856,325	1,269,300	3,587,025	1,265,176	4,124

Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Infrastructure Portfolio						
Engineering Services						
328149	SRIC - Tredegar Footway Improvements	25,000	25,000	0	25,000	0
328280	Coal Tip Safety	200,700	125,548	75,152	81,433	44,115
328315	Local Transport Fund - Project Retention	9,649	0	9,649	0	0
328318	Active Travel Fund	782,932	547,290	235,642	546,735	555
328323	Resilient Roads Fund	93,268	85,595	7,673	85,595	0
328340	LTF Metro Plus	1,956,837	500,696	1,456,141	500,696	0
328344	LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure	387,813	387,813	0	144,931	242,882
328346	Bus Infrastructure Fund	100,000	16,085	83,915	16,085	0
328360	Rail Infrastructure Programme	66,293,022	28,964,659	37,328,363	28,964,659	0
328370	20mph Core Allocation	230,054	158,630	71,424	149,357	9,273
	Engineering Services	70,079,275	30,811,316	39,267,959	30,514,491	296,825
Highways Network Management						
328063	Bridge Strengthening Works	1,857	0	1,857	0	0
328270	Highways Improvement Works	165,918	43,434	122,484	43,434	0
328334	LGBI - Trinant Hall	11,402	2,667	8,735	2,667	0
328404	Flood Damage - Emergency Repairs	828	0	828	0	0
328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	84,368	1,654	82,714	1,654	0
328406	Small Scale Works Grant	173,929	173,929	0	173,929	0
	Highways Network Management	438,302	221,684	216,618	221,684	0

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23**

Management Reports			Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn			
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12</i>						

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	Infrastructure Portfolio	70,517,577	31,033,000	39,484,577	30,736,175	296,825

Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
All Portfolios						
All Portfolios						
300300	City Deal	3,662,700	0	3,662,700	0	0
303990	OS Capital Admin/Design & Supervision	524,000	524,000	0	524,000	0
321112	Disabled Access - Special Programme	15,496	15,496	0	15,496	0
324672	The Company Shop - Tred	196,964	0	196,964	0	0
All Portfolios		4,399,160	539,496	3,859,664	539,496	0
All Portfolios		4,399,160	539,496	3,859,664	539,496	0

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Outturn
Capital Report 2022/23**

Management Reports	Capital Programme Funding Estimates Outturn
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/12</i>	

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: March 2023</i>	<i>Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Total Capital Funding		152,905,861	48,184,204	104,721,657	47,850,685	333,519

End of Report

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

APPENDIX 2

Portfolio	Cost Centre	Scheme	Amount (£)	Funding Body	Type	Additional Information
Corporate Services						
	327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wor	-183,939	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer of funding to individual projects as agreed by Budget Holder.
	327103	Civic Centre Decommissioning	-48,746	Blaenau Gwent	Revenue Contribution	Revenue contribution not required as contract forecast to underspend heavily against original budget
Social Services						
	323155	Childrens Residential Home - Mons Calpe	891,522	Welsh Government	Housing with Care Fund: Gwent Regional Partnership Board	New WG approval
	323156	Childrens Residential Home - Madison House	913,479	Welsh Government	Housing with Care Fund: Gwent Regional Partnership Board	New WG approval
	323155 & 323156	Childrens Residential Homes	65,000	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer of funds to project to cover the shortfall to purchase the properties
Economy						
	326163	Tredegar HLF	155,999	Lottery Funding	Heritage Lottery Fund	Additional HLF grant award to fund project through to completion
	326181	Lime Avenue Employment park	-2,495,101	WEFO		Approval no longer available as Blaenau Gwent no longer overseeing the project
	326227	Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID	27,780	Welsh Government	Decarbonisation and Energy	Additional WG funding received
	326251	Constrained Units	25,787	Welsh Government	Brexit Economic Stimulus	Transfer of funds to project
	326252	Constrained Units - Roseheymworth	111,272	Welsh Government	Brexit Economic Stimulus	Transfer of funds to project
	326269	HIVE – Hi Value Engineering Centre	9,360,000	Levelling Up Funding	Central Government	LUF grant approval for the construction of the HIVE project
	327050	Pond Road Industrial Units	84,466	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer of funds to project
Education, Active Living and Learning						
	324138	Education Capital Maintenance	970,712	Welsh Government	Education Capital Maintenance	Additional WG Approval
	324185	Glanhowy Ramp	-99,150	Welsh Government	Education Capital Maintenance	Project unable to go ahead, funding transferred to other priority Community Focused Schools Projects
	324187	CFS - Pen y Cwm - Outdoor Provision	65,000	Welsh Government	Education Capital Maintenance	Transfer of funding from aborted project within the CFS programme
	324188	Ebbw Fawr Primary CFS	13,786	Welsh Government	Education Capital Maintenance	Transfer of funding from aborted project within the CFS programme
	324250	Electrical Upgrade - Blaen y Cwm	28,362	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
	324251	Electrical Upgrade - Georgetown	111,510	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
	324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment	-139,872	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
	324530	ALN	-333,242	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
	324534	ALN - Penycwm	-18,597	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
	324535	ALN - River Centre	351,839	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
	324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	3,263,651	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Additional WG approval
	324756	Band B - Rhosyfedwen	61,580	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Transfer to individual projects within the Band B scheme
Environment						
	327036	WPT Business Resource Centre (SS)	100,000	Blaenau Gwent	Revenue Budget	Annual Revenue Contribution for the Invest 2 Save loan repayment
	350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	47,090	Welsh Government	ENABLE – Support for Independent Living	Virement from underspend on the Support for Independent Living to fund the additional costs as agreed with Welsh Government
	350550	Support for Independent Living	-47,090	Welsh Government	ENABLE – Support for Independent Living	Virement from underspend on the Support for Independent Living to fund the additional costs as agreed with Welsh Government
Infrastructure						
	328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	-15,667	Welsh Government		In year grant repayment

It should be noted that the funding changes detailed above will not balance to total funding changes between Q3 to Q4

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Agenda Item 11

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **5th July 2023**

Report Subject: **Meeting Specific Requirements of the Equality Act 2010: Strategic Equality Policy Development**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Stephen Thomas, Leader / Cabinet Member Corporate Overview and Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Sarah King – Head of Democratic Services, Governance and 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)
	04/05/23	29.06.23			05/07/23	19/07/23		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present an approach for undertaking strategic equality policy developments during 2023/24 to ensure the Council meets its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act hereafter) and achieves its commitments set out in the Corporate Plan 2022/27.

2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The current Strategic Equality Plan 2020/24 is in its final year of implementation. The Council has a legal requirement to develop and publish a new Strategic Equalities Plan & Equalities Objectives 2024/28 by 31st March 2024. Failure to fulfil these requirements would result in reputational and financial consequences.

 - 2.2 **National strategic equality policy development areas**
 - 2.2.1 The table below outlines *additional* strategic equality policy development areas set out by Welsh Government; a description of what they aim to achieve; and the expectations placed on local authorities / public bodies.

Table 1: Strategic equality development areas

Strategic equality development areas	Purpose	Expectations on local authorities
<p>Anti-racist Wales Action Plan</p> <p>The Plan sets a vision for 2030.</p> <p>Initial implementation period covers June 2022 – June 2024.</p>	<p>To take action to make Wales an Anti-racist nation.</p> <p>To create a culture with zero tolerance of racism and change our systems and institutions to ‘design-out’ racism.</p>	<p>To develop a local action plan and performance monitor delivery.</p>
<p>Public commemoration in Wales</p> <p>Non-statutory guidance for public bodies currently under development.</p>	<p>To support local authorities to reach well informed decisions about current and future public commemorations in-line with the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.</p>	<p>To review and appropriately address the way in which people and events with known historical associations to slavery and colonialism are commemorated in our public spaces and collections.</p>
<p>LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales</p>	<p>Together in Pride – making Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe.</p>	<p>To develop a local action plan and performance monitor delivery.</p>

2.3 Proposed approach for strategic equality policy development

2.3.1 What?

To develop the new Strategic Equality Plan & Equality Objectives 2024/28 and concurrently use this work to underpin the development of the *additional* strategic equality development areas outlined in the table above.

2.3.2 How? (Key actions)

- Undertake research to understand strategic equality position.
- Mapping of existing service delivery contributions.
- Briefings on strategic equality policy development provided for service areas, senior management teams and elected members.
- Organisation-wide quarterly corporate Policy & Performance workshops to be established to raise awareness and support the implementation of key statutory policy areas (e.g., Equality, Welsh, Climate Change etc.)

- Set up Equality Stakeholder Reference Group as a mechanism for capturing the lived experiences of people protected by the Act to support policy development and performance monitor implementation, with opportunity to include elected member and specialist agencies / organisation representation.
- On-going involvement / consultation via established engagement networks, key groups and staff with protected characteristics covered by the Act.
- Consider training requirements for staff, senior management, and Members on key statutory areas such as Equality, Welsh, and Participation & Engagement* etc.

** Development of the Council's Participation and Engagement Strategy 2023/26 (as per Local Government (Wales) Act 2010) is aligned to this work to maximise use of resources.*

2.3.3 **When?**

- Key actions undertaken during Summer and early Autumn 2023
- Formal consultation period held Autumn/Winter 2023 (4 weeks)
- Political / professional route for adoption by Council completed early 2024 prior to statutory deadline as noted above.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The report was considered and endorsed by CLT on the 4th May 2023.

3.2 The report will be considered by the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 5th July 2023, and any feedback will be provided verbally to Cabinet.

3.3 **Option 1 (preferred)**

- I. Consider and support the proposed approach for developing the Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28 and Equality Objectives to be approved by Cabinet.

Option 2

- I. Provide comment and suggest an alternative approach for developing the Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28 and Equality Objectives.

Option 1 is the preferred option.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
The Corporate Plan recognises that our Strategic Equality Plan is one of the key policies and strategies that help to deliver our ambition.

The plan will strengthen the Council to actively participate in the newly forming Gwent Well-being Plan which is due for adoption in July 2023 by the Gwent Public Services Board. This plan will have a strong focus on tackling and preventing inequity within the communities of Gwent.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

The development, publication, and translation of the Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28, on behalf of the Council, is met within the existing budget of Governance and Partnerships Section.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The main risks are reputational and relate to meeting the legal requirements within the statutory timescales, and in doing so developing a plan which plays a significant part in the council being able to meet both its general and specific duties from the Act. The outlined development plan should mitigate these risks, based on previous policy development models implemented since the Act inception in 2010.

5.3 ***Legal***

Failure to effectively project manage and set out appropriate arrangements for developing a new Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28 and Equality Objectives; local Anti-racism Wales Action Plan; local LGBTQ+ Action Plan or further work in relation to the National Commemoration Audit may lead to an increased risk of the Council failing to comply with its statutory requirements and specific duties of the Act.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

There is a duty across the organisation to comply with the Act and meet the specific Public Sector Equality Duties. The Policy and Partnerships Team oversee responsibility via the Professional Lead for Engagement, Equalities & Welsh Language to develop the Strategic Equality Plan 2024/28 and Equality Objectives within the defined timeframes.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Relevant equality performance information and data (e.g., primary and secondary research) will be used to inform strategic equality policy developments (e.g., the setting of equality objectives and actions).

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

Strategic equality policy development is centred on delivering positive outcomes for the public and is aligned to the national well-being goals for a more equal Wales; a Wales of cohesive communities; and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

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

Input from staff, elected members, and key representatives will be sought from across the Council as well as key stakeholders such as residents, local businesses, public & third sector organisations.

Involvement will also be supported via the Corporate Policy & Performance Workshops and Equality Stakeholder Reference Group.

Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

The plan covers a four-year period, and should be seen as a building block towards continually improving outcomes in-line with the Act and those defined within the protected characteristics.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The plan looks to ensure that the Council is well-placed to meet its duties and strive to prevent discrimination now or in the future.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The plan will be developed collaboratively with residents, the public and third sector and community organisations as well as any professional stakeholders interested in achieving equality outcomes for Blaenau Gwent.

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

The plan provides a corporate approach across the organisation to deliver general and specific equality duties, and will look to integrate with the overarching well-being plan for the area, and the Council's Corporate Plan.

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

This report has no direct implications towards decarbonisation or reducing carbon emissions.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)***

The report considers Equalities throughout and seeks to strengthen and embed Equalities across the Council. An Integrated Impact Assessment will be undertaken to support the policy development process, as expected by guidance and legislation.

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

7.1 As part of our statutory monitoring responsibilities, we have a duty to publish a Strategic Equality Annual Report on the Council web site where it is made available to the public and other organisations (e.g., EHRC). Furthermore, the Annual Report is considered each year (whether as a specific report or information item) as part of the Council's Cabinet and Scrutiny forward work programmes.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- [Blaenau Gwent Strategic Equality Plan](#)

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Agenda Item 12

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**
Date of meeting: **19th July 2023**
Report Subject: **Charter of Common Agreement between the Town & Community Councils and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Steve Thomas, Leader**
Report Submitted by: **Andrew Parker, Service Manager Policy and Partnerships**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	29 June 23	29.06.23				19 Jul 23		

1. **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for new liaison arrangements between Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) and each of the four Town and Community Councils (TCCs) from 2023/24.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The current Charter of Common Agreement between BGCBC and each of the four CTCs was last reviewed during 2019. It was refreshed in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFGA) and The Independent Review on TCCs in Wales published in October 2018, to ensure it remained fit for purpose.
 - 2.2 The Charter is designed to build on existing best practice and embrace the shared principles of openness, respect, honesty and common priority of putting citizens at the centre. It sets out how BGCBC and each TCC aim to work together towards our collective long-term goals in a collaborative, preventative and integrated way, particularly in relation to the WFGA as well as:-
 - Ethics
 - Local governance and information
 - Consultation
 - Land use planning
 - Budget setting
 - Practical support
 - Monitoring and reviewing the Charter
 - 2.3 The Charter contains expectations around the facilitation of quarterly Liaison Committee meetings between the leadership groups from the county borough council and each of the four TCCs. These committee meetings help to foster good communication, working relationships, and better joint working for the benefit of local people.

2.4 In addition to the member Liaison Committee, a regular quarterly officer meeting comprising the four TCC Clerks and Corporate Policy staff also exists to support the partnership working arrangements. Going forward, this meeting will seek to strengthen arrangements for advice and interaction with TCCs and will look to seek support from the Council's Wider Corporate Leadership Team to ensure all local issues are considered appropriately.

2.5 The recommended 2023/24 partnership meeting arrangements is as suggested below:

- Autumn 2023: Quarterly Liaison Committee meeting to review the existing Charter of Common Agreement and consider Forward Work Programmes for 23/24 – 24/25, as well as any regular partnership business.
- Winter 2023: Quarterly Liaison Committee meeting to consider regular partnership business as part of FWP 23/24.
- February 2024: Liaison Committee meeting to consider the 24/25 BGCBC Budget (generally one-item on agenda)
- Spring 2024: Liaison Committee meeting to consider a refreshed Charter of Common Agreement for 24/25 onwards
- Regular quarterly Clerks meetings in between the QLCs to support the partnership working arrangements at an officer level.
- That the Policy & Partnerships Team requests the TCC Quarterly Liaison Committee and its commitments and consequences is placed on the Wider CLT agenda at an appropriate time. This is to ensure that senior officers across the Council are aware and understand the content of a Charter and put arrangements in place to effectively support both the operational functioning of liaison committee going forward, and associated work that comes from being part of a Charter (e.g. strategic and operational considerations at a service level).

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Option 1: Cabinet to approve a return to the existing Charter of Common Agreement arrangements with the four TCCs, with a revised Charter for 2023/24 onwards to be presented for agreement at a future meeting.

B) Cabinet is invited to approve the recommended meeting arrangements with the TCCs for 2023/24 as outlined in the report.

3.2 Option 2: Cabinet to provide specific further considerations prior to the approval of the partnership arrangements with TCCs.

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

4.1 A Charter of Common Agreement between BGCBC and the TCCs aligns to the council's well-being objectives and the Corporate Plan, and supports local delivery of the Well-being Plan.

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There is a reputational risk for the council if partnership arrangements with TCCs and a Charter of Common Agreement is not in place, as well as a risk of the council not maximising opportunities to work with TCCs effectively through an agreed Charter.

5.3 ***Legal***

In 2007 the Welsh Government published a Local Government Policy Statement “A Shared Responsibility” which set out the expectations of Local Authorities and the support that the Welsh Government aimed to provide. It focused on:

- ensuring that public services are centred on the needs and experiences of citizens
- encouraging specialisation and economies of scale to be achieved through cross boundary collaboration
- encouraging integration and responsiveness to the diverse needs of citizens to be achieved through cross sector collaboration.

In response to this policy statement, a joint guidance document “A Shared Community - Relationship Building and Charters for Unitary Authorities and Community and Town Councils” was released in 2008 by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), One Voice Wales and the Welsh Government.

The focal point of the guidance is the emphasis on establishing formal relationships between county borough councils and TCCs by agreeing a Charter of Common Agreement.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The relationship management and liaison between the Council and each of the four TCCs is under the remit of the Head of Governance, Partnerships & Democratic Services.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

To support the implementation of the existing Charter, a TCC Clerks Forum was established. This Forum enables TCC clerks to meet regularly with each other and the policy team to share issues and best practice, as well as raise matters for consideration in advance of upcoming QLC meetings.

Arrangements will be strengthened to ensure an appropriate strategic agenda and forward working programme for the QLC meetings, whilst additional support for TCCs such as practical briefing sessions on matters directly affecting TCCs can be arranged.

With the exception of the annual budget consultation meetings, the TCC liaison committee has not met since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even so, the above mentioned Clerks Forum has continued to meet with officers from the Council and each of the four TCCs.

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

Maintaining good, collaborative working relationships between BGCBC and the TCCs in line with the WFGA will increase accountability amongst partners and improve outcomes for the public by protecting and enhancing the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of Blaenau Gwent in ways that are sustainable for current and future generations.

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

The existing Charter of Common Agreement was developed through a period of consultation and engagement with the TCCs. Brynmawr Town Council, Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council and Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council all formerly signed up to the existing Charter, however Tredegar Town Council did not commit due to a localised issue, and the perception that the charter principles had not be appropriately followed.

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

Putting robust collaborative partnership working arrangements in place through the ongoing QLC and Charter will enable all partners to work together to balance short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term objectives. The monitoring and review procedures built into a new forward work programme will enable partners to ensure that the joint commitments remain appropriate and relevant in the long-term.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The preventative nature of the joint partnership arrangements and commitments within the existing and revised Charter is expected to improve working relationships amongst all partners.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

BGCBC together with Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council, Brynmawr Town Council, and Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council are all partners committing to work together collaboratively within the Charter of Common Agreement. Tredegar Town Council did not formally sign up to the previous charter in 2019 but continued to collaborate as partners in the interim period, and will be invited to commit to a new charter covering 2024/25 onwards as it is considered.

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

The commitments set out to involve the Wider Corporate Leadership Team in the partnership working arrangements encourage a coordinated, integrated and collaborative approach across the council and each of the TCCs.

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

There are no climate change or decarbonisation considerations for this report.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***

An integrated impact assessment will be carried out as part of the development of the revised updated Charter for 2024/25 onwards.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

Reviews will be undertaken jointly by all partners (BGCBC and the TCCs) once during each Council term, or more often as appropriate if deemed necessary.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- ***Appendix A – 2019 Charter of Common Agreement between the Community and Town Councils and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council***
- [*Independent Review Panel on Community and Town Councils in Wales Final Report \(October 2018\)*](#)

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CHARTER OF COMMON AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND
TOWN COUNCILS OF: ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH; BRYNMAWR;
NANTYGLO; AND BLAINA AND TREDEGAR

WITH

BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Preface

This is the Charter for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council working together with the Community and Town Councils of Abertillery & Llanhilleth, Brynmawr, Nantyglo & Blaina, and Tredegar as Partners.

It is designed to build on existing good practice and embrace the shared principles of openness, respect for each other's opinions, honesty and common priority of putting citizens at the centre.

The Charter has been reviewed in 2019 to reflect the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and is based upon the principles of the 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Act. It is a set of guiding principles for how we will work together towards our long-term goals in a collaborative, preventative and integrated way.

Partners to the Charter

Partners as referred to in this document are defined as:-

Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council;
Brynmawr Town Council;
Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council;
Tredegar Town Council; and
any newly established CTC(s) since the inception of this Charter

with

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

ETHICS

Partners will provide an ethical service to local people, following the appropriate standards and codes of conduct in an ethical partnership working environment. We accept the legitimacy and benefits of partnership working whilst at the same time recognising and respecting each other's roles. We aim to work together as a partnership of equals rather than tiers.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
The appointed Monitoring Officer will remain a point of contact for community and town councils in the consideration of matters relating to the application of the Members Code of Conduct where relevant.	Councillors shall act in an appropriate manner under the Code of Conduct and will provide all such information as required by the Ombudsman or Monitoring Officer to enable them to carry out their role effectively.
Aim to work together for the benefit of local communities whilst recognising and retaining our respective responsibilities as autonomous, democratically elected statutory bodies.	Aim to work together for the benefit of local communities whilst recognising and retaining our respective responsibilities as autonomous, democratically elected statutory bodies.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION

All Partners to the Charter will be clear about the expectations that they have of each other and the expectations placed upon them in order to facilitate good working relationships. We will define the way in which we interact with each other and clear about the role of councillors at all levels in the relationship and in community leadership. Timely, clear, relevant information and communication fosters good relationships and better joint working for the benefit of local people.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Facilitate quarterly community and town council liaison meetings and ensure that copies of agendas, minutes and reports are circulated to Clerks.	Contribute towards the agenda for Quarterly Liaison Committee meetings through the agreed Agenda Item Request Form
The Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Members will attend the quarterly liaison meetings along with any relevant BGCBC officers	Nominate three Councillor representatives from each council to attend the Quarterly Liaison Committee meetings in addition to the Clerks.
Will provide the names and contact details for all County Borough Councillors, Wider Corporate Leadership Team and the community and town council liaison officer(s).	Will provide the names and contact details for all community and town council Mayors, Deputy Mayors, Councillors, and Clerks.
BGCBC Councillors and/or officers to be invited to attend joint committee of community and town council meetings as relevant.	Facilitate a joint committee of community and town councils including representatives of each community and town council to consider local issues, and invite BGCBC councillors / officers to be invited to attend as relevant.
Make community and town councils aware of where public copies of committee agenda papers, minutes and dates are available on the council website.	Make BGCBC aware of where public copies of council reports and minutes are available on the community and town council websites.

CONSULTATION

All Partners recognise the importance of meaningful consultation.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Will undertake duty to consult community and town councils on statutory matters as directed in the specific legislation relating to county borough consultation.	Will respond to statutory consultations in a timely manner through the agreed processes, addressing the key issues clearly.
Will consult community and town councils on significant place-based issues that impact on their specific geographical area.	Will respond to consultation opportunities relating to specific place-based issues that might impact upon the local area in a timely manner through the agreed processes, addressing the key issues clearly.
Provide a written explanation on request if consultation is not possible or has not taken place in exceptional circumstances	Acknowledge that in some circumstances the timescales for responding to certain consultations will be imposed on BGCBC externally so consultation periods may occasionally be very short or in rare cases unfeasible.

WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

Effective partnership working brings benefits and includes responsibilities for all those involved. Local government at both tiers should work together to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of our area in ways that are sustainable for current and future generations.

This can be achieved by embedding the 5 Ways of Working set out in the Act into this Charter:

- **Collaboration** – acting collaboratively with partners to help each other promote wellbeing objectives
- **Long-Term** – the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
- **Involvement** – the importance of involving each other in achieving wellbeing goals, ensuring that those represented reflect the diversity of the area
- **Prevention** – understanding how acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse can help public bodies meet wellbeing objectives
- **Integration** – considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact on their other objectives and the objectives of other public bodies.

Partners recognise the importance of the 'Blaenau Gwent We Want' Wellbeing Plan as the overarching strategic vision for the social, economic, environmental wellbeing of the area. Partners also recognise that the Plan can only be implemented effectively through partnership working and being informed by grass roots experiences from within our local communities.

The five objectives of the Wellbeing Plan developed through extensive engagement with local communities to reflect the Blaenau Gwent We Want:

- The best start in life for everyone;
- Safe and friendly communities;
- To look after and protect the natural environment;
- To forge new pathways to prosperity;
- To encourage healthy lifestyles.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Will commit to embed the 5 Ways of Working into joint working arrangements with community and town councils.	Will commit to embed the 5 Ways of Working into joint working arrangements with BGCBC.
Will involve community and town councils in the engagement and involvement work in supporting the development and implementation of the Wellbeing Plan.	Will consider opportunities for developing local community and town council wellbeing action plans where relevant and support the objectives in line with the BG Wellbeing Plan.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Will share the annual progress report of the Blaenau Gwent We Want Plan.	Where possible, will provide any information as relevant to inform the annual Wellbeing Plan progress report and engage with their communities regarding how local programmes could align with the delivery of the BG Wellbeing Plan.
Will work with community and town councils to protect local biodiversity and the natural environment through sustainable practices	Will work with BGCBC to protect local biodiversity and the natural environment through sustainable practices

LAND USE PLANNING

Community and town councils know and understand their local area and must be able to comment effectively on planning matters. BGCBC takes an overview of the needs of the whole local area and makes strategic decisions, taking local views into account.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Will uphold its statutory duty to consult with community and town councils on all planning applications in their communities	Will make appropriate responses to BGCBC recognising the parameters imposed by planning law and agreed planning policy.
Will invite representatives from community and town councils to attend (without voting rights) Planning Committee and fact-finding meetings relating to planning applications in their area.	Will ensure that Councillors receive adequate training on planning law and policy.
Will ensure that community and town councils receive copies of decisions relating to planning applications in their area on request.	Will progress any further clarification on planning decisions with relevant BGCBC council staff, whilst maintaining an objective approach to planning matters at all times.

BUDGET SETTING

Partners recognise the need for clarity and transparency in financial arrangements. In developing and implementing financial arrangements, relevant national, regional and local priorities will be taken into account.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
In setting the council's budget, will consult CTCs by holding a special Liaison Committee meeting focussing on the budget setting process	Will participate in BGCBC's budget setting consultation process and share the community and town council annual precepts once set.

PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Partners should ensure that all elected members and officers must be well-trained and have the support they need in order to carry out their roles effectively.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Will explore options for the provision of training, development and shared learning to benefit all Partners, including through One Voice Wales and others where relevant.	Will explore options for the provision of training, development and shared learning to benefit all Partners, including through One Voice Wales and others where relevant.
Support the development of a network for CTC Clerks with appropriate Terms of Reference.	Support the development of a network for CTC Clerks with appropriate Terms of Reference.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Charter will be reviewed by all Partners once during each Council term, or more often as appropriate if deemed necessary. The Partners will conduct this review and develop an annual progress report against the commitments within the Charter.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Community and Town Councils
Will arrange for the Charter to be reviewed by the community and town councils liaison committee when appropriate.	Will actively contribute to the review of the Charter.
Will facilitate the development of an annual progress report against the commitments within the Charter.	Will actively contribute to the development of an annual progress report against the commitments within the Charter.

CHARTER OF COMMON AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND
TOWN COUNCILS OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH; BRYNMAWR;
NANTYGLO AND BLAINA; AND TREDEGAR

WITH

BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council _____ Leader

Abertillery & Llanhilleth
Community Council _____ Chair

Brynmawr Town Council _____ Mayor

Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council _____ Mayor

Tredegar Town Council _____ Mayor

Dated:

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Agenda Item 13

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 06.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 05.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**
Date of meeting: **19 July 2023**
Report Subject: **Council tax premiums on long-term empty and 2nd homes.**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas – Leader & Cabinet Member for Resources**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
14 Jun 23	29/06/23	06.07.23				19/07/23		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider undertaking a consultation exercise on the implementation of council tax premiums on long-term empty and 2nd homes within Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Throughout Blaenau Gwent there are currently in the region of 400 dwellings that are classed as long term empty and 1 registered as a second home.
- 2.2 The Council's Empty Property Strategy aims to bring vacant properties back into use. To consider all the options available for tackling the problem of empty properties and to ensure that where vacant properties are identified every effort is made to renovate them to a good standard and bring them back into use.
- 2.3 Once long term empty properties are identified these are targeted for action to bring back into use by:-
- Encouraging Owners to bring their properties back into use by providing information and advice: and
 - Use of enforcement powers
- 2.4 Blaenau Gwent Council has previously used its discretion to remove the 50% discount provided to properties that have been empty for longer than 6 months and are not entitled to any statutory exemption under the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The Council therefore levy's 100% council tax on properties that meet this criteria.
- 2.5 Since 1st April 2017, under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, Councils have discretionary powers to charge a premium of up to 100% on long term empty

properties (properties empty longer than 12months) and second homes.

- 2.6 The decision to charge a council tax premium on either a long-term empty property, second home or both is a decision for each council to make. Councils can set different levels of premium for each class.
- 2.7 Welsh Government have recently undertaken a consultation exercise to update these regulations. As a result, from 1st April 2023, councils will be able to charge a premium of up to 300% on top of the standard rate of council tax for these properties.
- 2.8 In exercising its functions under this section, a billing authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers. The guidance can be found by using the link in appendix 1.
- 2.9 The regulations also identify seven classes of dwellings that are exempt from the premium. These include dwellings marketed for let or sale, annexes and seasonal homes. A full list can be found on page 7 of the accompanying guidance found in Appendix 1.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1(preferred option)**

To note details of the discretionary powers that Councils have relating to council tax premiums, and agree to undertake a public consultation exercise on proposals to introduce a council tax premium for long term empty properties and second homes within Blaenau Gwent. The proposed consultation questions are in Appendix 2.

3.2

Option 2

To note details of the discretionary powers that Councils have relating to council tax premiums, but not consider taking the powers available forward.

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

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan identifies the need for thriving and resilient communities within Blaenau Gwent. Bringing empty properties back in to use will help reduce demand for affordable housing and the use of temporary accommodation. Any additional revenue generated from council tax premiums could be utilised to help address some of these issues in future.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Option 1

Although the circumstances of the properties would have to be verified, on 2023/24 council tax levels it is estimated that circa 400 properties throughout Blaenau Gwent currently could be in scope for a long term empty premium. This could generate up to an additional £1.3m if the

Council adopted the maximum premium of 300%, and the premises remained vacant for a full financial year.

There may also be additional costs if the residents of these properties (once brought back into use) are for example eligible for Council Tax Reduction as well as potential increased costs of waste / recycling collection.

In addition some owners may make the decision to demolish the properties which will result in a reduction of Council Tax income.

Option 2

There will be no additional financial implications for the Council.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Option 1

There are no significant risks envisaged in undertaking the consultation exercise.

Option 2

Not undertaking the consultation exercise could delay any further consideration in this policy area.

5.3 ***Legal***

The Housing(Wales) Act 2014 introduced powers for Councils to consider introducing premiums for properties classed as long term empty or 2nd homes under s12A(3) and 12B(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The consultation exercise will be absorbed and delivered within existing staff resources. There will however, be a need to consider the staffing of the extra administrative burden should the decision in future be to adopt the discretionary premiums

6. ***Supporting Evidence***

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

As this report is seeking to instigate the consultation process for the introduction of council tax premiums there is currently no local performance information available.

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

There is a significant unmet demand for affordable housing within Blaenau Gwent alongside increasing costs associated with homelessness. It could be anticipated that properties classed as long term empty may be brought back in to use. If this is not the case, individuals that are currently liable to pay council tax on an identified long term empty property or second home will see an increase in the level of council tax that they currently pay.

- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
Consultation will be undertaken which will allow all stakeholders to express their views on the proposals. The consultation will last until the end of 30 September 2023
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
The response to the consultation exercise will be collated and help inform decision making.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
Not applicable to this report
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
Not applicable to this report.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
Not applicable to this report
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
Not applicable to this report
- 6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***
Not applicable to this report
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The results of the consultation will be provided to Cabinet to aid decision making. The final decision will inform the Medium Term Finance strategy.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Welsh Government Guidance

Appendix 2 – Consultation Questions



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

Council Tax on empty and second homes

Guidance for local authorities on council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and second homes.

First published: 9 March 2023

Last updated: 9 March 2023

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes.html> for the latest version.

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Contents

Introduction

Part 1: implementation of the council tax premium on long term empty dwellings and dwellings periodically occupied in Wales

Part 2: administration and enforcement

Part 3: monitoring and reporting council tax premiums

Part 4: appeals

Introduction

Since 1 April 2017, local authorities in Wales have been able to charge a premium of up to 100% of the standard rate of council tax on long-term empty dwellings and dwellings occupied periodically (more commonly referred to as second homes) in their areas. From 1 April 2023, the maximum level at which local authorities can set council tax premiums will increase to 300%. The powers given to local authorities are discretionary so whether to charge a premium on long-term empty properties or second homes (or both) is, therefore a decision to be made by each local authority.

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure a fair and consistent approach is applied across Wales and assist local authorities:

- in their decisions to charge or amend a premium in their local area
- with the administration and enforcement of premiums
- the application of the exceptions
- monitoring and reporting the use of premiums

All local authorities in Wales must have regard to any guidance issued by Welsh Ministers when determining a premium on the standard rate of council tax as set out in sections 12A (3) and 12B (4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ('the 1992 Act') as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 ('the 2014 Act').

This guidance should not be treated as an interpretation of the legislation. The interpretation of legislation is in the first instance a matter for the local authority, with definitive interpretation being the responsibility of the courts.

Part 1: implementation of the council tax premium on long term empty dwellings and

dwelling periodically occupied in Wales

Legal framework for the council tax premiums

This section sets out the legal framework which is common to both the premium on long-term empty dwellings and on dwellings periodically occupied. Specific requirements for long-term empty properties are set out in Section 12A, and those specific to dwellings periodically occupied are detailed Section 12B.

Sections 12A and 12B to enable a billing authority (a county council or county borough council) in Wales to disapply any discount granted to long-term empty dwellings and dwellings occupied periodically and apply a higher amount of council tax (a premium).

The Council Tax (Long-term Empty Dwellings and Dwellings Occupied Periodically) (Wales) Regulations 2022 ('the 2022 Regulations') amended sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act increasing the higher amount of council tax a billing authority (a county council or county borough council) in Wales can apply to long-term empty dwellings and dwellings occupied periodically to 300% for the 2023 to 2024 financial year and for subsequent years.

Where a determination to charge a premium is made, a local authority must publish a notice of the determination in at least 1 newspaper circulating in its area within 21 days of the date of the determination.

A determination by a billing authority to charge a premium will also disapply any discount that is granted under section 11(2)(a) of the 1992 Act for dwellings in which there are no residents.

A billing authority can make, vary, or revoke a determination made under sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act, but only before the beginning of the financial year to which the determination applies. In using these powers, a billing

authority can also determine the types or classes of properties within the categories of long-term empty dwellings or second homes to which they will apply a premium. This enables each authority to tailor its determination to local circumstances.

The Welsh Ministers also have powers under section 12A(4) and 12A(5), and 12B(5) and 12B(6) of the 1992 Act to prescribe through regulations certain classes of dwelling which may not be subject to a premium. The Council Tax (Exceptions to Higher Amounts Wales) Regulations 2015 prescribe the exceptions and are detailed later in this guidance.

The council tax system already provides several specific exemptions from council tax. The exempt groups are set out in the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 (as amended). There are several exemptions in place for unoccupied dwellings, for example:

- where the resident is in long-term residential care or hospital
- where a dwelling is being structurally repaired (for up to 1 year)
- where the resident has died (for up to 6 months after the grant of probate or letters of administration)

A dwelling that is exempt from council tax is not liable for a premium. However, where a dwelling is no longer eligible for an exemption, but remains unoccupied, it will become liable for the premium where 1 is applied. In the case of an empty dwelling, it will become liable for a premium after it has been empty for a continuous period of 1 year, and this will include the period that any exemption has been applied.

Section 12A: higher amount for long-term empty dwellings

A long-term empty dwelling is defined for the purpose of this section as a

dwelling which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 1 year.

The furnishing or occupation of a dwelling for 1 or more periods of 6 weeks or less during the year will not affect its status as a long-term empty dwelling. In other words, a person cannot alter a dwelling's status as a long-term empty dwelling by taking up residence or installing furniture for a short period.

Where a local authority makes a determination to charge a premium on long-term empty dwellings, it may specify different percentages for different dwellings based on the length of time for which they have been empty. This enables local authorities to take a stepped approach, with incremental increases applying over time.

Section 12B: higher amount for dwellings periodically occupied

A second home is defined for the purpose of this section as a dwelling which is not a person's sole or main home and is substantially furnished. These dwellings are referred to in the 1992 Act as dwellings occupied periodically but they are commonly referred to as 'second homes'.

For a premium to apply to dwellings occupied periodically, a billing authority must make its first determination under section 12B at least 1 year before the beginning of the financial year to which the premium relates.

From here on the guidance will refer to long-term empty properties and second homes.

Making a determination to charge the council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and/or second

homes

The discretion given to local authorities to charge a premium is intended to be a tool to help:

- bring long-term empty properties back into use to provide safe, secure and affordable homes
- support local authorities in increasing the supply of affordable housing and enhancing the sustainability of local communities

Local authorities can apply premiums to long-term empty properties or second homes or both and can set different levels of premium for each class.

The powers were deliberately designed as discretionary powers to allow local authorities to tailor their use to address local priorities and reflect the different patterns of housing availability and need across Wales.

There are a range of factors which could help inform local authorities in deciding whether to charge a premium. Whilst some factors will be specific to either long-term empty properties or second homes, others will be common to both. A list of these factors is set out below to assist local authorities. It is not intended to be exhaustive.

- Numbers and percentages of long-term empty properties and/or second homes in the local area.
- Distribution of long-term empty properties and/or second homes and other housing throughout the authority and an assessment of their impact on property values in particular areas.
- Potential impact on local economies and the tourism industry.
- Patterns of demand for, and availability of, affordable homes.
- Potential impact on local public services.
- Potential impact on the local community.

- Potential impact on the Welsh language.
- Other measures that are available to authorities to increase housing supply and the availability of affordable housing.
- Other measures that are available to authorities to help bring empty properties back into use.

The determination by a local authority to charge a premium under section 12A or 12B of the 1992 Act will usually be part of the budget-setting process as it is likely to affect tax-setting and spending decisions. It will therefore normally be a decision made by full Council. Prior to doing so, a local authority must give due consideration to its statutory duties to carry out equality impact assessments under the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh public sector equality Duty which came into force in 2011 and to all other relevant considerations. This will include consideration of how its policy meets the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and contribute specifically to the objectives of a prosperous Wales; a more equal Wales; and a Wales of cohesive communities.

Local authorities should also be mindful of the timing of any decisions to introduce or vary a premium for a financial year. Any change to a premium will alter an authority's revenue plans and should be taken into account in its budget-setting. A local authority is normally expected to reflect its proposed tax-base, including all discounts and premiums, by the end of December for the forthcoming financial year, so any decisions made after this point pose risks to the credibility of published data and could lead to criticism.

A local authority should consider how it engages and consults with key stakeholders, including the local electorate and second homeowners, before taking a decision to charge a premium.

Local authorities are strongly encouraged to consult before making a first determination to charge a premium. For second homes, the first determination to charge a premium must be made at least 12 months before the beginning of the

financial year to which the proposed premium relates. The same does not apply to empty properties but as a dwelling must be empty for at least 12 months before a premium can apply, the Welsh Government recommends that a first determination to apply a premium to long-term empty dwellings should be made at least 6 months before the beginning of the financial year to which the premium relates. A local authority should make a full assessment of possible impacts, including on the local population, its communities, and the local economy.

Any decision to vary or revoke a determination to apply a premium must be made before the beginning of the financial year to which it applies. Local authorities are also strongly encouraged to consult before making a determination to increase a premium to a level above 100% and to do so at least 6 months before the beginning of the financial year to which the proposed premium increase relates. This will enable the premium to be taken into account when setting council tax levels for the forthcoming year and allow taxpayers sufficient time to consider the impact of a higher premium on their own personal financial circumstances and make choices regarding their property.

Having decided to introduce or vary a premium, in addition to the requirement to publish a notice in a local newspaper within 21 days, a local authority should consider how its decision is communicated more widely, particularly to those who might be affected. This may be through the publication of press notices, providing information on website pages or via other avenues to raise awareness such as, for example, direct communication with council taxpayers who are likely to be liable for the premium. A local authority should also give consideration as to how they advise or inform those who may be affected but may reside outside the local area.

Exceptions to the council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and second homes

Sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act provide Welsh Ministers with powers to make regulations to prescribe 1 or more classes of dwellings in relation to which a billing authority may not make a determination to apply a premium. The Council Tax (Exceptions to Higher Amounts) (Wales) Regulations 2015 are made under these powers a premium may not be charged on a dwelling that falls within an exception. A local authority must have regard to these exceptions before deciding to implement a premium.

The regulations prescribe 7 classes of exempt dwellings. Classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 apply to both long-term empty properties and second homes. Classes 5, 6, and 7 apply only to second homes. The classes of dwelling are outlined below.

Class 1: dwellings being marketed for sale or where an offer to buy the dwelling has been accepted, time-limited for 1 year

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

Class 2: dwellings being marketed for let or where an offer to rent has been accepted, time-limited for 1 year

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

Class 3: annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

Class 4: dwellings which would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in armed forces accommodation

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

Class 5: occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings

Application

Second homes.

Class 6: dwellings where by virtue of a planning condition, year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited or has been specified for use as holiday accommodation only or prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence

Application

Second homes.

Class 7: job-related dwellings

Application

Second homes.

Class 1: dwellings being marketed for sale

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and

on second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for sale. It also covers dwellings where an offer to buy the dwelling has been accepted but the sale has not yet been completed.

To qualify for this exception a dwelling must be on the market for sale at a reasonable price for that dwelling. In considering whether a price is reasonable, regard should be given to the sale price of comparable dwellings in the area. Additional guidance is provided in Part 2 Administration and Enforcement to assist local authorities in the application of this exception.

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception. After an exception has ended, a dwelling being marketed for sale will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been sold.

Class 2: dwellings being marketed for let

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for let. It also covers dwellings where an offer to rent has been accepted but the tenant is not yet entitled to occupy the property because the tenancy has not yet started.

To be eligible for this exception, a dwelling must be on the market for let at a reasonable rent, that is, the rent the property would be expected to fetch having regard to the rent raised on comparable dwellings. Additional guidance is provided in Part 2 Administration and Enforcement to assist local authorities in the application of this exception.

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception. After the end of the exception period, a dwelling being marketed for let will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been subject to a tenancy that was granted for a term of 6 months or more.

Class 3: annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and on second homes.

This exception applies where an owner has adapted their dwelling to provide an annexe and the annexe is now being used as part of the main dwelling.

Class 4: dwellings which would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in armed forces accommodation

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and on second homes.

This exception applies to dwellings that would be a person's sole or main residence but which is unoccupied because that person resides in armed forces accommodation.

This exception is also intended to cover armed forces personnel whose homes are unoccupied because they are living in armed forces accommodation overseas.

Class 5: occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings

This exception applies to the second home premium. It covers dwellings that consist of a pitch occupied by a caravan or a mooring occupied by a boat where the caravan or boat currently has no resident, but when next in use will be a

person's sole or main residence.

Class 6: seasonal homes or holiday lets where year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited

This exception applies to the second home premium. It is applicable to dwellings that are subject to planning conditions that prevent occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 12 month period.

This exception is often applied to purpose-built holiday homes or chalets which are subject to planning conditions restricting year-round occupancy or to protect local features, for example where the site is near a fragile habitat which requires protection at particular times of year. The exception is based on the definition of the existing discretionary discount for seasonal homes (Class A) in The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998.

From 1 April 2023, Class 6 is extended to include every dwelling restricted by a planning condition which:

- prevents occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 1 year period
- specifies its use as a holiday let only
- prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence

Class 7: job-related dwellings

This exception applies only in relation to the second home premium and applies to dwellings occupied by a person who is:

- a qualifying person in relation to the dwelling, but who is resident in another dwelling which is job-related (as defined in Schedule 1 to the Regulations)

- a qualifying person in relation to a job-related dwelling

A qualifying person is defined as:

- a person who is liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling on a particular day, whether or not jointly with another person
- a person who would be liable for the council tax in respect of a dwelling on a particular day, whether or not jointly with another person if that dwelling did not fall within Class O of the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 or Class E of the Council Tax (Liability for Owners) Regulations 1992

This exception applies where a person is required to reside in a job-related dwelling. It applies to a second home that is occupied periodically because a person is required to live in job-related accommodation elsewhere. It also applies where the job-related accommodation is a person's second home.

The definition of a job-related dwelling is given in the Schedule to the Regulations. Although this exception is similar to the job-related discount under the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998, it differs because the discount only applies if the job-related dwelling is a person's sole or main residence.

Another difference from the job-related dwelling discount is that there is no requirement for the taxpayer to be liable for council tax in respect of 2 dwellings, meaning that a person who has either a main home abroad or a job-related dwelling abroad can also benefit from the exception.

Additional guidance is provided in Part 2 Administration and Enforcement to assist local authorities in the application of this exception.

Reducing liability for the council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and second homes

In exercising the power under section 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act, a billing authority may determine the particular types or classes of properties within the categories of long-term empty properties or second homes to which it will or will not apply a premium. In addition, under section 13A of the 1992 Act, billing authorities have discretionary powers to reduce council tax liability to such extent as the billing authority thinks fit. The power can be exercised in particular cases or by determining a class of cases. The power may be used to reduce council tax liability by any amount, including in circumstances where a local authority may otherwise charge a premium. Local authorities may use these powers for example to reduce or disapply a premium, and potentially as a means to target the use of premiums.

Some illustrative examples of where a local authority might consider using its powers include:

- where there are reasons why the dwelling could not be lived in as a permanent residence
- where there are reasons why a dwelling could not be sold or let
- where an offer has been accepted on a property but the sale has not yet been completed and the exception period has run out
- where the owner's use of a property is restricted by circumstances not covered by an exception from the premium
- where charging a premium might cause hardship

The above list is not exhaustive and billing authorities will want to consider all factors they think are relevant when deciding to reduce the council tax liability for a particular property or class of properties and to make an assessment of the potential impact.

Self-catering accommodation

From 1 April 2023, if a self-catering property does not meet the new letting thresholds established by the Non-Domestic Rating (Amendment of Definition of Domestic Property) (Wales) Order 2022, it will be classified as a domestic property and will be liable for council tax. Where the local authority has determined to apply a premium to second homes, the owner will also be liable to pay the additional charge unless their property falls within an exception, or the local authority has determined not to charge a premium for the type or class of property.

There may be instances where some self-catering properties that would be considered unsuitable for permanent living will become subject to council tax and a premium because they do not fall within an exception. In such instances, local authorities are encouraged to consider using their discretionary powers to tailor a determination or to reduce council tax liability to moderate the impact, in effect, reducing the premium. Retaining liability for standard rate council tax, for properties which do not meet the letting criteria, would be consistent with the aim of ensuring all property owners 'make a fair contribution' to their local communities. Some illustrative examples of where a local authority might consider using these powers include:

- outbuildings or barns converted to holiday lets as part of farm diversification
- annexes or garage conversions that form part of an owner's primary residence
- lodges, caravans or chalets

It is a matter for a local authority as to whether it uses the discretionary powers in sections 12A, 12B or 13A to reduce council tax liability in respect of a premium or to reduce the standard council tax liability, or both, as appropriate. This policy should cover a range of situations in which a local authority would consider using its discretionary powers, including properties which do not meet

the criteria to be classed as non-domestic. In the interest of fairness and transparency, a local authority should have a clear policy on whether, and how, these powers will be used. The authority should, however, consider each case on its merits having considered the circumstances of the case.

It should be noted that deliberations around the use of the discretionary section 13A powers are likely to be different when they are considered to reduce council tax liability resulting from a premium compared to reducing liability from the standard rate of council tax. This is because dwellings liable to a premium are already liable for the standard rate of council tax.

Use of additional revenue generated from the council tax premiums

A local authority will be able to retain any additional funds generated by implementing the premiums and amendments to the calculation of the council tax tax-base have been made to facilitate this. Adjustments will be made to allow for the increase in the maximum premium which may be applied from 1 April 2023. Authorities may use the additional revenue for any purpose, but they are encouraged to use it to help to meet local housing needs, in line with the policy intentions for the premiums.

Specific requirements in relation to reporting on any additional revenue generated and its subsequent use are set out in Part 3 Monitoring and Evaluation.

Part 2: administration and enforcement

Determining liability for the council tax premiums and eligibility for exceptions

In deciding to charge a premium, a local authority will need to identify whether a dwelling is a long-term empty property or a second home and whether it would therefore be liable for a premium.

It is reasonable for a local authority to request evidence such as utility bills showing use of services, a driving licence as proof of address, or receipts or other evidence of moving costs if a property is said to be occupied (not empty) or occupied as a sole or main home (not a second home). The process will be similar to existing practices used to assess eligibility for council tax exemptions and discounts.

The Welsh Ministers have prescribed certain exceptions to the council tax premiums and it will be a liable person's responsibility to apply to a local authority for an exception if they believe they are eligible, and to provide evidence in support of their application. Each local authority should clearly set out and explain the evidence required in the interests of transparency and fairness.

As with the monitoring and enforcement of existing council tax exemptions and discounts, it is expected that local authorities will take steps to verify the evidence provided in support of an application for an exception. A local authority may also conduct regular inspections or site visits to verify continued eligibility.

Local authorities will be aware that under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, civil penalties can be applied to a person who deliberately supplies false information.

The following sections provide additional information to assist local authorities in applying the exceptions specifically for:

- dwellings being marketed for sale
- dwellings being marketed for let
- job-related dwellings

Class 1: dwellings being marketed for sale

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for sale. It also covers dwellings where an offer to buy the dwelling has been accepted but the sale has not yet been completed.

To qualify for this exception a dwelling must be on the market for sale at a reasonable price for that dwelling. A liable owner must demonstrate to the satisfaction of a local authority that they are actively marketing their property for sale at a reasonable price, ie what it would reasonably be expected to fetch on the open market.

In considering an application for an exception, a local authority may wish to consider a range of factors relating to the sale of dwellings, such as the following:

- how long properties in the area have been available for sale
- the average price and time on the market of similar properties in the local area
- whether unduly restrictive conditions, such as the price, are being placed on the dwelling to impede its sale
- any other reasonable factors

To determine whether a dwelling is genuinely on the market for sale a local

authority may wish to consider different types of evidence which could include the following:

- listing on advertised websites, for example estate agent websites, Rightmove and Zoopla, or evidence of other ways in which the property is being marketed
- a contract with an estate agent
- estate agent listings or sales particulars if privately marketed
- an Energy Performance Certificate (required when a property is built or sold)

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception but can be extended should the property sale have been agreed but not completed beyond the 1 year anniversary of the exception period commencing. The exception would end on the date of the sale of the property. After an exception has ended, a dwelling being marketed for sale will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been sold.

Class 2: dwellings being marketed for let

This exception also applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for let. It also covers dwellings where an offer to rent has been accepted but the tenant is not yet entitled to occupy the property because the tenancy has not yet started.

To be eligible for this exception, a liable owner must demonstrate to the satisfaction of a local authority that they are actively marketing the property for let at a reasonable price, ie the rent the property would reasonably be expected to fetch having regard to the rent raised on comparable dwellings.

In considering whether the exception applies, a local authority may wish to consider a range of factors relating to the letting of dwellings, such as the following:

- how long properties in their area have been available for rent
- the average rent and time on the market for similar rental properties in the local area
- whether unduly restrictive conditions such as the rent is being placed on the property to impede its letting
- any other reasonable factors

For a local authority to determine whether a liable owner is actively or genuinely marketing their property for let, a local authority may wish to consider different types of evidence which could include the following:

- a contract with a letting agency
- estate agent listings or letting agent brochures
- registration and licensing of a landlord and agent for a dwelling being marketed for let, via Rent Smart Wales
- housing lists of properties being offered for rent provided by Registered Social Landlords
- an Energy Performance Certificate (required when a property is built or let)
- a valid gas safety certificate required for homes being let

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception. After the end of the exception period, a dwelling being marketed for let will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been subject to a tenancy that was granted for a term of 6 months or more.

Exceptions 3 to 6 are more specific classes and are not covered further in this part of the guidance.

Class 7: job-related dwellings

This exception applies only in relation to the second home premium and applies to dwellings occupied by a qualifying person. The criteria for a qualifying person

are set out under Class 7 in Part 1.

In considering eligibility for this exception, a local authority may request certain types of evidence, to prove that a liable person is required to live in a job-related dwelling. This could include the following:

- a contract of employment
- a council tax demand notice (to show liability in respect of another property if the main or second home is in the UK)
- tax returns or pay statements
- Denomination Letter (in respect of a Minister of Religion)
- Ministry of Defence letter or written contract (in respect of the Armed Forces)

Part 3: monitoring and reporting council tax premiums

During the summer of 2021, the Welsh Government consulted on local taxes for second homes and self-catering accommodation. This considered the effectiveness of the discretionary powers given to local authorities to apply council tax premiums to second homes and long-term empty properties. Many responses called for local authorities to be more transparent about how they spend the funds raised from the premium.

To assess the effectiveness of the premiums and ensure information on their use is clearly made available to local council taxpayers, the Welsh Government expects local authorities to report on the implementation of the premiums and the additional revenue generated.

In having regard to this guidance, local authorities should also give due consideration to publishing information to assist members of the public and must provide information to the Welsh Ministers when requested.

Local authorities already report through the existing statutory CT1 (Council Tax Dwellings) Return the following information relating to premiums. This informs the annual statistical releases on council tax collection:

- number of properties liable for the premiums
- percentage of premium applied to long-term empty homes
- percentage of premium applied to second homes

From 1 April 2023, local authorities will be encouraged to publish on their websites, details relating to the income generated from charging a premium for the previous financial year.

As a minimum this should include the following:

- the total numbers of (i) long-term empty properties and (ii) second homes
- the numbers of properties liable for each premium (i) long-term empty properties and (ii) second homes
- the amount of income generated from charging a premium on long-term empty properties
- the amount of income generated from charging a premium on second homes
- how the additional income raised has been used to tackle the problems caused by long-term empty properties and second homes, or to address other local housing issues

Part 4: appeals

If a person is dissatisfied with their local authority due to a decision made regarding the calculation of their council tax liability, including their liability to pay a premium, they should, in the first instance, contact their local authority to discuss the decision.

If a person remains dissatisfied after a discussion with their local authority, they may make an appeal to their local authority.

If a person disagrees with the outcome of the local authority appeals process or if the local authority does not provide a decision within the required timescales, the person may instigate an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal for Wales. A person may only do this only after they have exhausted the local authority's appeals process and complied with any processes required by the VTW before an appeal may be instigated.

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Council Tax Premiums for long term empty properties and second homes.

Blaenau Gwent County Council’s Cabinet has agreed to undertake a consultation exercise to seek your views about charging a council tax premium for long-term empty properties and second homes in the county.

The Housing waiting list across Blaenau Gwent is significant and the Council also experiences high levels of homelessness requiring costly short term emergency accommodation to be provided.

To help address these issues, the Council’s Empty Property Strategy aims to bring vacant properties back into use by considering all the options available for tackling the problem of empty properties and to ensure that where vacant properties are identified every effort is made to renovate them to a good standard.

Under section 12A and 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, with effect from the 1st April 2023 premiums of up to 300% can be charged on these properties.

Depending on the outcome of the consultation exercise the Council may consider introducing premiums for these classes of properties in the future.

A **long-term empty property** is defined as a dwelling which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least one year.

A **second home** is defined as a dwelling which is not a person’s sole or main home and is substantially furnished.

The consultation exercise will run until the 30th September 2023.

1. Should the Council use it’s discretionary powers to charge a premium on :-

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| i) Long Term Empty Properties | Yes / No |
| ii) Second Homes | Yes / No |

Comments:

2. What do you feel is an appropriate amount of premium to be charged on?:-

	50%	100%	150%	200%	300%	Other
i. Long Term Empty Properties						
ii. Second Homes						
Comments:						

Properties that would be exempt from any Council Tax Premium

Council tax legislation already provides a number of specific exemptions from council tax. There are a number of exemptions in place for unoccupied dwellings, such as, for example:

- where the resident is in long-term residential care or hospital,
- where a dwelling is being structurally repaired (for up to one year),
- where the resident has died (for up to six months after grant of probate or letters of administration).

A dwelling that is exempt from council tax is not liable for a premium

There are also a number of exemption classes which specifically apply to long-term empty properties and/or second homes. Where a property falls into one of these classes the council is not able to charge a council tax premium.

Classes of Dwellings	Definition	Applies to
Class 1	Dwellings being marketed for sale – time limited for 1 year.	Long-Term Empty Properties and Second Homes
Class 2	Dwellings being marketed for let – time limited for 1 year	
Class 3	Annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of the main dwelling	
Class 4	Dwellings which would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in armed forces accommodation	
Class 5	Occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings	Second Homes
Class 6	Seasonal homes where year-round occupation is prohibited	
Class 7	Job-related dwellings	

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Agenda Item 14

Cabinet and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 06.07.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 06.07.23

Committee: **Cabinet**
Date of meeting: **19th July 2023**
Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information (including Social Services 1st January to 31st March and Education Spring Term–2023 and Corporate Services)**
Portfolio Holder: **All Cabinet Members**
Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, Interim Corporate Director of Social Services and Luisa Munro-Morris, Interim 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)
23.06.23	28.06.23	29.06.23			18.07.23	19.07.23		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with safeguarding performance information and analysis from across the Council but with specific information relating to Children’s and Adult’s Social Services from 1st January 2023 to the 31st March 2023, and Education for the Spring term 2023 (Appendix 1). The information at Appendix 1 also includes detail on the current processes for monitoring safeguarding at a corporate level.
- 1.2 Monitoring and reporting systems are well developed within both Social Services and Education allowing the departments to track information, and evidence that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the Local Authority as a whole and to identify safeguarding areas within the Authority which require further development to improve safeguarding practice and procedures.
- 1.3 The information provided will enable members to identify safeguarding trends and areas within the Authority that require further development to improve safeguarding practice in order to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people within Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from:
 - Corporate Services for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023
 - Social Services for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023;
 - Education for the Spring term 2023; and
- 2.2 This report is written to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda and its importance across all service areas within the Council.
- 2.3 The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to the People Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet after each school term.

2.4 In April 2016 the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GwASB) and the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) became a statutory Board as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. The role of the Board is to set the strategic direction in relation to multi agency safeguarding. The Board carries out these core functions through policy direction, monitoring the effectiveness within agencies, commissioning practice reviews, and disseminating learning to practitioners to ensure safeguarding is high on the agenda at all levels of the workforce.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report was presented to CLT on 29th June 2023. This report will also be considered by the People Scrutiny Committee on 18th July 2023 and any feedback will be provided verbally to Cabinet.

3.2 **Option 1**

- (a) Accept the approach and information detailed in the report (appendix 1) as provided; and
- (b) agree the revised Safeguarding in Education Policy as shown in Appendix 3.

Option 2

- (a) Consider the information provided and provide comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes; and
- (b) provide suggested amendment to the revised Safeguarding in Education Policy, prior to approval.

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

4.1 The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the Council's Corporate Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy
- Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy

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

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There is no impact on the budget both in the short and long term.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies the highest risks for the Social Services Department. These are monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director

of Social Services. Similarly, the Education Directorate risk register captures the risks in respect of Education and is again included for reference in the data pack.

5.3 **Legal**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6th April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications attached to this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information**

Performance and data is provided within the report and the accompanying data pack.

6.1.1 **Corporate Services**

6.1.2 **Overview**

In November 2022, the Council received a report from Audit Wales on our safeguarding arrangements. This report was a follow up to a previous review undertaken in 2019.

6.1.3 Audit Wales found that, 'the pandemic further delayed the Council's response to the 2019 report. Although it has taken recent action to strengthen its corporate safeguarding arrangements, the Council has not yet fully addressed our previous recommendations. The Council recognises the need to strengthen corporate safeguarding arrangements beyond the Social Services and Education directorates. The Council developed an action plan to address the outstanding recommendations but, due to the pandemic, most of the planned work did not begin until early 2022.

6.1.4 From this, a further two recommendations were received for implementation:

- The Council needs to take further action to fully comply with the recommendations in our October 2019 follow up report on corporate arrangements for safeguarding of children.
- The Council needs to strengthen its monitoring arrangements of third parties so it can assure itself that they comply with the Council's safeguarding policies. It should consider whether a self-assessment tool like that recently used by Council directorates can be used with third parties to better understand compliance.

6.1.5 Significant progress has been made to respond to these additional recommendations. A key aspect of this has been the re-purposing of the Strategic Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group who have reviewed their terms of reference to ensure its purpose and objectives are clear. There is

also a designated safeguarding lead in each directorate who are represented on this group.

6.1.6 The Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and is available on the front pages of both the internet and intranet sites and contractors now receive a copy of the policy when tendering. OD oversee robust arrangements for the safe recruitment and DBS renewals of staff employed directly by the Council and safeguarding is now included in the Council's induction programme.

6.1.7 Detail of the Corporate safeguarding information is found in section 6 of appendix 1 and includes:

- DBS Compliance;
- VAWDASV Corporate Training;
- The Corporate Risk relating to safeguarding; and
- Progress to date of the Audit Wales recommendations.

6.1.8 ***Children's Social Services***

6.1.9 **Referrals to Social Services**

Figure 1:1 Shows the number of referrals made to social services. The chart demonstrates an increase in referrals between Q2 (1,686), Q3 (1,710) and Q4 (1,981). The data is indicative of previous trends where there has been a noted continued increase in referral rates into Children's Services. It is noted there was a slight decrease in Q2 however, despite this, the upward rise of referrals has since continued with Q4 demonstrating the highest number of referrals received in all Q's reported on within the chart. Referral rates continue to be monitored and similar increasing referral patterns are being reported within neighbouring Gwent authorities.

6.1.10 **Figure 1.1A** Shows the number of individuals associated with the referrals received, the number of individuals who have had 2 or more referrals during the month and the highest number of referrals received by an individual during the month. As noted in Figure 1.1, the number of total referrals has increased in Q4 therefore when considering months Jan, Feb and Mar 2023, it is not surprising to identify an overall increase in the number of individuals who have been referred. When considering an average across the Q's, Q4 has a lower average number of individuals who have received 2 or more referrals (65) in comparison to Q3 (70). On average the highest number of referrals for an individual is the same for Q3 and Q4 (5.3).

6.1.11 **Figure 1.2:** Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, Police remain the highest referring agency (Q2 35%, Q3 35% and Q4 29.9%). Health, Other Agency, and Education referrals are grouped closely within these quarters as being the second, third and fourth highest referring agency. Ongoing joint working with Police through hub meetings allows for regular discussion and monitoring of Police referrals alongside a Detective Sergeant from Gwent Police being co-located in Children's IAA, to quality assure all PPN's received.

Referral thresholds from partner agencies are being considered on a regional basis as part of a task and finish group which has been set up under the Gwent Safeguarding Board. The task and finish group are currently looking at the development of a regional Duty to Report (DTR) threshold document to act as an aid for professional judgement on when to appropriately submit a referral to Children's Services. This work is in its infancy however it is hoped the creation of this document will lead to an eventual reduction in inappropriate referrals being made to Children's Services.

6.1.12 **Figure 1.3:** Shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. The graph identifies a steady line for the receipt of additional referrals on open cases across all 4 Q's in 2022/23 in comparison to the steady increase in overall referrals received by the department. Interestingly there is a more noticeable gap comparison between the referrals received and referrals on open cases in Q4.

6.1.13 **Child Protection**

6.1.14 **Figures 2.1 & 2.2:** Provides a summary of the number of children on the child protection register with the numbers of registrations and deregistration's also being referenced within Fig 2.2.

There was a total of 62 children on the child protection register in Q4 which demonstrates a reduction of 11 from Q3.

During Q4 there have been a total of 31 new registrations which is a decrease of 13 compared to Q3. There was an increase of 4 de-registrations in Q4 compared to Q3.

Q4 figures evidence a reduced number of new registrations in comparison to all other Q's, particularly Q3, which may be attributable the service reconfiguration in Children's Services. The development of the Statutory Assessment Team (SAT) within the pilot model has enabled new referral allocation for under 14's to be streamlined to one team, focusing on undertaking thorough child protection investigations and consent based integrated assessments to promote children and families getting the right help at the right time. Additionally, the development of 2 locality care planning teams has meant an increased focus on care plan management of long-term cases which enables work to be undertaken to avoid registration or promote deregistration when safe and appropriate. This will continue to be monitored via the pilot review meetings being held to closely evaluate the pilot structure and what impact this is having on service delivery.

The outcome focused; strengths-based practice model continues to be well embedded within children's services with a focus on priority risk management. This continues to support a risk management culture which appears to be influencing consistency within child protection registrations when considering numbers of children on the child protection register across the year.

- 6.1.15 **Figure 2.3:** Shows the categories of abuse for which children's names are registered for on the Child Protection Register over the past year. Neglect and Emotional/Psychological abuse remain the highest categories of abuse across all 4 Q's. This is typically in keeping with national statistics for child protection categorisations.

It is noted that sexual abuse is notoriously underrepresented as a registration category for children on the child protection register. Child Sexual Abuse is key priority for the Gwent Safeguarding Board and a recent thematic audit has been undertaken across the region to consider Local Authority responses to child protection referrals where sexual abuse/harm is the reason concern. The Safeguarding Service Manager undertook a dip sample of 5 cases meeting this requirement within Blaenau Gwent; positively there were assurances that operational teams had responded appropriately with thorough investigations being undertaken regarding this area of concern.

- 6.1.16 **Figure 2.4:** relates to the age and gender breakdown of children on the child protection register with Males aged 10-15 being the highest (16), followed by females in the 5-9 and 1-4 age brackets (14).

6.1.17 **Adults Social Services**

- 6.1.18 **Figure 3.1** relates to the number of reports received of an 'adult suspected of being at risk' during the given period (1/1/23 - 31/3/23) was 205. During the same period for the previous year (2021/2022) there was a total of 122 which represents an increase of over 40% in quarter 4 compared with the same period in the previous year and an overall annual increase of 13%.

It is important to consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic over the last few years and more recently the significant challenges for citizens, communities and services as a result of the cost-of-living crisis which could be the key factors contributing to the increase in referrals. Despite these relentless and anticipated challenges, we continue to work tirelessly to ensure that essential services remain operational to provide support, care and protection to children and adults in our communities.

- 6.1.19 **Figure 3.2** relates to the number of referrals received within the different categories of abuse or neglect. As in previous years the most referrals are received for females over the age of 65. The category of abuse most reported is neglect following by physical abuse. The category of abuse with the least reports is sexual abuse which has been the situation for the last four years.

The regional Quality Assurance sub-group continues to support the development of the performance management and quality assurance framework identifying any emerging safeguarding themes and challenges that may become more amplified and require more targeted attention moving forward.

- 6.1.20 **Figure 3.3** relates to the places where the alleged abuse has occurred. The most common setting for alleged abuse occurring was in care home settings,

followed very closely by an individual's own home. This split is common and fairly consistent with last years' data. The care home settings include residential, nursing or respite care whereby the alleged perpetrators could be paid carers/nurses, family and or other service users. The alleged perpetrators within an individual's own home also range between being professionals/paid carers, friends, or family.

Adults Safeguarding team has adopted a similar approach to children services by developing a quality assurance approach into reviewing cases to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures and investigations are carried out with due diligence.

- 6.1.21 **Figure 3.4** relates to the persons alleged to be responsible for abuse. In quarter 4, the figures show that 136 perpetrators were 'not known' which is an increase of over 50%. This accounts for referrals where there is no specific alleged perpetrator and systematic/organisation issues have alleged to have caused possible abuse. There is a similar referral rate for the alleged perpetrators being professionals, other person or another service user. The Safeguarding team have recently implemented a system for recording practitioner concern referrals and this data will be made available from April 2023.

Over the course of the last three years, the lessons which were learned from regional adult practice reviews in relation to the commissioning of care have been shared with care home forums and providers, across Gwent. These improved links with care home providers now continue as core business for our Quality Assurance subgroup, which ensures that safeguarding mechanisms are in place and adhered to whilst care is commissioned, enabling us to achieve our intended outcomes in this area. In order to further share lessons learned from Operation Jasmine, in June 2022 we cascaded information emerging from the national, multi-agency, facilitated online reflection and learning event. We continue to consider how this learning should inform our provision of safeguarding training and awareness-raising campaigns.

- 6.1.22 **Figure 3.5:** identifies the number of referrals received are from a variety of agencies and sources. The majority of the referrals were submitted from provider agencies which is consistent with last year's data. The category marked other includes referrals from DWP, fire and rescue, anonymous referrals and financial Banks.

Safeguarding remains an important part of the commissioning function and requires a substantial resource commitment from the Commissioning Team who provide crucial information in respect of commissioned services and providers which contributes to informed decision making in relation to safeguarding cases. A member of the Commissioning Team attends every strategy meeting held for commissioned services to offer advice, guidance and perspective. The Contracts and Commissioning Team Manager and the three Contract Monitoring Officers are all fully trained non-criminal investigators and undertake investigations independently or jointly with colleagues depending on the complexity and size of the investigation, or, with health colleagues if there are nursing issues involved. Whether referrals progress to strategy meetings

and/or investigation, or are closed down as inappropriate safeguarding referrals, there is very often some preliminary investigation work and/or recommendations / performance issues with providers to be acted upon and followed up by the Commissioning Team.

- 6.1.23 **Figure 3.6** relates to the referrals of domestic abuse received to the Safeguarding team. There is a common and consistent theme that reports for female victims are higher than males. The figures for domestic abuse as shown relate to where the victim is considered as an 'adult at risk'. During this quarter there were 10 cases for domestic abuse compared with 5 in the same period as last year.

A strong link also remains with the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) partnership. Our close working relationships are also demonstrated with the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, and nationally recognised bodies such as Public Health Wales along with our regional volunteering agencies, Gwent Association of Volunteering Organisations (GAVO) and Torfaen Voluntary Alliance.

6.1.24 **Education**

6.1.25 **Overview**

Members will be aware that Blaenau Gwent Council and the Education Directorate is committed to ensuring that Safeguarding in Education processes are robust, fit for purpose and are being consistently applied. Through this report Scrutiny Members are provided with an overview of the work that is undertaken in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are managed effectively and fulfil the requirements as set out in the Estyn framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES). This report is the second report that captures the broader data sets. Members will be aware that data presented within this written report is done so on an exception basis to bring key aspects of information to Members' attention and as such not all evidence in the supporting performance report will be included in this narrative.

- 6.1.26 Members will be aware that there continues to be ongoing industrial action short of strike (ASOS) which has impacted upon some of the data that would routinely be presented to Members. Where this is the case the relevant section of the report identifies this.

- 6.1.27 In addition, this report will also provide an overview of changes to Safeguarding policies (Appendix 3) that have been reviewed during this period with a small group of school Headteachers and DSP's. The policies for scrutiny are listed below along with a summary of the main changes to the respective policies:

- LGES Safeguarding Policy for 2023/24

- 6.1.28 Main changes to the policy are:

- The addition to the start of the school template (Appendix 1) that it is to be read in conjunction with the whole Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy.

- The Youth Service Appendix (Appendix 3) is updated to reflect changes in contact details within the Youth Service.
- The addition of a communication protocol to the practitioner concern appendix (Appendix 6)

6.1.29 Members will be aware that during this period Estyn published their report on the outcome of the LGES inspection during this period, that has already been shared with People Scrutiny. However, for completeness in terms of performance below is an extract from the report in relation to Safeguarding that confirms that there are appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place.

“Officers and elected members are committed to safeguarding young people in their local authority. There is an appropriate safeguarding culture within the local authority. All officers and elected members receive suitable safeguarding training. The way in which education and children’s services work together has contributed well to improving multi-agency working and the support schools receive to manage the needs of pupils and their families more effectively. The advice and guidance provided to schools by officers is valued by school leaders and helps them to respond to safeguarding concerns appropriately. Elected members are beginning to develop their understanding of safeguarding in education and challenge appropriately the content of reports they receive.”

6.1.30 **Section 05 Figure 1.2 Estyn** The data set for recording the outcomes of Estyn inspection visits has been amended as judgements are no longer provide against inspection areas. However, where Estyn identifies concerns in relation to health and safety and or safeguarding arrangements, they may issue a letter and include a recommendation within the inspection report. During the period two inspections were completed and both inspections resulted in a recommendation to improve, and a letter being issued. In both cases the concerns were in relation to the physical site / premises considerations and remedial action has been taken to address these concerns. In addition, the Education Directorate has undertaken a review of premises/ site considerations to ensure that where such issues are identified by schools that appropriate timely action is taken to mitigate any concerns. This has resulted in the identification of further works on some sites which has either been completed or is in train with interim safeguards in place until the matter has been rectified.

6.1.31 **Section 05 Figure 1.3.1/1.3.2: Safeguarding Policy** - The Local Government Education Services Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually. All schools are expected to adopt the safeguarding policy through their governing body and all schools have a safeguarding policy in place. By the end of the Spring term 2023, 64% of schools had adopted the most recent safeguarding policy for 2022-23.

6.1.32 **Section 05 Figure 3.1.1: Out of County Placements** - All out of county placements are safeguard assessed prior to any learner being placed in the setting. The process for independent settings involves a review of: Estyn reports for the setting, safeguarding policy and safeguarding quality assurance visit information. A further independent setting was quality assured for safeguarding in the Spring term for safeguarding with no concerns arising as a result.

For out of county Local Authority maintained provision, following scrutiny of the school SG policy and Estyn report, contact is made with relevant Local Authorities where further information is needed for safeguarding assurance. During the period no concerns were identified.

- 6.1.33 **Section 05 Figure 4.1.1: EWC Registration** - There were; 2 EWC registrations that were incomplete prior to staff starting their roles within their respective schools. These followed the agreed escalation process and were fully resolved.
- 6.1.34 **Section 05 Figure 4.2.1/4.2.3: Training** - The number of school staff completing the VAWDASV Group 1 online training during the Spring term remains at 73%. Attendance at termly meeting for Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) in schools has also remained stable, with attendance during the Spring term of 64%. Whilst recorded completion of the online safeguarding module is low, all schools are compliant with 'in-person' delivery of their whole school safeguarding training.
- 6.1.35 **Section 05 Fig 5.121.1 /2** - There are established arrangements in place for the reporting of bullying within schools. Due to ASOS data for the Spring term 2023 is not available for inclusion as not all schools have returned their data.
- 6.1.36 **Section 05 Figure 5.2.1/5.2.2/5.2.3: Electively Home Educated Pupils** - Annual visits by LA Officers to EHE pupils provide valuable information regarding the efficiency of the education provided. Support is offered to reintegrate or to signpost. Home visits are offered to parents who refuse are few. Neutral venues are offered, and School Attendance Orders are considered. Additional funding from WG has improved engagement with hard-to-reach families. There is emerging positive impact of this work but more needs to be done nationally so that a national register is compiled of all those children EHE. The implementation of effective safeguarding nationally continues to be compromised until this is achieved.
- 6.1.37 **Section 05 Figure 5.4.1/5.4.2/5.4.3/5.4.4/5.4.5: Children who offend** - There is a service level agreement in place with the Youth Offending Service and both agencies work together to ensure that children are in appropriate education. Figures demonstrate that there tends to be a dip in the autumn term. Outcome 22 is a new police outcome code that can be used when the police have decided to defer prosecution until the accused has been given the opportunity to engage with an intervention activity.
- 6.1.38 **Section 05 Figure 5.5.1: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** - There has been a drop in the number of incidents. The number of cases may differ as in addition to issuing Strike Warning Letters, the Police consider a range of options as a preventative measure. These include words of advice and home visits.
- 6.1.39 **Figure 5.8.5 Operation Encompass**
The number of Operation Encompass notifications has reduced since the Autumn Term 2022, though it should be noted that the Spring term is shorter

than the Autumn term. When compared with the two previous Spring terms, the number of occurrences and number of children involved have reduced for each Spring term since 2021. Data available since Autumn 2022 is the % children present at incident; during the Spring term, children were present at 31.6% of occurrences, a slight decrease from 37.5% in the Autumn term.

6.1.40 **Section 05 Figure 5.10.1/5.10.2: Exclusions -**

Exclusions are high, with many schools seeing a decline in the behaviour of pupils. There is a similar picture across Wales. Targeted support meetings have been offered to schools to discuss attendance and behaviour. Training has been offered to governors. A vulnerable learner panel has been established where schools can discuss pupils with persistent disruptive behaviour. This remains a key priority for the Education Directorate and schools.

6.1.41 **Section 05 Figure 5.11.2: Physical Interventions -** The number of incidents increased during the Autumn term, reducing again in the Spring term. Spring term data is now aligned to the level of interventions seen during the pre-pandemic period. Most of the interventions are attributable to the specialist schools. Since the Autumn term, there has been a reduction in the number of interventions used in both specialist schools.

6.1.42 **Section 05 Figure 5.12/5.13/5.14 – Prejudice Related Incidents/Bullying -** There are established arrangements in place for the reporting of bullying concerns within schools which involve an alleged incident involving a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act. Due to ASOS the data for the Spring term 2023 is not available for inclusion.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

Quarterly reporting provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded, and the Local Authority adheres to legislation regarding statutory intervention.

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

6.3.1 The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads meetings reconvened in 2021, this helps to ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.

6.3.2 Termly meetings also take place with the Safeguarding Leads from all the schools and other education settings and half termly meetings take place between the safeguarding team and lead education staff.

6.3.3 The SEWSCB local Safeguarding Network group also reviews the safeguarding information to ensure all partner agencies are as fully aware as possible.

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

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

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables both Social Services and the Education Directorates to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future. This process is further supplemented by the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework within which local government education services operate.

The rigours self-evaluation processes ensure that key areas for development are identified and then embedded within business planning arrangements.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 The work undertaken by the Social Services and Education Directorates looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having a proactive rather than reactive approach to service planning can also help with planning resources.

6.5.2 Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny Committee enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

6.5.3 The Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board has developed a new partnership agreement between local authorities and agency partners including Gwent Police, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Wales Probation Trust, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations which sets out a clear and shared vision to ensure all adults in Gwent are safeguarded effectively through partnership working and community engagement.

6.5.4 The recent establishment of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board continues to progress strategic issues across the Local Government Education Services.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

6.6.1 The South-East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub-groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

6.6.2 Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Aneurin Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

6.6.3 Throughout the quarters, partnership working with the police and statutory partners continued to progress. The Hub model is working well, with multi agency safeguarding meetings happening in a timely manner.

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

6.7.1 All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

6.7.2 The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental safeguarding leads meetings helps ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any issues trends within safeguarding. Within Education this is further supplemented by the work of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board and the termly meetings with Designated Safeguarding persons (DSP'S)

6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

N/A

6.9 **Integrated Impact Assessment - EqIA** (*screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed*).

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The Local Safeguarding Network Group is a subgroup of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board. This group is made up of multi-agency representation from within Blaenau Gwent who monitor and reviews the safeguarding information and performance. This group has direct links with the Youth Forum to ensure the voice of the child is fully considered and heard on safeguarding issues.

7.2 The performance of safeguarding information is monitored throughout the financial year from April to March and reported to People Scrutiny Committee and, in the context of Education, is supplemented by various quality assurance activities that are routinely reported to Education DLT on a termly basis and seek to inform the ongoing self-evaluation and the priorities to be progressed in respect of Safeguarding in Education.

7.3 The Strategic Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group has responsibility for implementing the recommendations from Audit Wales as well as ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities remain a role for all service areas.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Data Template Quarter 4 2023 Final

Appendix 2 – BG Education Risk Register

Appendix 3 - LGES Safeguarding Policy for 2023/24

The following hyperlink provides further details on the governance and Structure: www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk

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Safeguarding Performance Report

Social Services
1st January 2023 to
31st March 2023

Education
Spring Term 2023

Corporate Services
1st January 2023 to
31st March 2023



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

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Purpose of the report

The council is committed to creating an environment which enables people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities whilst feeling safe and protected.

We believe that all children, adults and young people have the right to be safe from harm and it is a corporate objective to put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.

We recognise our responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and this includes the contribution we make to working together with other agencies so that all children and young people reach their full potential and we continue to look after the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The purpose of this report is to provide safeguarding information that is recorded and monitored to ensure that we are indeed delivering this objective.

Monitoring and reporting systems are well-developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

Performance information is collated from Social Services, Organisational Development and Education information systems which identifies activity, demands and trends of data. This includes a number of items that are statutory requirements as part of the Welsh Government Performance Framework.

The report includes information on the following:

- Referrals received and their outcomes
- Children who are being safeguarded and analysis
- Quality assurance arrangements with education settings
- Broader issues within education that impact upon safeguarding
- Corporate progress on recommended proposals for improvement
- DBS Compliance
- Safeguarding Corporate Risk Register

This report will be shared with Senior Management Teams and presented to the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee for Social Services, Education and Active Living.

00 | Community Profile - Demographics

Community Profile



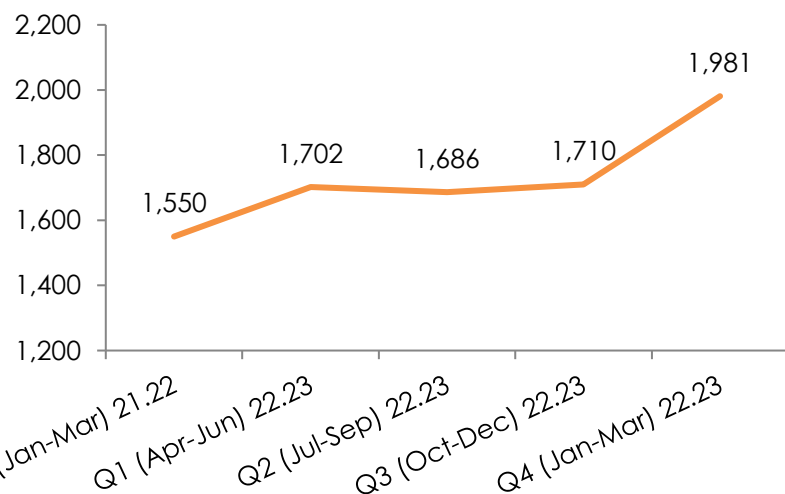
– key benefit claimants **August 2014 - 23.2%** in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of **16.4%**

- The total rate of Blaenau Gwent's recorded offence levels was higher than comparative areas. For the year ending **December 2014** Police recorded crimes - **76.89** crimes per thousand population in Blaenau Gwent compared to its most similar group of areas average (as defined by the Home Office) of **69.03** per thousand population.
- Total Population: **70,020** Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,619** (2020 Population Estimates)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 31st December 20: **1,108**
- Number of pupils attending primary schools: **6,125**
- Number of pupils attending secondary schools: **3,251**

- 45% of Blaenau Gwent's local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)
- The proportion of benefit claimants amongst people of working age was higher in Blaenau Gwent than the proportion across the comparable authorities (working-age client group)

01 Children's Social Services

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services



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Fig 1.1a Number of individuals linked to referrals

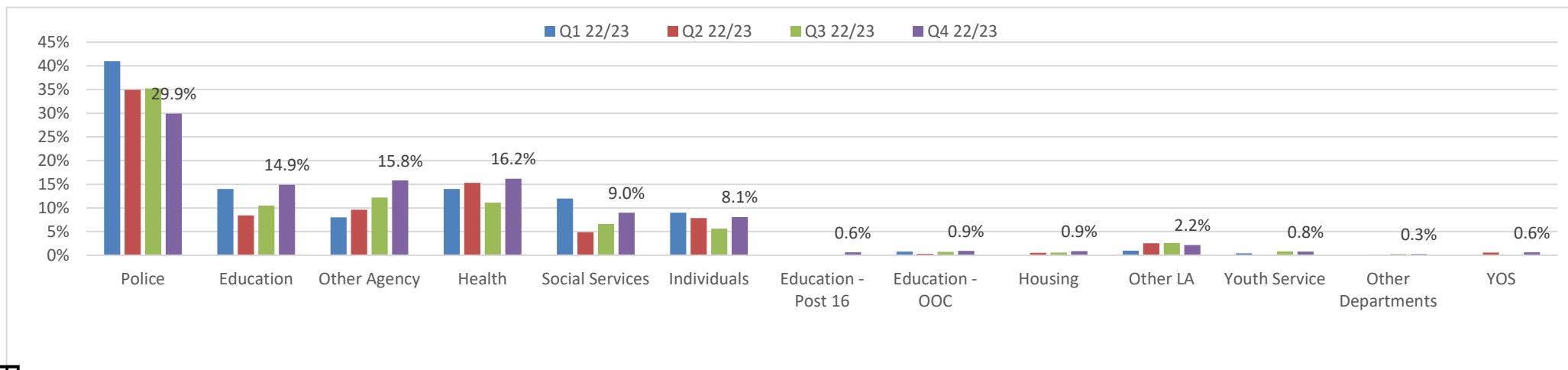
	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23
Referrals	499	676	635	649	426	645	604	732
No of Individuals	414	563	510	547	374	552	531	638
2+ Referrals	63	67	90	72	48	63	52	81
Highest No. of Referrals for an individual	8	10	6	6	4	7	5	4

Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (Q1, Q2, Q3 & Q4)

	Quarter 1		Quarter 3		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Police	698	41%	692	35%	698	35%	593	29.9%
Education	243	14%	167	8%	208	10%	295	14.9%
Other Agency	140	8%	190	10%	242	12%	313	15.8%
Health	230	14%	303	15%	220	11%	320	16.2%
Social Services	202	12%	96	5%	131	7%	178	9.0%
Individuals	149	9%	156	8%	112	6%	160	8.1%
Education - Post 16		0.00%	0	0%	1	0%	12	0.6%
Education - OOC	13	0.80%	6	0%	14	1%	18	0.9%
Housing	1	0%	10	1%	11	1%	17	0.9%
Other LA	20	1%	50	3%	51	3%	43	2.2%
Youth Service	6	0.40%	2	0%	16	1%	15	0.8%
Other	0	0.00%	3	0%	5	0%	5	0.3%
Departments								
YOS	0	0.00%	11	1%	1	0%	12	0.6%
Total	1,702	100%	1,686	100%	1,710	100%	1,981	100%

01 Children's Social Services

Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage



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Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open cases

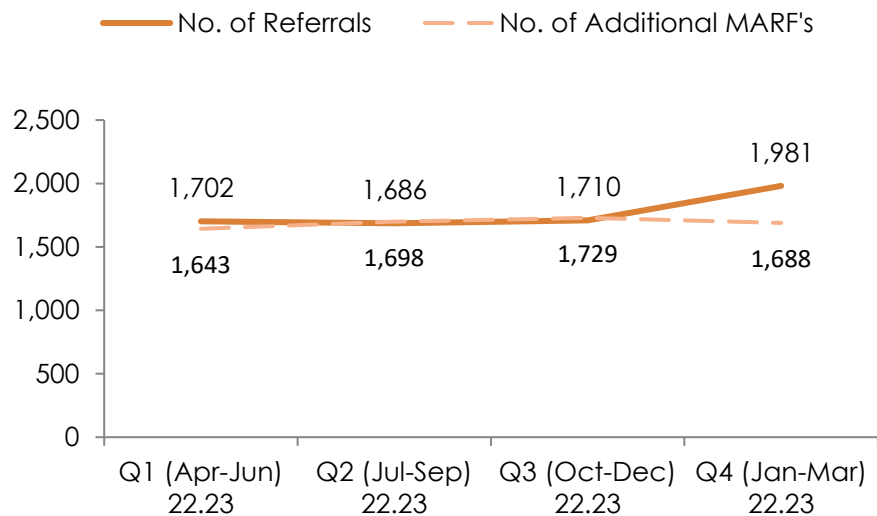


Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register

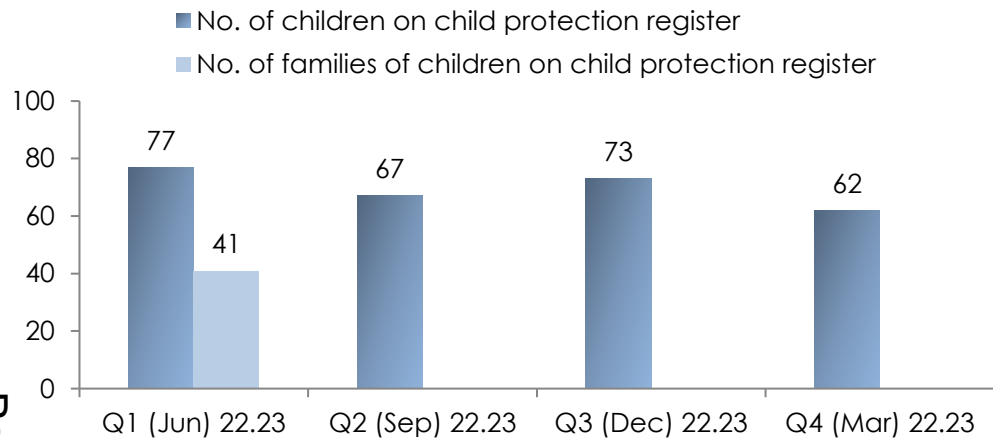
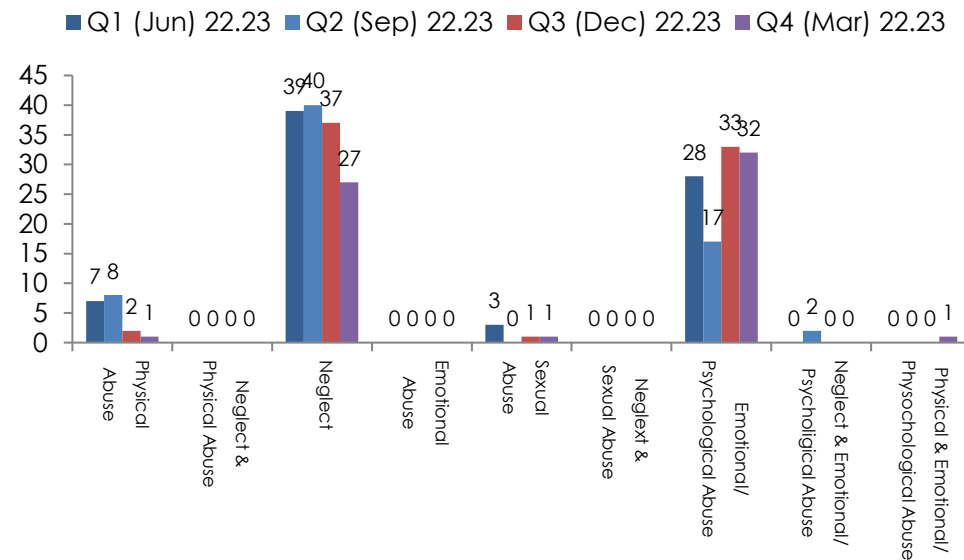


Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse



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Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary

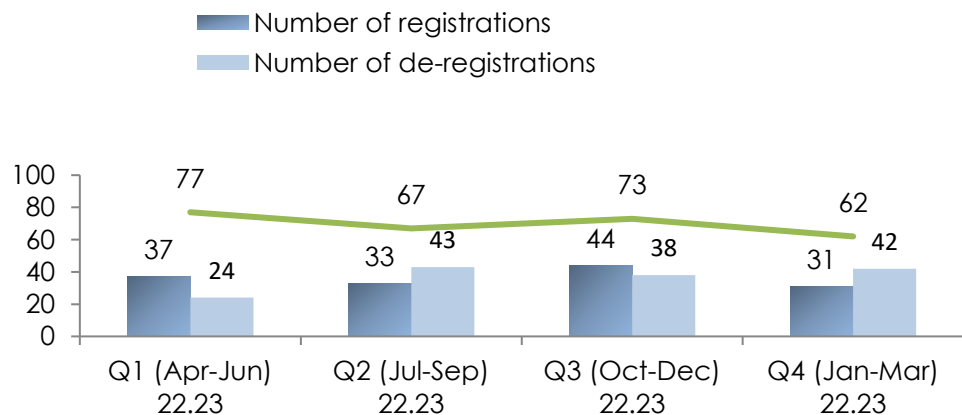
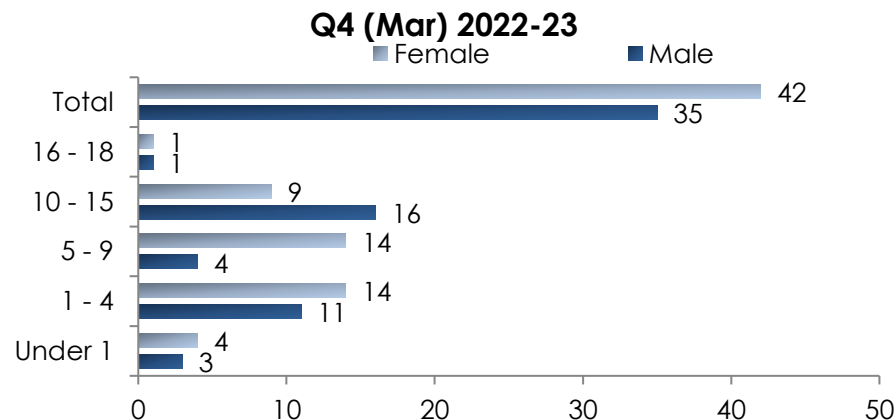


Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register



03 | Adult Services

Fig 3.1 Adults suspected of being at risk

Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the quarter	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	122	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	205
Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the year	1/4/21-31/3/22	553	1/4/22-31/3/23	639

Fig 3.2 Categories of abuse or neglect

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Category of Abuse	Gender	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over
		1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/4/22-31/3/23	1/4/22-31/3/23
Physical	Male	6	8	19	22	8	17	21	35
	Female	6	11	37	55	10	15	37	62
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	Male	0	1	5	1	1	1	3	1
	Female	4	3	19	7	8	2	14	6
Emotional/ Psychological	Male	5	0	24	7	10	6	22	20
	Female	15	5	53	23	15	12	32	23
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
Financial	Male	2	1	22	12	3	6	10	17
	Female	2	4	19	31	8	7	27	29
Neglect	Male	6	16	27	52	4	30	24	76
	Female	2	25	22	96	5	35	31	147
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	Male	19	26	97	94	26	60	80	149
	Female	29	48	150	212	46	71	141	267
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
	Total	48	74	247	306	74	131	223	416

Fig 3.3 Place alleged abuse/neglect took place

Place alleged abuse or neglect occurred	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/4/22-31/3/23
Own Home	47	248	88	271
Community	11	59	15	51
Care Home Setting	58	219	90	283
Health Setting	6	27	12	34
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	122	553	205	639

Fig 3.5 Source of Referral

Source of Referral	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/4/22-31/3/23
Self-reported	1	19	3	11
Relative / friend	5	32	5	14
Local authority	4	13	9	30
Police	4	23	8	22
Local health board	19	89	29	84
Independent hospital	0	0	1	5
Ambulance service	3	14	0	8
Care regulator	1	9	5	6
Provider agency	65	220	93	273
Probation	0	2	0	0
Third sector	7	35	9	19
Advocate	0	0	0	1
Education	0	4	0	4
Housing	2	11	5	22
Internal (Social Worker, Other Team)	7	60	29	102
Other	4	22	9	38
Total	122	553	205	639

Fig 3.4 Person alleged responsible

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Person alleged responsible	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/4/22-31/3/23
A spouse	8	35	8	35
A son or daughter	0	33	10	34
A family member who is not a child or spouse	9	47	5	39
A professional	24	131	15	109
A volunteer or unpaid worker	0	0	0	1
A friend	4	31	2	12
A neighbour	1	2	4	19
Another service user	11	49	11	32
Other Person	5	32	14	32
Not known	60	193	136	326
Total	122	553	205	639

Fig 3.6 Domestic abuse referrals

	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over
	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/1/22-31/3/22 (Q4)	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/4/21-31/3/22	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/1/23-31/3/23 (Q4)	1/4/22-31/3/23	1/4/22-31/3/23
Male	0	0	2	4	2	2	3	5
Female	4	1	22	8	6	0	15	2

* Please note that information recorded for Domestic abuse referrals doesn't get recorded until case closure.

04 | Referrals from Education

Fig 4.1 Contacts by Source – Primary School

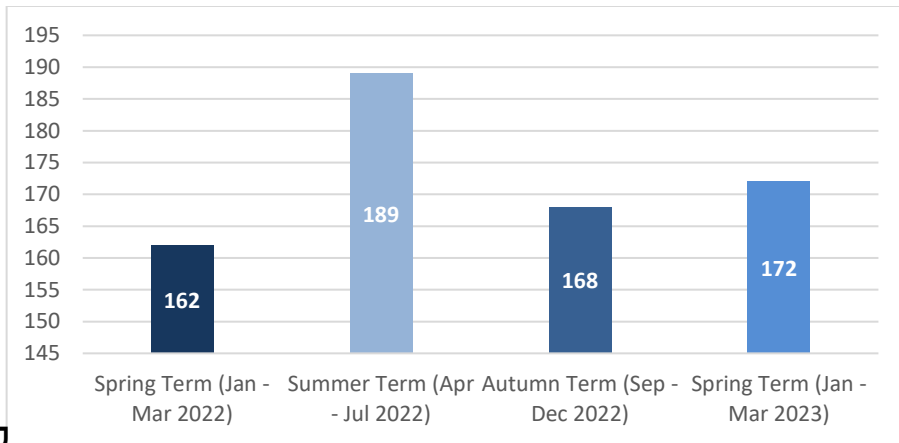


Fig 4.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School

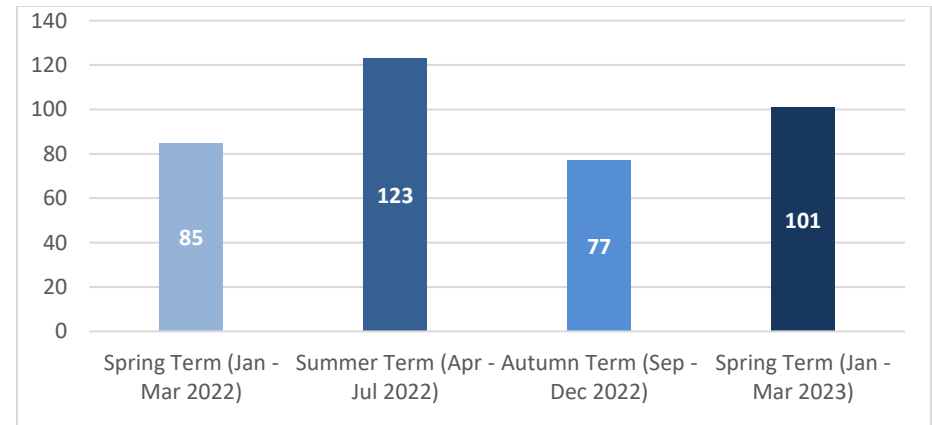


Fig 4.3 Contacts by Source - Other

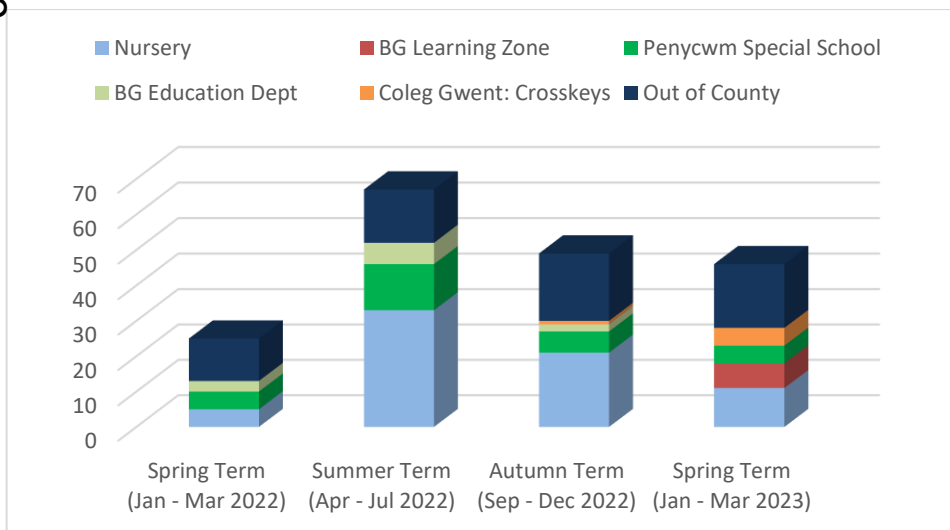
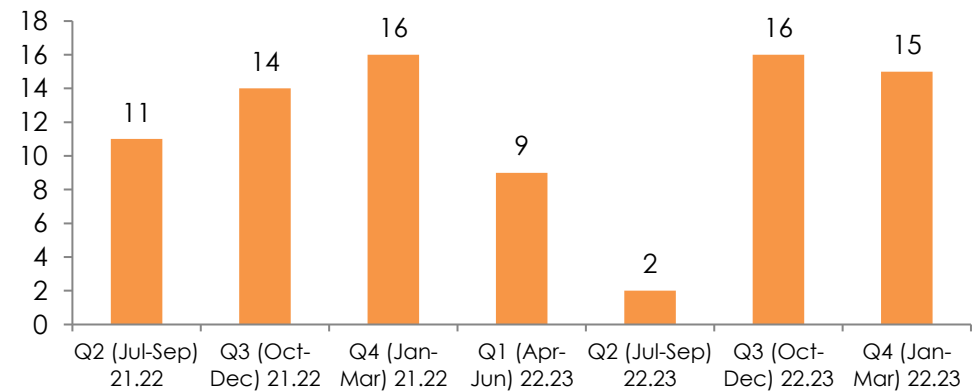


Fig 4.4 Referrals received from Youth Services



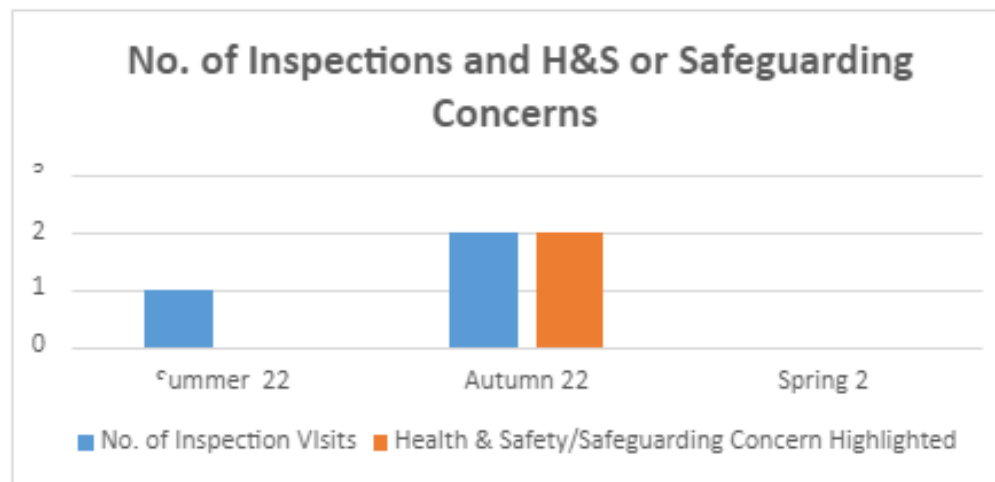
1. Regulatory

1.1 Education Directorate Risk - **Education Risk Register is a separate appendix.**

1.2 Estyn

1.2.1 The table below provides an overview of the number of Estyn inspections conducted and associated Health & Safety/Safeguarding concerns highlighted.

No of School Inspected	No. of Inspection Visits	Health & Safety/Safeguarding Concern Highlighted
Summer 22	1	0
Autumn 22	2	2
Spring 23	0	0



1.3 Policy

1.3.1 Compliance Statements

Partner Agency Safeguarding Policies in Place	Ac Year 21-22	Ac Year 22-23
No of Partner Agencies	4	4
Policies in Place	4	4
% Compliance	100%	100%

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1.3.2 Safeguarding Policies released and Governing Body Compliance

Safeguarding Policy Compliance	21-22	22-23
No of Schools in BG	25	25
Governing Body Compliance	25	16
% Compliance	100%	64%%

All schools adopted the LGES Safeguarding policy

May 2023 - All schools have a Safeguarding policy. 64% are recorded as having adopted the 2023-23 version by the end of the Spring term 2023.

2. Systems/Quality Assurance

2.1 My Concern

2.1.1 Safeguarding Systems in Use

Safeguarding System	Term	No. of Schools Using	% of Schools Using
My Concern	Autumn 22	22	81%
	Spring 23	24	96%

2.2 Keeping Learners Safe audit tool

2.2.1 School Assessment of 5 Key Areas

	21-22	22-23
No of Schools in BG	25	25
No of Schools who have used the KLS Safeguarding Toolkit to review procedures in the last 12 months?	25	25
% of Schools who have Reviewed	100%	100%

3. Independent Settings

3.1 Pupils in Out of County Placements - LA and Independent Settings

3.1.1 – Out of County Placements

	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2022	Spring 2022	Spring 2023
LA	15	15	9	9	11
Independent	18	18	10	11	16

3.1.2 Overview of Safeguarding arrangements.

May 2023 - there is a BG SG QA process for OOC settings which includes open source search, review of Estyn reports, safeguarding policy and QA visit information.

3.2 Education Workforce Council (EWC) Registrations

3.2.1 EWC Registrations on Appointment

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Incomplete EWC Registrations	5	0	0	1	2

4. Safe Workforce

4.1 DBS Position Statement: **Data as at Q1 – This data is no longer available**

4.1.1 New Starter/Rolling Programme DBS Checks Schools

Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1263
Staff with a valid DBS	1262

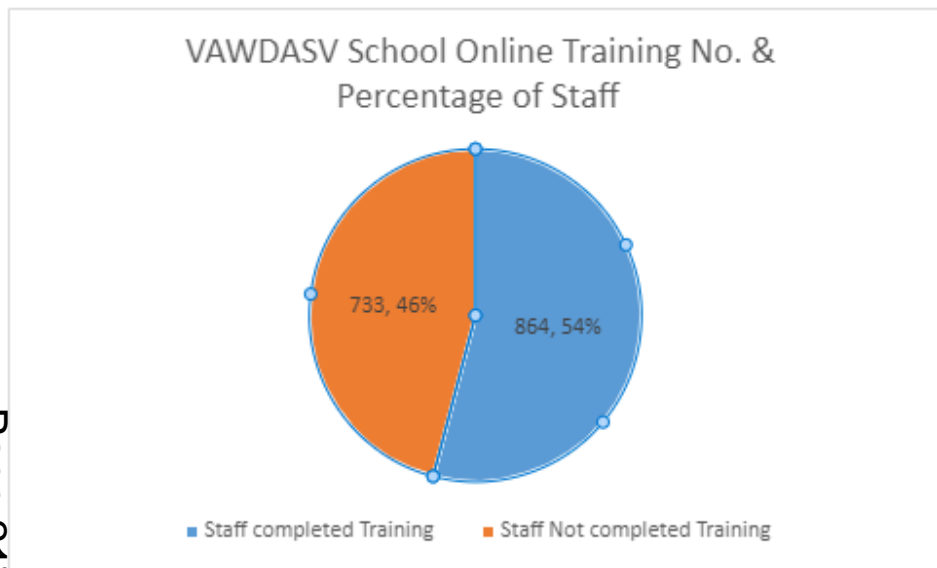
Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks		More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance	0		0	0
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance	0		1	1
Totals	0		1	1

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Appt Comments	Awaiting Certificate		Total	Escalation	
				Chased with Employee	Escalation to Operational Team
Awaiting ID documents	0		1	0	1
	0		1	0	1

4.2 Training

4.2.1 Basic/Enhanced VAWDA SV



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4.2.3 Online Safeguarding Training – Schools

Online Safeguarding Training	Q2 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23
Staff completed Training	173	244	256
Staff Not completed Training	1,081	1,010	998
Total Staff	1,254	1,254	1,254

All schools are compliant with their whole school safeguarding training (delivered in person).

4.2.2 Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) Meetings

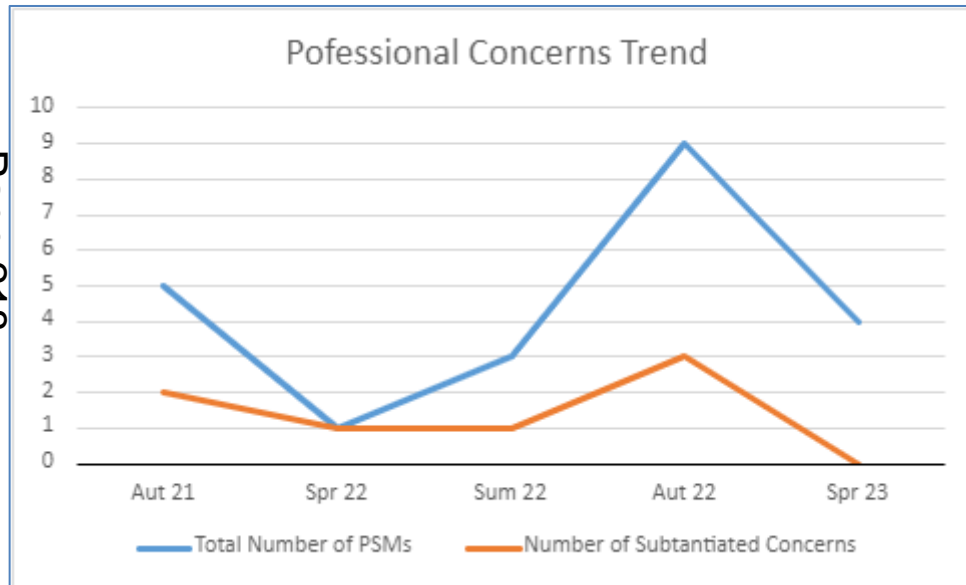
DSP Meetings	Aut 21	Spr 22	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23
No of Schools Represented	16	17	16	no mtg	16
% of School represented	64%	68%	64%	N/A	64%

4.3 Professional Concerns

4.3.1 Professional Concerns Review

Professional Strat Meetings	Aut21	Spr 22	Sum22	Aut 22	Spr 23
Total Number of PSMs	5	1	3	9	4
Number of Substantiated Concerns	2	1	1	3	0

4.3.2 Professional Concerns Trend



5. Vulnerable Children and Specific Incidents

5.1 Pregnant Schoolchildren

5.1.1 Numbers by Academic Year

No. by Academic Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
No. of Pregnant Schoolchildren*	1	1	2	1

*As numbers are so small, there are too few to report termly.

5.2 Electively Home Educated Pupils

5.2.1 Total Number of EHE Pupils

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	PLASC January 2022 No.	PLASC January 2021	PLASC January 2020 No.
Children electively home educated in BG	132	89	70
Children electively home educated in Wales	197	180	132

5.2.2 The table below sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn, spring and summer terms.

Month	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Apl – Jul 2021	3	0	1	0	3	2	3	0
Sept - Dec 2021	4		5	1	6		3	
Jan - Mar 2022	7	2	1		4		0	
Apr - Jul 2022	2	0	5	0	3	0	2	0
Sep – Dec 2022	3	2	6	6	3	4	5	4
Jan – Mar 2023	1	1	0	1	3	0	3	0
Total	20	5	18	8	22	4	16	4

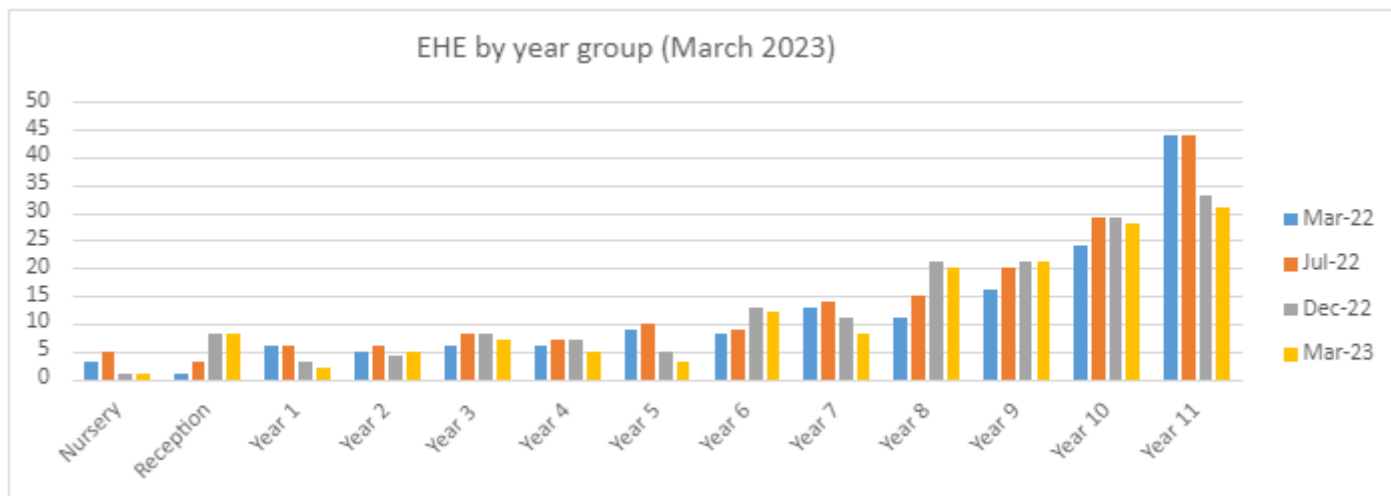
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5.2.3 The table below sets out the number of additional pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn, spring and summer terms.

Month	Primary		College		Did not transition		Moved into/out of Borough (including BG pupils that were in OOC schools)		School place unavailable		Special School	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Apl – Jul 2021	7	1			1		6					
Sept - Dec 2021	5	9			1		11				1	
Jan - Mar 2022	2	2					7				1	
Apr - Jul 2022	7	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
Sep – Dec 2022	4	9	0	1	2	1	11	1	0	0	0	0
Jan – Mar 2023	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	28	23	0	1	4	1	42	1	0	0	2	0

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5.2.4 EHE Breakdown per year group



*Please note that all year 11 pupils are removed on the last Friday of June when they end compulsory school education.

5.3 Children Missing in Education

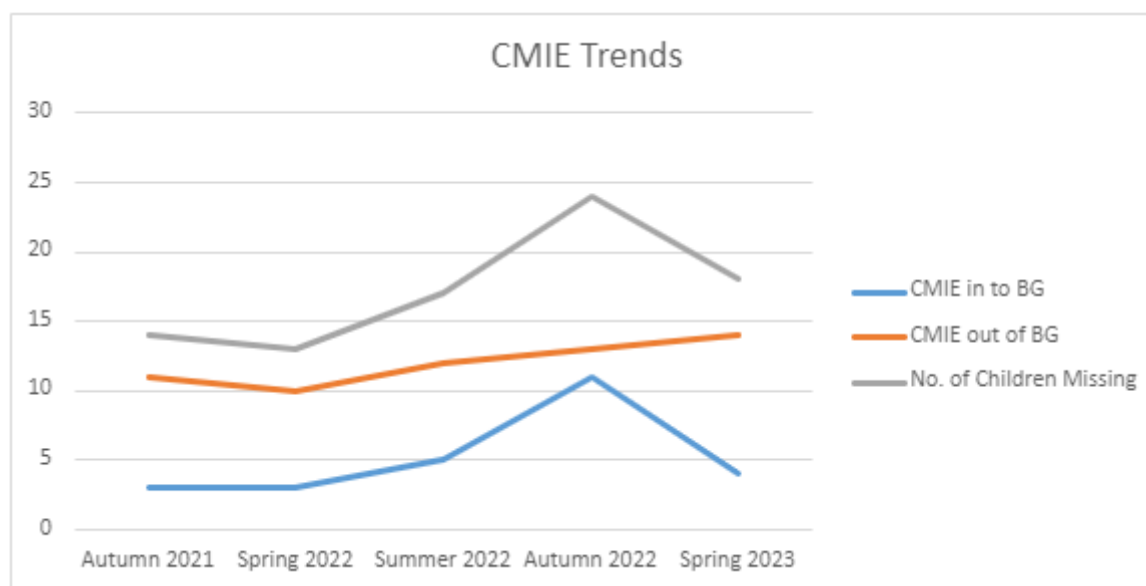
5.3.1 Referrals from other LAs

No. of CMIE Referrals	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
CMIE in to BG	3	3	5	11	4
CMIE out of BG	11	10	12	13	14

5.3.2 Number of Children Missing

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Children Missing	14	13	17	24	18

5.3.3 CMIE Trends



5.4 Youth Offending Referrals

5.4.1 Number of children accessing the Service

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No of Schoolchildren accessing YOS	23	34	32	18	31

5.4.2 YOS pupil Placement by Setting and Access

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
Access					
FT	14	34	30	6	23
PT	3	0	3	3	4
Setting					
EHE	0	0	0	0	0
Special Schools	5	9	5	0	4
Mainstream - Primary	1	4	4	0	3
Mainstream - Secondary	11	21	23	8	20
Secure Unit				1	0
Employed	3	0	0	1	2
College				3	0
NEET	3	0	0	4	1
Training Provider				1	1

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5.4.4 REACH Interventions

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
Prevention Programme	5	16	19	1	11
Community Resolution	12	13	10	10	10
Youth Caution	0	1	0	01	0
Youth Conditional Caution	1	2	1	0	0
Referral Order	2	2	2	1	0
Youth Rehabilitation Order	2	0	0	2	0
Remanded in Custody	1	0	0	1	0
Detained	0	0	0	0	0
Outcome 22	0	0	0	2	10

5.5 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Data recorded in Quarters due to the team working through the summer.

	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4
	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
No. of Schoolchildren Identified and Managed through CS Team	9	6	15	10	4	14	16	13	29	7	3	10	2	2	4

5.5.1 Number, Age and Gender of Children Identified and Managed through Community Safety Team

Age of Schoolchildren Identified and Managed through the CS Team	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4
	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23
Primary Aged Pupils	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Secondary Pupils Aged 11-14 (KS3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	1
Secondary Pupils Aged 14-16 (KS4)	4	2	6	3	4	7	9	9	18	6	2	8	1	2	3
Total	5	4	9	7	0	7	3	4	7	1	1	2	0	0	0

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5.5.2 Types of ASB Incidents

Incident	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Nuisance behaviour – part of a group	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23
Nuisance behaviour – part of a group	15	28	24	4	3	1	0	0
Setting fires – part of a group	2	7	0	6	4	4	0	0
Swearing	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of alcohol	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inappropriate use of electric scooter	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trespass in a derelict building	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	0
Verbally abusive	0	4	0	3	0	2	0	0
Shouting	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Criminal damage	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2

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5.5.3 Warning Letters Issued

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
No of Warning Letters Issued	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23
1st Strike	19	43	24	13	6	19	6	2
2nd Strike	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	0
Strike 3 (multi-agency ASB Case Management Group)	4	3	2	2	7	8	1	1
Strike 4 (multi-agency ASB Case Management Group)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5.5.4 Cases by Agency to demonstrate Co-ordinated Intervention

Cases by Agency (involved in cases discussed at Strike 3 (multi-agency meeting))	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Youth Offending Service	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23
Social Services	1	2	1	1	4	4	1	1
Families First	0	2	1	1	6	5	1	1
CAMHS	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Youth Services	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Registered Social Landlord	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0
NxtGen Project	0	3	0	2	3	4	0	0
Fire Intervention Service	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

5.5.5 EWO Involvement with schools of known to be involved in anti-social behaviour

Senior Education Welfare Officer is invited to Strike 3 and Strike 4 meetings for all school-aged pupils known to be involved in anti-social behaviour. Senior Education Welfare Officer participates and provides updates at each meeting and sends a copy of the notes and agreed actions to the relevant schools. In addition to the above Agencies, Education provide intervention and support on a case by case basis.

5.6 Child Employment

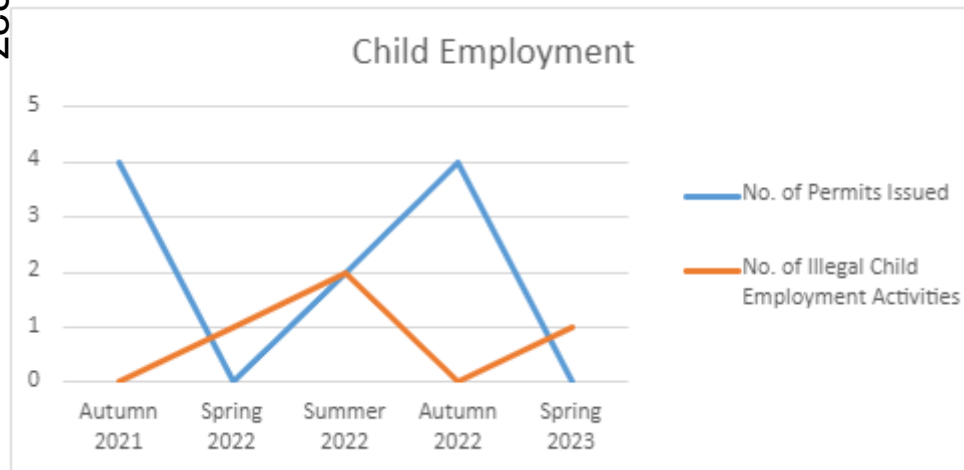
5.6.1 Number of Permits Issued

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Permits Issued	4	0	2	4	0

5.6.2 Number of Investigations relating to Illegal Child Employment Activities

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Illegal Child Employment Activities	0	1	2	0	1

5.6.3 Child Employment Trends



5.7 Child Performances

5.7.1 Number of Licences Issued to Children and Chaperones

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Licences Issues to Children and Chaperones	4	20	56	52	2
No of licences for chaperones	20	18	5	14	3
Body of persons approvals - group licences	10	6	7	2	6

5.7.2 Number of Chaperones attending Training

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Chaperones	20	18	5	14	3
No of Chaperones attending Training	29	24	15	20	8

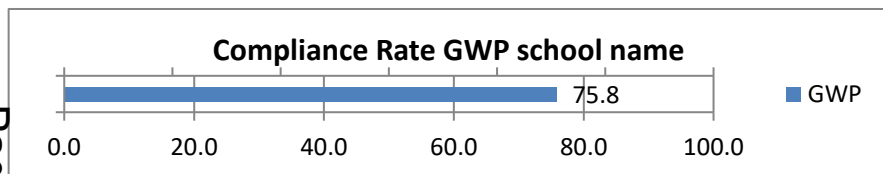
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5.8 Operation Encompass - **Not Updated – Reviewing Collection of Data Process**

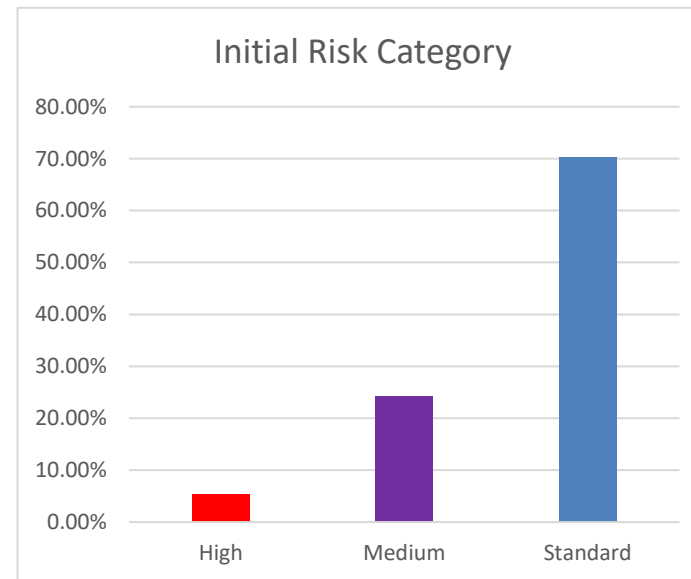
5.8.1 Number of Incidents in Period and Repeat Incidents

Term	Occurrences	CYP	Repeat Incidents
Autumn 2021	265	330	22.40%
Spring 2022	211	266	24.10%
Summer 2022	246	333	21%

5.8.3 % Compliance by Police



5.8.2 Risk Level



5.8.4 Comparative Data

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
No. of Occurrences	265	296	141	265	211	246	282	182
No. of Children and Young People Involved	330	371	185	330	266	333	299	218
Average No. of CYP per Occurrence		1.25	1.31	1.25	1.26	1.35	unavailable	unavailable
% children present at incident							37.50%	31.60%

5.9 Attendance

5.9.1 Primary and Secondary Attendance

	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
Primary Attendance	88.4	89.6	89.9	89.3	89.3	89.0	89.5	90.4
Secondary Attendance	84.3	83.0	84.8	85.3	85.3	84.8	85.9	85.8

5.9.2 Low Attendance and Implementation of Neglect Policy

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	Autumn 2022	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023
Fixed penalties	0	0	2	22	46
Single Justice Process	5	0	6	9	21
Court Notices	0	3	0	0	0

5.10 Exclusions

5.10.1 Exclusions by Setting and Type

	Spring 22			Summer 22			Autumn 22			Spring 23		
	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	No. Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent
Primary	30	2.1		25	2.4		42	2.1		39	2.1	
Secondary	323	1.8	3	193	1.4		404	1.4	2	402	1.4	1
Special	5	1		12	1.1		15	2.5		2	5.5	
Total	358	1.8		230	1.5		461	1.5		443	1.5	

5.10.2 Exclusions Linked to Bullying

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	Spring 22		Summer 22		Autumn 22		Spring 23	
	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent
Primary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5.10.3 Pupils with Multiple Exclusions

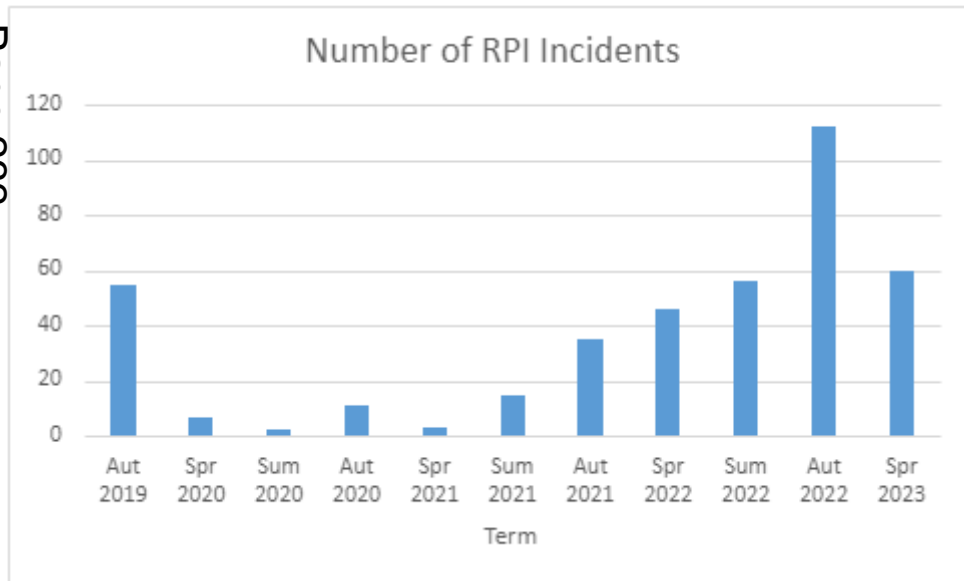
No of Exclusions	Spring 22			Summer 22			Autumn 22			Spring 23		
	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days	No. Pupils	No of Exclusions	Average No. of Days
1	137	137	1.8	91	91	1.3	124	124	1.5	119	119	1.6
2	42	84	1.4	13	26	2.9	41	82	1.5	39	78	1.4
3	15	45	1.8	8	24	5.5	25	75	1.5	26	78	1.4
4	11	44	2.7	6	24	4.9	8	32	1.4	7	28	1.3
5	7	35	1.2	8	40	8.1	5	25	1.1	13	65	1.6
6+	2	13	2.5	4	25	10.4	17	123	1.5	10	74	1.7
Total	214	358	1.8	130	230	1.5	220	461	690	215	443	1.5

5.11.1 RPI Incidents

School	Aut 2022	Spr 2023
1	14	6
2	96	55
3	1	0

5.11.2 RPI Trends

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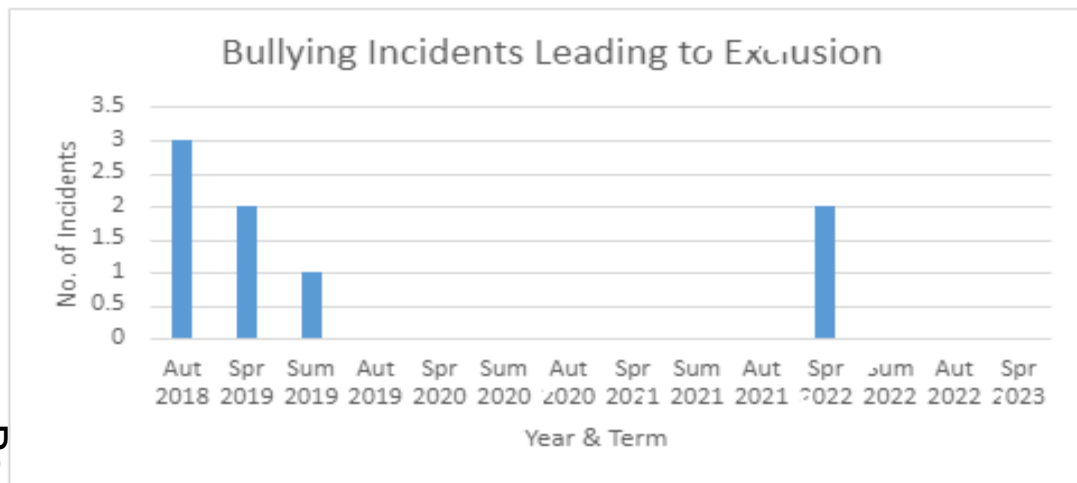
5.12 Racial Incidents

5.12.1 Racial Incidents in Period by Category and Setting

	Autum 22		Spring 23
	No. Schools	No Incident.	No. Schools
Age			
Learners with a disbaility	1	1	N/A
Homophobic/ biphobic	2	4	N/A
Sexist or sexual bullying	1	1	N/A
Racism Anti - Gypsium	0	0	N/A
Racism Anti- refugee prejudice	0	0	N/A
Racism Anti- Semitism	0	0	N/A
Racism - appearance	7	27	N/A
Total	11	33	

5.13 Bullying Incidents

5.13.1 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion



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5.13.2 Rights Respect Equalities Return bullying incidents

Rights Respect Equalities Return	
No of Schools submitting	16
No of incidents	19
No of Pupils involved	19

Data for the spring term is incomplete due to ASOS with only 7 schools returning

5.14 Safer Schools

5.14.1 Number of Safer Schools Tactical Meetings called under the Crime & Disorder Act

	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23
No. of Safer Schools Strategic Partnership Board Meetings	1	0	0
No. of Safer Schools Partnership Meetings	1	0	0

5.14.2 Number of Incidents in the Community

Types of Community Safety Issues requiring a SSPM	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23
Damage	0	0	0
Threat to Staff	0	0	0
Knife Crime	0	0	0

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5.14.3 Issues that hit the trigger for Safer Schools e.g. Criminal Exploitation, Violence, Threat to kill/of serious harm, Use of weapons

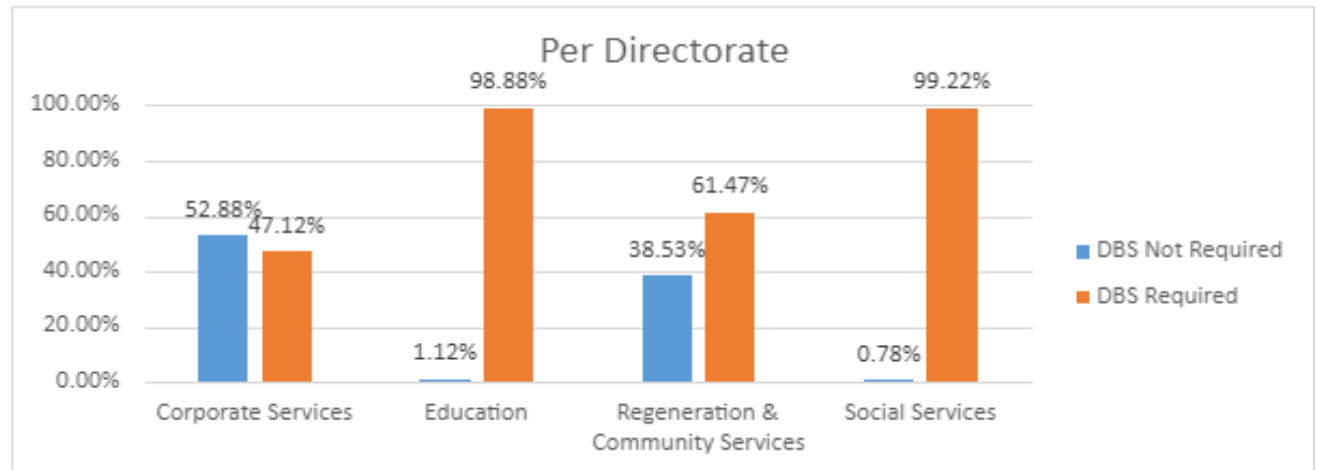
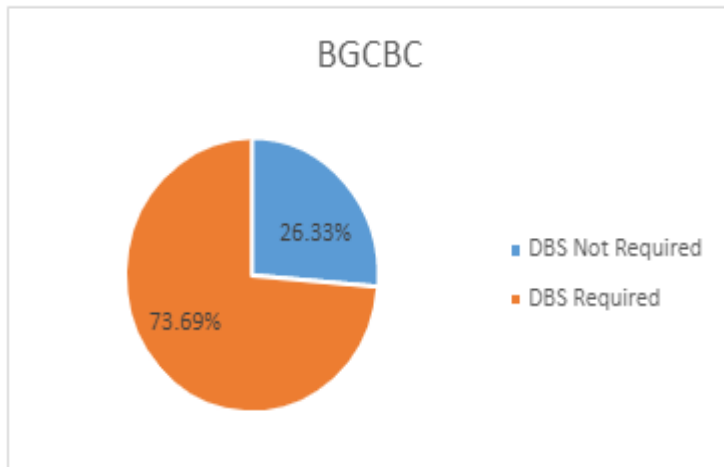
Issue	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23
Arson			
Criminal Exploitation	0	0	0
Violence	1	0	0
Threat of Serious Harm	0	0	0
Threat to Kill	0	0	0
Use of Weapons	0	0	0

6.1 DBS Compliance

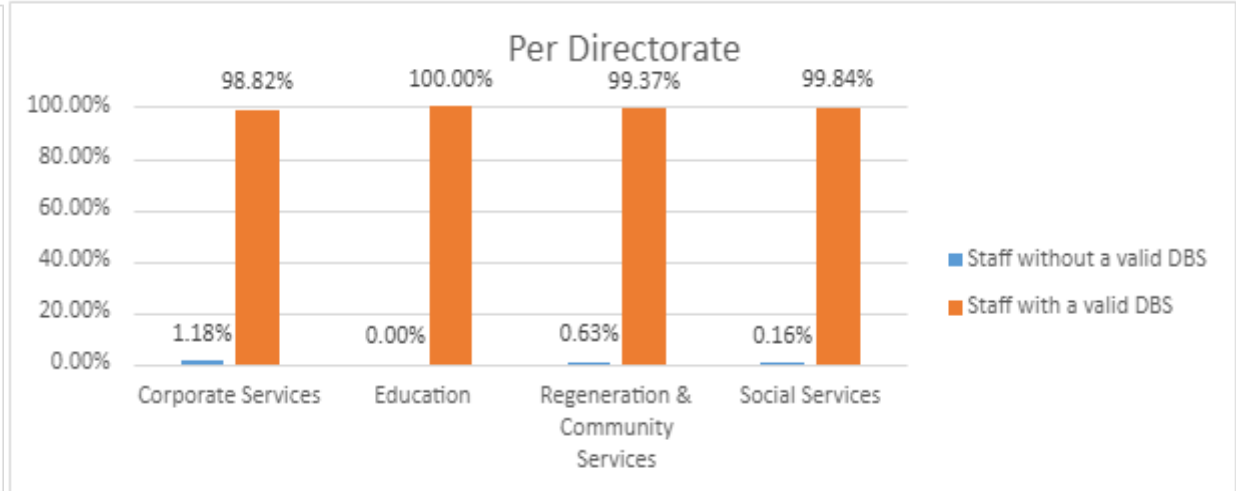
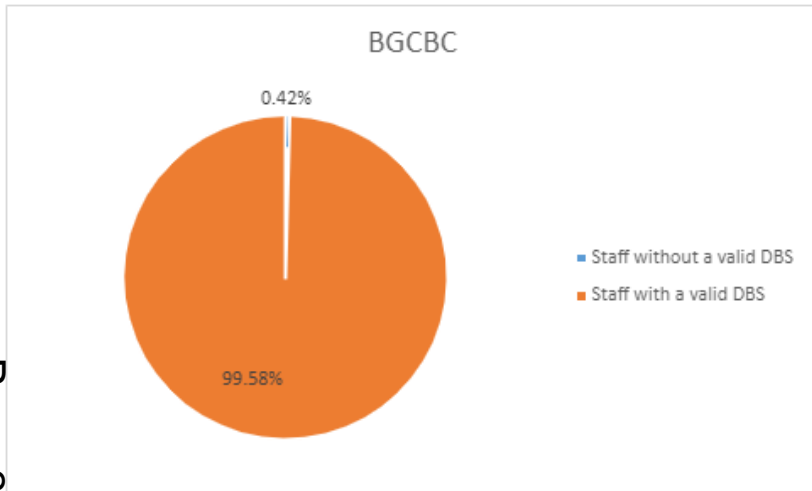
Managers are required to identify the requirement of a DBS check utilising the eligibility criteria, all DBS checks are renewed on a 3 yearly basis. Organisational Development co-ordinates this DBS process for new starters and 3 yearly rolling programme along with monitoring the compliance of these checks and we have formal escalation processes in place. The updates on the compliance with DBS are provided annually to Corporate Leadership Team but monitoring and escalation continues on a regular basis.

The latest submission to CLT was in May 2023 and is shown below:

6.1.1 Position Statement: Breakdown of Positions that require a DBS Check as at 31st March 2023



6.1.2 Breakdown of those employees in compliance with DBS requirements as at 31st March 2023



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Escalation Process

Employees and Managers receive automated e-mails from the DBS system reminding that the process has not been completed.

Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required

6.2 VAWDASV Corporate Training Online

Corporate Training

Domestic abuse Training

Corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with **58%** of staff having **completed** the **VAWDAS online training**.

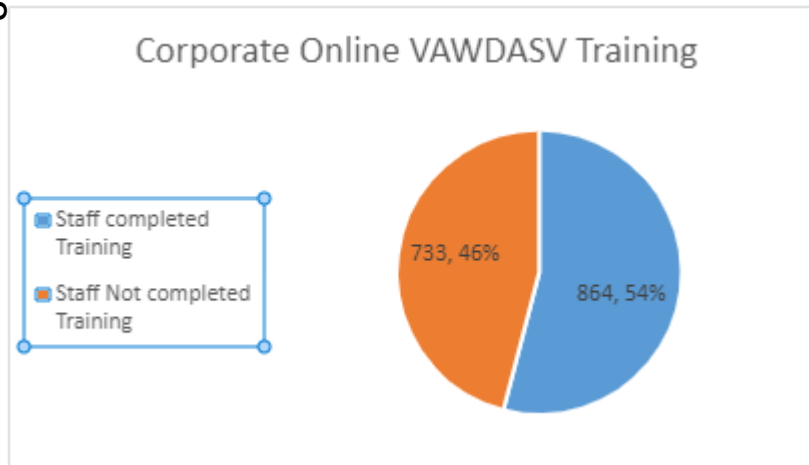
All Wales Safeguarding Training on line for staff

Online Safeguarding training was included in the online corporate induction module in 2019.

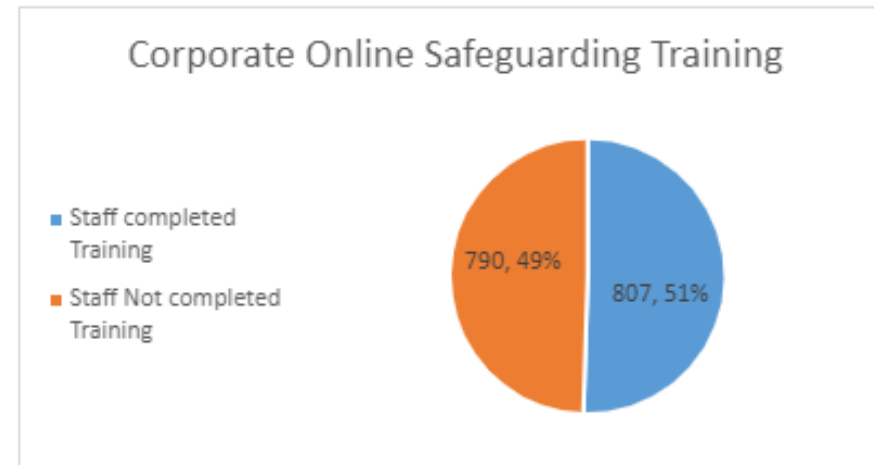
In terms of the wider workforce a suitable module is currently being evaluated by the corporate Safeguarding group which has been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic.

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6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate



6.2.2 Safeguarding Training



6.3 Risk Register

6.3.1 Corporate Risk Register CRR4

Risk Reference CRR4 Risk Description: Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent Risk Owner - Corporate Leadership Team / Interim Director of Social Services Portfolio holder: Councillor Hayden Trollope Risk Updater: Interim Director of Social Services / Director of Education / Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group												
Triggers	Consequences	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Target Score		
										L x I = Score		
• If there is inadequate assessments and monitoring • If there is a lack of documentation • If there are increasing referrals for services • If there is a lack of appropriate guidance and training • If there is poor communication between all parties (internal / external) • If there is a high turnover of staff and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. *If there are increased levels of sickness in key areas. • Failure to recognise that all staff have a duty to report abuse, harm or neglect. • Lack of appropriate guidance and training on safeguarding	• Potential significant harm / loss of life • Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined • Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution • External intervention • Increased pressure on budgets • Low staff morale	3	4	Critical	• Strategic lead for Safeguarding • Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group, made up of the designated safeguarding representative for each directorate. • Safeguarding Training Framework in place • Corporate Safeguarding Policy reviewed in May 2022 • Lead Executive Member identified for safeguarding • Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board • SE Wales Safeguarding Children’s Board • Standing item on CLT agenda • Safeguarding Network • Adult protection co-ordinator and process in place in line with All Wales process. • Joint Education and Social Services Safeguarding Team • Joint Business unit and subgroups for adults and children • Safeguarding as a standing item on the CLT agenda • Safeguarding information to be scrutinised as part of the scrutiny process • Safeguarding app can be downloaded for all staff with a work phone	2	4	High	• Business Plans will further embed risk assessment tools • Embedding of quality assurance processes in adult services safeguarding *Safeguarding Training programme to be implemented in Quarter 2 • Safeguarding Reports into Scrutiny will be on a corporate basis / will include all directorates. • Safeguarding to be included in self-assessment.	1	4	Medium

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QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATES

The Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group is well established and has maintained a regular core group of senior representatives from across the Council. The Group meets four times per year. The group has been responsible for driving forward the recommendations made following an inspection by Audit Wales in 2019. Audit Wales returned to Blaenau Gwent Council in May 2022 to review this work and published their report, 'Corporate Safeguarding Follow-up' in November 2022. This report looked at what progress the Council had made to address the outstanding recommendations and proposals for improvement in their previous report in October 2019. Although the report recognised that the Council has taken action to strengthen its corporate safeguarding arrangements, it concluded that the Council had not yet fully addressed previous recommendations. The Council needs to take further action to fully comply with the recommendations in the October 2019 report and additionally needed to strengthen its monitoring arrangements of third parties to assure itself that they comply with the council's safeguarding policies. The report was presented to Governance and Audit Committee in Quarter 4 and the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group will undertake implementation of the recommendations identified.

The Council received the final report from the Estyn Local Government Education Services Inspection. The inspection was positive in terms of the work undertaken by the Council and recognised the improvements made to the collation of safeguarding information by introducing the "My Concern" system to record and report incidents and related pupil demographics. There was a recognition that officers and elected members are committed to safeguarding young people and received suitable safeguarding training. There was recognition that the education and children's services work together to improve multi agency working ensure that schools received support to manage the needs of pupils and their families more effectively. It was also noted that elected members are beginning to develop their understanding of safeguarding in education and challenge appropriately the content of reports they receive.

In Children's Services, vacancies in the locality teams have been filled by a combination of staff seconded onto the Social Work degree course and newly qualified workers. There is still 1 vacancy which is being advertised. The challenge will now be to retain these staff. The locality teams are starting a new way of operating from January 2023 which should allow better management of workload. All safeguarding referrals continue to be managed in line with the Wales Safeguarding procedures. An internal audit has taken place in relation to safeguarding processes across the directorate. Reasonable assurance was given. Despite good progress being made low vacancy rates will now need be sustained in addition there are savings targets attributed to the workforce which could impact of the departments safeguarding ability.

Regulatory Proposals

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer / group
R1	The Council needs to take further action to fully comply with the recommendations in the October 2019 follow-up report on corporate arrangements for safeguarding of children.	The Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group has identified the actions where further improvement is needed. A self-assessment process has been implemented across the council. The first of which took place in November 2022. The findings of the self-assessment are reported back to the strategic leadership group and actions are set against these findings. It has been further agreed that a corporate safeguarding report is produced annually, and this report will be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee and will include self assessment findings. The corporate self-assessment will take place annually with the second due to commence late summer 2023.	Self assessment – late summer 2023 Implementing actions from self assessment - ongoing	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group
R2	The Council needs to strengthen its monitoring arrangements of third parties so it can assure itself that they comply with the Council's safeguarding policies. It should consider whether a self-assessment tool like that recently used by Council directorates can be used with third parties to better understand compliance.	<p>Monitoring of safeguarding arrangements for third parties will be tested by Internal Audit in line with the risk assessed Audit Plan. This will evidence how well the monitoring arrangements work and provide an opportunity for the CSL Group to further strengthen these arrangements. The plan will contain the following audit areas, split between Corporate Procurement and Schools and each of these areas will be considered for audit as part of the annual risk review.</p> <p>Corporate Procurement - A systems audit will be conducted in Qtr. 2/3 of 2023/4, testing the arrangements in place that require third parties to meet minimum safeguarding standards as part of the procurement process. Further, more targeted testing, will be undertaken for services where enhanced safeguarding measures are required. The audit report will be issued to the CSL group for any weaknesses identified through the audit to be rectified.</p> <p>Schools - Schools are required to complete an annual Control Risk Self-Assessment (CRSA) explaining the measures they have in place to mitigate risks. The CRSA questionnaire will be updated to include specific questions on safeguarding in relation to third parties, either through procurement or volunteering. The answers provided will be assessed and if required a systems audit of third party safeguarding in schools will be conducted. The CRSA questionnaire will be issued to schools in April.</p>	Audit Quarter 2/3 2023/24	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group

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Ref No.	Description of Risk	Triggers	Consequences	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Progress Update
				3	4	Critical		1	4	Medium		
Directorate Risk EDDRR3 Corporate Risk Register CRR4	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate. Safeguarding arrangements are in place for children & young adults in Blaenau Gwent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate assessments and monitoring Lack of documentation Increasing demand for services Lack of appropriate guidance and training Poor communication between all parties (internal / external) High turnover of staff Varying capacity as a result of the pandemic so routine activities do not take place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential significant harm / loss of life Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution External intervention Increased pressure on budgets Low staff morale 	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Social Services and Education Scrutiny established Education Designated Lead and Deputy Officer nominated Education Safeguarding Officer established and in post Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board Safeguarding is a standing item on CMT agenda Lead Executive Member has been identified for having responsibility for safeguarding Senior leadership have received Level 1 training. Programme of training for schools underway. Corporate leads established for each directorate who have been requested to identify staff for Level 1 training (3 dates have already been set) Safeguarding in Education matrix regularly updated *Use of MyConcern software in schools will be used to gather data, monitor positive cases and create consistency across the school estate. The roll-out project team is fully established. 	1	4	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reporting systems and databases in place Inclusion protocol in place Education Safeguarding Manager close working with School Improvement and Inclusion Close working relationships with Social Services Directorate Youth Services safeguarding arrangements are effective and monitoring is through the corporate arrangements. Half termly meetings to priorities to be diarised * DMT receive regular QA reports from Safeguarding in Education Manager 	<p>Quarter 1 Progress (April – June 2022) For Joint Report and self-evaluation</p> <p>During the period there was a critical incident in one of the schools involving an alleged racist incident that continues to be investigated by the police and was identified as a hate crime. The corporate response in responding to such a high-level incident inevitably had a direct impact upon key pieces of work for the start of the academic year for use by settings. As part of the recovery phase discussions are ongoing with partners to provide professional learning opportunities for key stakeholders on such matters.</p> <p>An overview of schools self-evaluation returns has been presented to DMT which identified one school with significant areas to be addressed which is presently a School Causing Concern. The Safeguarding in Education Manager continues to work closely with this setting to address the areas for development within the schools self- evaluation report. This work moving forwards along with other quantitative and qualitative data will continue to inform the work programme of the Safeguarding in Education Manager whose post sits within Social Services.</p> <p>The implementation of My Concern has continued to progress and work is ongoing with schools to agree a set of categories for use in September. Discussions are also ongoing with one school that is not using the system with a view to securing 100% participation during the next academic year.</p> <p>Key areas to be addressed and to be brought back on line include, performance reporting arrangements, the Sexual Abuse action Plan, Prevent Action Plan and the inaugural meeting of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board, Policy reviews and self-evaluation of safeguarding.</p>

Quarter 2 Progress (July – September 2022)

Schools are presently updating the Keeping Learners Safe self-evaluation returns for the 2022/23 academic year and at this stage it too early to draw any conclusions from this latest data capture. The Safeguarding in Education Manager continues to work closely with the setting that was identified as needing specific support in last year's self- evaluation report and progress is being made to address those areas. Quality assurance visits to school's settings have also been undertaken during the period. The revised performance report was presented to People Scrutiny Committee and was well received by Members. Scrutiny Members are now provided with an overview of the work that is undertaken in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are managed effectively and fulfil the requirements as set out in the Estyn framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES).

At the end of the Qtr 1 period one school which had already been identified as a School Causing Concern was inspected and placed in an Estyn follow up category. During the inspection, the inspection team identified safeguarding and health and safety concerns, which encompassed site and building issues, Restrictive Physical Intervention policy to practice and the school's risk assessment arrangements for certain off-site educational activities. Of these areas of improvements identified the required actions have either been completed or are in train and to mitigate any potential risks alternative arrangements are in place. Whilst at a more strategic level the Directorate in response to this is undertaking a quality assurance review of all health and safety facilities functions to ensure that any further potential risks are identified and appropriately managed.

All schools have now registered to use the My Concern System but one school is not using it as staff need to undertake the relevant training, whilst all other schools have started to use the revised categories within My Concern at the start of the academic year and initial informal feedback received is promising but a more detailed review will be completed at the end of the autumn term.

The annual self- evaluation of safeguarding for the 2021/22 academic year has been completed with the findings summarised in the Directorates Self- Evaluation Autumn term report with key works streams identified and includes the establishment of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board and the need to progress the Peer-on-Peer Sexual abuse action plan and Respect and Resilience action plan.

The areas for improvement continue to inform the business planning arrangements within the Directorate. There remains an invariable link to the risks identified in Social Services and the risk level remains unchanged.

Quarter 3 Progress (October – December 2022)

School's safeguarding processes are closely monitored. The quality assurance arrangements that are in place include the safeguarding matrix, keeping learners safe audit tool and the quality assurance visits which the Safeguarding in Education Manager completes and reports findings through a FADE (Focused Area Development Evaluation) approach to Education DMT.

Safeguarding in Education Policy was approved by Cabinet in November 2022 following its annual review and prior to its distribution to schools.

Corporate Safeguarding Performance Report, which includes information for Education Summer Term 2022 went to People Scrutiny Committee 18th October 2022 and will be presented to the committee next in June 2023.

All schools have now bought into My Concern, the software package which supports effective data collection of children suspected to be at risk, Categories within My Concern have been trialled during the autumn term as well as a health check, which many schools have reported that they have found very helpful in understanding how they can use My Concern more effectively. DMT to receive a report by the end of January 2023 on progress and barriers to progress.

First meeting of Strategic Safer Schools Board taken place – Chair and vice chair elected.

The Council was subject to an Estyn inspection in November / December 2022. Arrangements for safeguarding were included in the areas for inspection and the preliminary feedback received on 2nd December suggests that Safeguarding arrangements are effective. The outcome of the Inspection is positive overall, progress since the last inspection has been made and there is no requirement for follow-up activity

Quarter 4 (January – March 2023)

The Safeguarding in Education Manager continues to make good progress in implementing the various QA processes for the current academic year. There has been a slight delay in the submission of some Fades to Education DMT but these will be presented after Easter. SSSPB continues to support the development of key pieces of work across LGES but it is too early to assess the impact of this work. Good progress continues to be made in the implementation of My Concern. DMT have agreed the progress report that included the blueprint for the further use of My Concern and the TOR for a User group. The User group involving schools has met and has commenced phase 1 of trialling new aspects of My Concern, with an initial focus upon reporting Restrictive Practice Incidents (RPIs). The school that had not undertaken training in respect of My Concern has now been met with and have agreed to complete the training but as yet no date has been set.

The Council received the final report from the Estyn Local Government Education Services Inspection. The inspection was positive in terms of the work undertaken by the Council and recognised the improvements made to the collation of safeguarding information by introducing the "My Concern" system to record and report incidents and related pupil demographics. There was a recognition that officers and elected members are committed to safeguarding young people and received suitable safeguarding training. There was recognition that the education and children's services work together to improve multi agency working ensure that schools received support to manage the needs of pupils and their families more effectively.

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**Education Directorate
Local Government Education Services
Safeguarding Policy**

June 2023



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Contact Information

Information, advice and assistance – Social services	01495 315700	dutyteam@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk DutyTeamAdults@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Families First		familiesfirstduty@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
South East Wales Emergency Duty Team (SEWEDT) - after 5pm, weekends and Bank Holidays.	0800 328 4432.	
Domestic Abuse	01495 291202	info@pheonixdas.co.uk
Modern Day Slavery/Trafficking – Training and Victim Support (BAWSO)	0800 731 8147 01633 213213	www.bawso.org.uk
Gwent Safeguarding Board		www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk
Safeguarding In Education Manager (Safeguarding and Quality Assurance team, Children’s Services)		Sarah.Dixon@blaneau-gwent.gov.uk

With regard to Safeguarding across the Council as a whole The Local Authority Designated Officer is the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager in Social Services. The Safeguarding in Education Manager, covers the responsibilities laid out in WG circular no 009/2014, ‘Safeguarding children in Education: Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff’, and is the first point of contact with schools, education settings and education directorate staff for advice regarding safeguarding matters relating to practitioners arising in education settings.”

Document version	Author	Date of issue	Changes made
1.0	Sarah Dixon	April 2015	Updated to reflect changes in WG Guidance, Keeping Learners Safe 158/2015
2.0	Sarah Dixon	May 2016	Update to reflect changes in legislation: Counter Terrorism and security Act 2015

3.0	Sarah Dixon	May 2017	Annual review and updated to reflect changes in contact details and the change to Information, Advice and Assistance team.
4.0	Sarah Dixon	Aug 2018	Annual review. Updated to reflect changes in contact details and Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework
5.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2019	Annual review. Updated to reflect changes in contact details.
6.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2020	Annual review. Updated with reference to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and to include details of safeguarding data collection, BG Youth Service policy and COVID 19 procedures
7.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2021	Updated to reflect changes in WG Guidance, Keeping Learners Safe 272/2021 and the use of My Concerns software package
8.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2022	Annual review. Inclusion of Children (abolition of defence of reasonable punishment) (Wales) Act 2020
9.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2023	Annual review – contact details updated and communication protocol added to the Practitioner concern flow chart (Appendix 6)

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INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse is everybody's responsibility. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the County Borough is safe and protected and that our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are effectively met. This is reflected in the wellbeing plan. Objectives include Blaenau Gwent having safe and friendly communities and everyone having the best start in life.

Children are defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Education services provide support to young people up to the age of 25 years. This policy covers education settings. The Corporate Safeguarding policy can be found here: [Blaenau Gwent Corporate Safeguarding Policy | Blaenau Gwent CBC \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/corporate-safeguarding-policy)

All Local Government Education Services (LGES) are required to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place. The Council seeks assurance from its commissioned services that these policies and procedure are in place and this is validated by the Safeguarding in Education manager on an annual basis. Settings will need to assure themselves that commissioned services and those activities which extend beyond the school day (and not in the direct control of the setting) have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place.

It is recommended that the policy format recorded in Keeping Learners Safe (Welsh Government circular 283/2022) is used as the basis for all establishments, organisations and services linked to Education. This format can be adapted to meet the needs and requirements of those linked to Education and can be used as the starting point for specifically constructed policies to suit their roles and responsibilities in working with and supporting children and young people.

Other information for children, parents, staff, volunteers and governors could be added as appendices to the main policy. This could include methods of internal recording of concerns and guidance and advice to children, staff and parents in raising concerns.

The policy should be dated and also notification when the next formal review is intended. Where appropriate the date of approval by the Governing Body or Management would be important to be recorded on the policy.

Basic items from the policy could be included in school/ education setting and or organisation's publications for parents and children. A full copy of the policy must be made available to parents on request, but a nominal cost may be incurred.

SCOPE

For the purposes of this policy, 'workforce' is defined as those engaged by the Council, including permanent and temporary employees, students, volunteers, workers employed by employment agencies, contractors and consultants. Where the term 'practitioner' is used, it describes anyone in paid employment and unpaid volunteers. This policy covers all education settings within Blaenau Gwent.

While practitioners and contractors are likely to have varied levels of contact with children, young people and adults at risk as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.

All education settings must have their own safeguarding policies and procedures which are in keeping with this document and local, regional and national procedures and guidance. An example policy template for schools/education settings can be found at Appendix 1.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requiring local authorities and non-maintained settings to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the well-being and welfare of the children on their care.
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales>
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Wales Safeguarding Procedures are the national safeguarding procedures for Wales. A copy of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures document is available to download as an App and via <https://safeguarding.wales/>. It is the responsibility of all practitioners to be familiarise themselves with the document and it's location.

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding means preventing and protecting children and adults from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.

The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect:

‘Abuse’ means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place. ‘Financial abuse’ includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

‘Neglect’ means a failure to meet a person’s basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person’s well-being for example, impairment of the person’s health

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

PREVENTATIVE APPROACH

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council wants safe and friendly communities. With regard to this, the council is committed to the development of approaches to ensure organisations meet the same Council objective. Local Government Education Services will be expected to respond to the needs of children/adults at risk, understand how to establish a positive culture of safeguarding and adhere to the principles of partnership working, promoting prevention and early intervention.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFEGUARDING IN EDUCATION

Overview

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk of harm.

All practitioners working for or on behalf of the Council have a **“duty to report”** any concerns they may have for the welfare and/or protection of children and adults at risk. The process to follow to make reports is contained in Appendix 5.

The Council promotes safer recruitment policy and practice. Safe recruitment procedures will be implemented in accordance with local, regional and national guidance. Education settings will implement the relevant Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Manager’s Guide to Volunteers in the Workplace.

Practitioners working with children and young people are required to undergo a DBS check, at the appropriate level, which is updated on a three year rolling programme. Education settings must maintain a record of DBS checks, recording the certificate number and date of issue. To ensure compliance with GDPR, original/photocopied certificates should not be retained. All school governors should undergo a DBS check

at the appropriate level, upon appointment and renewed at the start of each term of office.

Where practitioners have safeguarding concerns or suspicions about other practitioners or contractors these should be reported through safeguarding procedures. Practitioners should also be aware of the statutory protection provided by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (“PIDA”) that protects employees against victimisation if they speak about concerns about conduct or practice within a school which is potentially illegal, corrupt, improper, unsafe or unethical, or which amounts to malpractice.

All practitioners will be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities as part of their induction to their employment. Additional training will be undertaken appropriate to the practitioner’s role and responsibilities.

Any person responsible for, or working with, children or adults at risk in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, is considered both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care. This includes a duty to behave in a manner that does not threaten, harm or put people at risk of harm from others.

All practitioners have a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children or adults at risk.

Each local government education setting/school is responsible for nominating a Designated Senior Person (DSP) and deputy DSP with responsibility for safeguarding. All DSP’s will be invited to termly DSP meetings with the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

The Role of the Governing Body in Schools

The Council’s agreed statutory partnership agreement sets out the responsibilities of school’s governing bodies, which are summarised below:

Governing Bodies of schools are accountable for ensuring effective policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and monitoring its compliance with them

Governing Bodies must ensure that their schools:

- Have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place that are:
 - In accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed interagency procedures
 - Inclusive of services that extend beyond the school day (e.g. community activities on school premises)
 - Reviewed at least annually
 - Made available to parents/carers upon request

- Provided in a format appropriate to the understanding of children, particularly where schools cater for children with additional needs
- Operate safe recruitment procedures in line with Local Authority policy and 'Keeping Learners Safe' guidance. Safe recruitment procedures must take account of the need to safeguard children and young people, including arrangements to ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including relevant DBS checks and professional registration (if required).
- Ensure that the head teacher/principal and all other permanent practitioners who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them with the knowledge and skills that are necessary to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up to date with refresher training
- Ensure that any agency staff who work with children have the relevant pre-employment checks and DBS checks in place
- Give clear guidance to volunteers/temporary staff providing cover during short-term absences and who will be working with children and young people on the organisation's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- Ensure that the governing body remedies, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention.
- Provide a copy of the school's 'Keeping learners Safe' safeguarding self-evaluation to the Safeguarding in Education Manager annually during the first half of each Autumn term.
- Ensure that areas identified for improvement are dealt with in a timely fashion and as appropriate seek advice from the Safeguarding in Education Manager
- Ensure that data for the safeguarding matrix is provided twice a year to the Safeguarding in Education Manager
- Ensure that the school participates in any quality assurance reviews as requested
- Ensure that the DSP and deputy DSP undertake inter- agency training at least every three years and the Chair of governors and the Safeguarding governor also undertake safeguarding training.
- Ensure that there is a designated person for relationship and sexuality education, and Equality matters who is appropriately trained.

It is the expectation of Blaenau Gwent council that the designated safeguarding governor and the chair of governors undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by or to the standards agreed by the Safeguarding Children Board, as well as refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date, in addition to basic safeguarding training. Training should be refreshed at a period not exceeding three years

It is also the expectation of Blaenau Gwent council that all members of governing bodies undertake relevant safeguarding training. This should be within the first term of

starting the role to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their wider safeguarding responsibilities. As a minimum, governors should complete the Keeping Learners Safe modules which support practitioners in education settings to understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

The Governing Body of a school controls the use of the school premises both during and outside school hours, except where a trust deed allows a person other than the governing body to control the use of the premises, or a transfer of control agreement has been made. Governors can enter into transfer of control agreements in order to share control of the school premises with another body, or transfer control to it. The other body, known as the 'controlling body', will control the occupation and use of the premises during the times specified in the agreement.

Transferring control of the premises to local community groups, sports association and service providers can enable school facilities to be used without needing ongoing management or administrative time from school staff.

Where the governing body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for safeguarding will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing body must confirm that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate prior to any use of school premises being allowed.

Responsibilities of Head Teachers/ Managers

Head teachers/Managers should foster a nurturing culture within settings and promote open communication between staff and pupils on safeguarding matters.

Head teachers/Managers must ensure that all practitioners (including supply staff and volunteers):

- Fully implement and follow the safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body or proprietor
- Have both time and access to sufficient resources to enable them to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussion and other inter-agency meetings as well as contributing to the assessment of children.
- Understand the procedures for safeguarding children, feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and be confident that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with Welsh Government Procedures for Whistleblowing in Schools (Model Policy).
- As part of their induction, are given a written statement about the setting's policy and procedures, and the name and contact details of the DSP.
- Understand and comply with pre-employment, DBS and Professional Registration requirements

- Receive appropriate safeguarding training (Staff, volunteers and governors)

Head teachers/ Managers should also:

- Provide timely updates to the Safeguarding in Education Manager in line with the safeguarding data protocol (Appendix 11)
- Participate in the Quality Assurance processes in a timely manner
- Ensure that the safeguarding processes are reviewed annually and shared with staff, the governing body and the Safeguarding in Education manager through the provision of the 'Keeping Learners Safe' safeguarding self-evaluation. This document to be provided to the Safeguarding in Education manager during the first half of each Autumn term.
- By the Spring term provide a copy of the self-evaluation to the Governing body for review and as appropriate, an action plan.
- Ensure that there is a designated person in place for relationship and sexuality education, and Equality matters who is appropriately trained.

Role of the Designated Person in schools and educational settings

The Designated Senior Person (DSP) for safeguarding fulfills an essential role in developing and implementing policies that help to safeguard adults and children from all forms of abuse and create a safe environment.

Each education setting must identify a DSP with lead responsibility for managing all safeguarding concerns. The DSP must be available to discuss safeguarding concerns; should be consulted, when possible, as to whether to raise a safeguarding concern with the local authority; and will manage any immediate actions required to ensure the individual at risk is safe from abuse. All practitioners should know who to contact in their education setting for advice and they should not hesitate to discuss their concerns no matter how insignificant they may appear.

The DSP need not be a teacher but **must** be a senior member of the leadership team with the status and authority within the organisation to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources to safeguarding matters and directing other staff. The DSP could also be a single appointment within the senior team and need not carry other duties.

Each DSP should have at least one deputy who has equal status and access to the same training. The number of deputies will depend on the education setting and should reflect the proportion of work involved and the size and scale of the education setting. Larger education settings should have a team of staff working together and split-site education settings should have a DSP available on each site.

The DSP should possess the necessary skills and qualities for the role, which will have a strong focus on communication with learners and professionals. This can be a demanding role and will require a level of expertise, knowledge, resources and support.

Handling individual cases may be a responsibility delegated to other members of staff, but it is important that a senior member of staff take overall responsibility for this area of work. The DSP should always be kept informed of the progress and the outcome of all cases. All staff taking on these responsibilities should be fully trained and skilled in their responsibilities.

In education settings with a high number of safeguarding concerns, consideration should be given to appointing a full-time DSP with relevant skills and experience. An alternative arrangement might involve the delegation of day-to-day responsibilities while the DSP retains overall responsibility, as described above.

The DSP should have adequate support, training and supervision to undertake their role effectively. The supervision should support the DSP with the emotional impact of their role and provide an opportunity for reflection on their practice. This could be done on an individual or group basis but the DSP should be provided with an opportunity for individual support where necessary.

The DSP must know how to recognise and identify the signs of abuse, neglect and other types of harm, irrespective of whether it is online or offline, and know when it is appropriate to make a report to the local authority (or police where the child/children are in immediate danger).

The DSP role involves providing advice and support to other staff, record-keeping, working with family members or carers, making referrals to children's services and attending statutory meetings, as well as liaising with the SCB and working with other agencies as necessary. The DSP role is not to investigate allegations, but they must keep the headteacher informed of all safeguarding concerns raised in the school or college. The Council has purchased the MyConcern software package for schools to better facilitate the sharing of information in a timely manner

The DSP should also consider how safeguarding more widely can be addressed and ensure preventative measures are adopted in the education setting. This part of the role will include building relationships with other agencies, as well as ensuring staff and learners are informed about risks and how to access support. This will form part of the whole-school (setting) approach and learning through the new curriculum.

The DSP will take responsibility for the education setting's safeguarding practice, policy, procedures and professional development, working with other agencies as necessary. The DSP should ensure the education setting's safeguarding policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the governing body or proprietor regarding this.

The DSP is responsible for ensuring that parents/carers see copies of the safeguarding policy. This may help avoid the potential for later conflict by alerting them to the role of the education setting and the fact that reports may be made to the local authority where there are safeguarding concerns. Many education settings include information about this at induction meetings for new parents/carers, in their prospectus and on their website.

As well as the education setting's safeguarding policy, there are other policies that have relevance to safeguarding, and the DSP may be involved in monitoring the effectiveness of these other policies to ensure there is consistency and coherence in the way the school effectively safeguards their children.

The DSP should ensure the education setting completes the 'Keeping Learners Safe' Safeguarding Self-Evaluation to support a whole-setting approach to safeguarding, as well as to provide a benchmark against which to seek to continually improve safeguarding approaches and structures. This should be regularly reviewed (at least annually) to ensure that there is constant reflection, learning and updating of processes within the education setting and shared with the Governing Body.

The principles outlined in the responsibilities of the DSP should be adopted as effective practice in all education settings.

The head teacher/ Manager should ensure that the DSP:

- Is given sufficient time and resources to carry out the role effectively, which should be explicitly defined in the post holder's job description.
- Has access to required levels of training and support to undertake the role, including ongoing professional development and regular participation at DSP meetings.
- Has time to attend and provide reports and advice to case conferences and other interagency meetings as required

Safeguarding Training

The DSP must have regular training in safeguarding to meet the requirements of the role. This will require a higher level of training than for other staff in education settings and will include more specialist training in different types of abuse as well as the skills required to respond so the DSP has a good understanding of current issues and skills. The DSP should receive prompt training in inter-agency procedures that enables them to work in partnership with other agencies and gives them the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their responsibilities. They should also undertake refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

It is the role of the DSP, working with the headteacher, to ensure all practitioners:

- have access to and understand the education setting's safeguarding policy, especially new or part-time staff who may work with different education settings
- have induction and refresher training covering safeguarding
- understand the causes of abuse, neglect and other kinds of harm
- understand the different types of abuse
- are able to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and other kinds of harm
- know how to respond effectively when they have concerns
- know how to respond to a disclosure appropriately
- know how to communicate effectively with children and young people, including using skills such as empathy
- know that they have a responsibility to report any concerns immediately as they arise.

The DSP must keep a record of all staff training, including the dates, details of the provider and a record of staff attendance.

All staff should attend refresher training preferably within two years but should not exceed three years between training; due to the changing nature of online safety it is recommended that this be renewed regularly.

The Keeping learners safe modules ([210419-keeping-learners-safe-module-guidance.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)) support all staff in education settings to understand their safeguarding responsibilities as set out in this guidance.

All governors, including the chair of governors, and safeguarding governor should be given access to safeguarding training to ensure a basic and consistent level of awareness. This training includes, but is not limited to, the Keeping learners safe modules ([210419-keeping-learners-safe-module-guidance.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)). Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the education setting policies and procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements, and all governors should know what to do if they have concerns about a child.

In addition to the safeguarding Children and/or adults training, all staff must complete Group 1 training on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) as outlined in the National Training Framework and training on Preventing Extremism. Links to online PREVENT training are contained in Appendix 8. Further training on wider safeguarding issues should be accessed according to the needs of the setting.

Responding to Concerns that a child is at risk

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment and to identify children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or harm irrespective of where this happens (online or offline, on or off the education setting premises). All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

In addition to working with the DSP, staff members should be aware that they might be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children

Early identification and intervention are key to meeting the needs of children by preventing or delaying circumstances that might lead to social services' intervention. Addressing low-level well-being problems early can stop issues escalating. Therefore, prevention, identification and early intervention are key, and equipping teachers and other school staff with the necessary knowledge to identify problems, together with support in the form of consultation, liaison and advice from more specialist services is key to the whole-school (setting) approach.

Everyone in the education system who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children, as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent issues from escalating. Staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children

Education settings should consider how they could build relationships with other services to ensure early referrals and offers of support to children and families are made before their needs escalate.

The DSP should provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and liaise closely with other services such as children's social care and family support services.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures provide common standards to guide safeguarding practice and a framework within which individual reports of a child at risk, actions, decisions and plans are made and carried out. They are an integral part of the framework for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children. The DSP should ensure that everyone working in the education setting is aware of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and knows how to access a copy of the procedures.

Staff should always speak to the DSP in the first instance to discuss their concerns, but it is important to remember that anyone can contact the local authority children's social services to raise a concern at any time. Where a concern about the well-being of a child is identified, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

A child, parent, carer, relative or member of the public who expresses concerns about a child's well-being to anyone working in the education setting must never simply be asked to make a direct report to social services or the police. These concerns should be shared with the DSP. If the individual wishes to make a report, this report should not change the actions of the DSP; a report must still be made by the DSP if it is felt that the child is at risk.

Every education setting must have a suitable system in place to support effective data collection of children suspected to be at risk. 'My Concern' is the software package for

use in Blaenau Gwent. This package will support staff to log concerns and the DSP to identify patterns of abuse, neglect, or other kinds of harm.

Where a staff member has concerns but would like further advice on these concerns, they should have a discussion with the DSP. Concerns must be shared with social services through a report, supported by the DSP. The DSP can advise on and manage the process. Whether the actual making of the report is done by the DSP or the staff member will depend on the arrangements in place at the individual education setting.

All agencies involved in safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children must have policies and procedures specifying arrangements for the retention, storage and destruction of electronic and paper case records. The policies should ensure that case records are stored safely and are able to be retrieved as required.

If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, the staff member must write a record of the conversation as soon as possible, distinguishing clearly between fact, observation, allegation and opinion, noting any action taken in cases of possible abuse or neglect, and signing and dating the note.

All education settings must reassure and inform children that there is a safe environment to talk about matters that affect them. Displaying information of national children's helplines and peer support schemes, in visible and easily accessible places, can encourage them to share concerns and receive help. These posters provide support to children to speak out when they have a concern. Education settings should display these posters on their premises in clear view of children as effective practice.

Reporting a child at risk

Partners must inform the local authority where they have reasonable cause to believe a child to be at risk.

The DSP should act as a point of contact and a source of support, advice and expertise for education settings when deciding whether to make a report to the local authority. The DSP should also take a lead in liaising with relevant agencies unless there are immediate concerns and staff should make contact directly.

Where the DSP has reasonable cause to suspect that a child attending the education setting is at risk, a report must be made to the local authority as soon as possible. However, if there are immediate concerns about a child's safety or a criminal offence against a child is suspected, the emergency services must be contacted without delay to protect the child/children from risk of serious harm.

Where staff members have concerns that a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or other harm they must raise these with the DSP. The DSP must then decide whether it is appropriate to make a report to social services and/or the police. It is important to note

any staff member can also report concerns to local authority social services or to the police directly; however, liaison with the DSP is advisable in all cases, where possible.

Concerns should always lead to help and support, either through a report to social services, or direct support through the education setting or other service such as family support services. The DSP should share the following information with the staff member making the report and the headteacher or principle:

- proposed initial action, including signposting or that no further action will be taken
- who will be taking action

Staff members must also be aware of wider safeguarding concerns and report these to the DSP.

Where the concerns relate to practitioners, cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse against staff, guidance is available in Wales Safeguarding Procedures and in Welsh Government circular 009/2014, '[safeguarding-children-in-education-handling-allegations-of-abuse-against-teachers-and-other-staff.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)'

A summary of the process for practitioner concerns is set out in the example template policy (appendix 1, under the heading, 'What to do if a child tells you they have been abused by a practitioner (including volunteers)'). Further information is contained in Welsh Government Circular 002/2020, '[Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff | GOV.WALES](#)'

All practitioners and contractors have a responsibility to share their concerns in accordance with this policy and to undertake relevant training.

Children - Further guidance and the relevant Multi Agency Referral Form to make a report can be found through the Gwent Safeguarding website, at <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

Adults - Further guidance and the appropriate referral form for reporting an adult at risk can be found through the Gwent Safeguarding website <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

Example policy template for schools/education settings

This template should be read in conjunction with the Blaenau Gwent LGES Safeguarding policy and associated appendices.



Safeguarding in
Education Policy June

Safeguarding Policy for (Name of School /Setting)**1. Introduction**

The school/setting fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding.

There are three main elements to our policy: -

- Prevention through the culture, teaching and pastoral support offered to learners
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse - because of our contact with children and adults at risk, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse; and
- Support to learners who may have been abused.

Our policy applies to all practitioners, (staff and volunteers) working in the school/education setting. In the case of schools, it is the Governing Body's policy.

It is recognised by this school/setting that all practitioners that come into contact with children and adults at risk can often be the first point of disclosure. This first point of contact is an important part of the safeguarding process, and it is essential that all practitioners are aware of and implement the school's/ setting's procedures as noted in this policy.

2. Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to safeguard learners.

The school/setting will therefore: -

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children and adults at risk feel secure, are encouraged to talk and share their concerns and are listened to;
- Ensure that children and adults at risk know that there are adults in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for relationships and sexuality education which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help; and

- Include in the activities and in the curriculum, material which will help children and adults at risk develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- build relationships with other agencies and ensure early and appropriate referrals for support and intervention are made before risks escalate.
- take a whole-school (setting) approach to well-being which will incorporate safeguarding and preventative measures to support children and families.

3. Procedures

At this school/setting we will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures, which can be downloaded as an App, or accessed via <https://safeguarding.wales/> and other guidance and protocols that have been endorsed and agreed by Gwent Safeguarding www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk .

The school / setting will: -

- Ensure it has a designated senior person (DSP) and deputy for safeguarding, who have undertaken the appropriate training.
- Recognise the role of the designated senior person and arrange support and training. The school/setting will look to Council's Safeguarding in Education Manager and Gwent Safeguarding for guidance and support in assisting the school's designated senior person.
- Ensure that all practitioners, along with every governor, know: -
 - the name and contact details of the DSP and their role, the local authority point of contact and the designated governor for safeguarding
 - that they have an individual responsibility for reporting children at risk and safeguarding concerns to social services, or to the police, within the timescales agreed with the Regional Safeguarding Board
 - how to take forward those concerns when the DSP is unavailable
 - that advice can be sought from the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA), and /or the Safeguarding in Education Manager if necessary when a report is being considered. When out of hours, advice will be sought from the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team (SEWEDT)
- Ensure that all practitioners are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and neglect and know how to respond to a learner who may disclose abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that staff members are aware of wider safeguarding concerns and report these to the DSP: staff will be made aware of the information on wider safeguarding issues contained in Keeping Learners Safe and Wales Safeguarding Procedures, including safeguarding responsibilities in specific circumstances, peer-on-peer abuse and harmful sexual behaviour and the suite of guidance on 'Rights, Respect, Equality' to help prevent and address bullying.

- Ensure that members of staff who are EWC registrants are aware of the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for registrants with the Education Workforce Council (see www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf.html) and the expectation within the Code that the registrant has regard to the safety and well-being of learners in their care and related content.
- Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school/college/education setting and staff for safeguarding by setting out its obligations in the school brochure and/or other forms of communication
- Provide safeguarding training for all practitioners, who will be expected to attend as arranged/directed by the school/setting, so that they: -
 - Understand their personal responsibility;
 - Are cognisant of agreed local procedures and their duty to respond
 - Are aware of the need to be vigilant in identifying suspected cases of abuse; and
 - Know how to support a person who discloses abuse or neglect
 - Understand the role online behaviours may have in each of the above
- Notify Social Services if: -
 - a learner on the child protection register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently; and
 - there is an unexplained absence of a learner on the child protection register of more than two days' duration from school (or one day following a weekend).
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at initial and review child protection conferences and core groups and the submission of written reports to the conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children and adults at risk (noting date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to report the matter to agencies immediately.
- Ensure that all records and files are kept secure and in locked locations. The DSP is responsible for the security, compilation and storage of all records and should be able to access and produce them in times of need. It is the responsibility of the DSP to ensure that any transfer of records is conducted via MyConcern software package or using the Authority's agreed protocol and procedures for the 'Transfer of Sensitive Information' (Appendix7).
- Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government circular 002/2020, [Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff | GOV.WALES](#)
- Ensure that all recruitment and selection procedures follow national and local guidance, the Council's Recruitment and Selection policy and, in the case of volunteers, the Council's Volunteer Guidance. Schools will seek advice and

guidance from the Council's Organisational Development Department on recruitment and selection.

- In schools, designate a governor for safeguarding who will oversee the school's policy and practice. This governor will feed back to the Governing Body on safeguarding matters as and when required, and will be required to provide an annual report to the Governing Body on the school's safeguarding activities.
- Ensure the 'Keeping Learners Safe' safeguarding self-evaluation is shared with the Governing Body at least annually and provided to the Safeguarding in Education Manager during the first half of the Autumn Term.

4. Supporting those at Risk

At this education setting/school we recognise that children/adults who are at risk, suffer abuse, or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.

This education setting/school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of the children/adults at risk. Nevertheless, their behaviour in the setting may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

This education setting/school will endeavour to support learners through: -

- The content of activities and the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation,
- The ethos of the school/setting which:-
 - promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
 - Gives pupils/adults at risk a sense of being valued
- The setting/school's behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the setting. All practitioners will agree on a consistent approach that focuses on the behavioural outcome of the child but does not damage the individual's sense of self-worth. The setting will endeavour to ensure that the learner knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred,
- Liaison with other agencies who support the learner, such as the Educational Psychology Service, Education Welfare Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services, Social Services, and advocacy services; and
- Keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a safeguarding or recurrence of a concern.

When a learner on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school /setting immediately and inform Social Services. Transfer of information will take place using MyConcern (where MyConcern is not used in both settings, the Safeguarding File – Transfer of records proforma will be used, following the procedure

outlined in appendix 7, Safeguarding File – Transfer of Records). The DSP will be central to this process.

5. Behaviour

This setting/school has a behaviour policy which clearly states our values and expectations. This is a separate policy which is reviewed on a regular basis by the Governing Body.

6. Rights, Respect, Equality

The setting/school's policy on Rights, Respect, Equality, to prevent and challenge bullying, has been set out in (a separate document/ the behaviour policy etc.) (It would be useful to note any guidance from the Authority within any documentation.) This policy/information is reviewed annually by the governing body.

7. Physical Intervention

The setting/school's policy on physical intervention has been set out in (a separate document) It is reviewed annually by the governing body and is consistent with the Welsh Government guidance on Safe and Effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons 097/2013.

8. Keeping Safe Online

The school/setting's policy on Keeping Safe Online has been set out in (a separate document).

9. Children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

This school/setting recognises that statistically children and young people with additional learning needs are most vulnerable to abuse. Practitioners who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour problems need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. The school's policy on ALN has been set out in (a separate document).

10. Care Experienced Children

This school/setting recognises that Children Looked After (CLA) are often the most vulnerable. Advice and guidance can be sought from the Local Authority's Education Coordinator for Children Looked After.

11. Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism

This school/setting is committed to providing a safe environment for all of our students and practitioners. There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our setting.

Where we become aware of information involving identification of potential instances of extremism and radicalisation, we will refer to Children's/Adult Services in the same way as for all safeguarding concerns.

Our policy statement for community cohesion is attached as appendix 8: Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism.

The Local Authority has 'Secure and Shelter' (Lockdown) procedures that may be activated in response to any number of situations and includes the requirement to carry out practice procedures (appendix 9).

12. Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV)

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender based violence, abuse and sexual violence.

The protection of victims and support for people affected is underpinned by the 'Ask and Act' duty placed on public service staff to ask potential victims about the possibility that they may be experiencing VAWDASV and act so as to reduce suffering and harm.

The regional VAWDASV board has also prioritised a 'whole school approach' to training and support in order to continue a preventative agenda to domestic abuse. This approach is relevant for all education settings.

Every school should have a designated lead responsible for supporting learners with relationships and sexuality education. There is extensive guidance available on preventing and responding to child sexual abuse, including 'Keeping Learners Safe' [Keeping learners safe | GOV.WALES](#) and [guidance-for-education-settings-on-peer-sexual-abuse-exploitation-and-harmful-sexual-behaviour.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#).

The school/setting's policy on VAWDASV has been set out in (a separate document/ the schools VAWDASV policy etc.).

The school participates in Operation Encompass. The purpose of Operation Encompass is to safeguard and support these children and young people who have witnessed and/or been present at the time of a domestic abuse incident. Operation Encompass aims to ensure that appropriate practitioners are made aware at the earliest possible stage in order to provide relevant and tailored support to children and young people in a way that means they feel safe and included.

13. Modern Slavery

Modern slavery describes forced labour practices with the perpetrator – the slave master- trapping and controlling the victim. The most common form of modern slavery is sexual exploitation. Labour exploitation is the second most common form of slavery

occurring most frequently in the agricultural, food, hospitality and construction sectors. Victims may be vulnerable UK or foreigner citizens. Police, Local Authorities, the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters Labour and Abuse Authority who encounter a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking have a duty to notify the Home Office under Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Modern slavery is a hidden, pervasive crime targeted towards those individuals most vulnerable. The Council and BAWSO are first responding organisations to cases of slavery. Training and victim support regarding Modern Slavery can be found at BAWSO, www.bawso.org.uk

14. Safer Schools' Partnership

The Safer Schools' partnership allows the safe and legal sharing of information that will ensure children can be safeguarded where they are identified as being at risk of or involved in crime and anti-social behavior. This is a multi-agency risk assessment approach. Specific advice on this can be sought from the Safeguarding in Education Manager/Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Education.

15. Transfer of school records

Where children are transferred to or from this school, we will ensure appropriate record keeping of the transfer of safeguarding records through the use of My Concern software package. Where My Concern is not used in both settings, the Safeguarding File – Transfer of records proforma will be used. (See appendix 7).

16. Out of Hours

After 5pm and on weekends and bank holidays, the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on 0800 328 4432

17. Information for Practitioners (staff/volunteers)

a) What to do if a person tells you they have been abused or harmed:

A person may confide in any practitioner. Practitioners to whom an allegation is made should remember: -

- Yours is a listening role, do not interrupt them when they are freely recalling events. Limit any questions to clarifying your understanding of what is being said. Any questions should be framed in an open manner so not to lead;
- In schools, staff should always speak to the DSP in the first instance, or in their absence, the Deputy DSP. In the event that both are absent, do not delay - anyone can contact the local authority children's social services to raise a concern at any time (Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) team). Staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

- For other education settings, the process outlined in the setting's own procedures must be followed;
- Make a note of the discussion, as soon as is reasonably practical (but within 24 hours) to pass on to the DSP. The note which should be clear in its use of terminology, should record the time, date, place, and people who were present and should record answers/responses in exactly the way they were said as far as possible. This note will in most cases be the only written record of what has been disclosed, and as it is the initial contact, an important one in the process. Remember, your note of the discussion may be used in any subsequent formal investigation and/or court proceedings. It is advised that you retain a copy in a safe place;
- Do not give undertakings of confidentiality. You will need to express this in age/developmental related ways as soon as appropriately possible during the disclosure. This may result in the person 'clamping up' and not completing the disclosure, but you will still be required to share the fact that they have a shared concern with you to the DSP. Often what is initially shared is the tip of an iceberg;
- That a person may be waiting for a case to go to criminal court, may have to give evidence or in the case of a child, may be awaiting care proceedings;
- You may have a future role in terms of supporting or monitoring the person, for example, contributing to an assessment or in the case of a child, implementing child protection plans. You can ask the DSP for an update on concerns shared, but they may be limited in their response. The level of feedback will be on a need to know, but whatever is shared is confidential and not for sharing with others;
- When making a report about an 'adult at risk', consent is not required to make the report, but it would be helpful to know if the adult at risk consents to the adult safeguarding process.

b) What to do if a person tells you they have a practitioner concern (including volunteers):

If an allegation of abuse is made against a practitioner, this must be reported in accordance with the information below.

Where there is a practitioner concern, reports to children's/adult services are made in the same way as for all safeguarding concerns

Where there is an allegation/concern about a practitioner, you should refer to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and the Welsh Government guidance circular 009/2014 Safeguarding Children in Education: Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff. (A summary of procedures is included in appendix 6: Practitioner Allegations/Concerns).

If a safeguarding allegation/concern about a practitioner is made, this must be reported to the Head Teacher/ manager.

If the concern is about the Head Teacher, this must be reported to the Chair of Governors and if the concern is about a manager, it must be reported to the next line manager.

The matter must also be discussed with the Safeguarding in Education Manager. In the absence of the Safeguarding in Education Manager, do not delay, contact the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Team.

If there is an allegation against a Local Authority Officer then this must be communicated to the Corporate Director for Education, Lynn Phillips Tel: 01495 355603 / 07772379795 and the Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) for the Education Directorate, Michelle Jones Tel: 01495 355823 mobile 07881815904

If the concern is about the SSL, then the Corporate Director for Education is to be contacted. If there is a concern about the Corporate Director for Education, then this should be referred to the Chief Executive.

Upon receipt of an allegation/concern about a practitioner in a school, the Head teacher/ manager (or where appropriate, the Chair of Governors), will:

- obtain details of the allegation in writing, signed and dated.
- Keep a record of dates, times, location and names of potential witnesses.
- Not investigate the allegation, or interview pupils, or discuss the allegation with the member of staff, but consult with the Safeguarding in Education Manager/IAA Service.
- inform the Chair of Governors / manager.
- Contact the Safeguarding in Education Manager who, together with Children's Services will give urgent consideration as to whether or not there is sufficient substance to the allegation to warrant an investigation: The outcome will either be:
 - i. without foundation
 - ii. internal disciplinary procedures
 - iii. a report under the safeguarding procedures
- In the case of adults at risk, further advice can be sought from the Information, Advice and Assistance team in Adult services.

Pending the outcome of this process, interim safeguarding arrangements will be necessary to prevent any unsupervised contact between the person making the allegation and the subject of the allegation and should consider the contact that takes place between any other child(ren)/adult at risk and the person against whom the

allegation has been made. This will require a risk assessment to be completed and documented by the Head teacher/Chair of Governors/manager.

The sharing of information about an allegation must be handled sensitively and must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to safeguard.

Information about the child, adult at risk or family must not be shared with the individual against whom the allegation was made or anyone representing them.

The matter must be treated confidentially and will not be discussed with practitioners.

When a report has been made to the Local Authority, consideration will be given to the report by the statutory authorities, who can conclude their considerations at any stage in the safeguarding process. Once the statutory authorities have completed their consideration of the allegation, the matter is referred back to the governing body to consider any actions required by the employer. At the conclusion of the involvement of statutory services, the Safeguarding in Education Manager will consult with the Headteacher and chair of governors to discuss next steps ([Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and staff | GOV.WALES](#))

Each establishment, organisation or service will keep and maintain records which detail allegations of abuse against any practitioner working for them, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, whatever the outcome. There are clear requirements of when this information is to be shared with legal or statutory organisations such as DBS and the Education Workforce Council (EWC). Advice and guidance for the sharing of this specific information **must** be sought from Organisational Development.

c) Confidentiality

The school/setting and practitioners are fully aware of confidentiality issues if a person divulges that they are or have been abused. A person may only feel confident to confide in a practitioner if they feel that the information will not be divulged to anyone else. However, practitioners have a professional responsibility to share relevant information with the designated statutory agencies when a child or adult at risk is experiencing abuse and/or neglect.

It is important that each practitioner deals with this sensitively. When responding, practitioners should explain that they must inform the appropriate people who can help, but they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. Practitioners should reassure the person and tell them that their situation will not be common knowledge within the setting. Be aware that it may well have taken significant courage to disclose the information and they may also be experiencing conflicting emotions, involving feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disloyalty (if the abuser is someone close) and hurt.

Ensure that only those with a professional involvement, i.e. the DSP and Head teacher/Manager, have access to safeguarding records. At all other times, they should be kept secure and separate from the person's main file.

18. Training

The school/setting will ensure that the designated senior person and deputy will have received initial training when starting their role and continued professional updates as required. Specific updates as suggested by national and local requirements will be central to the DSP/deputy DSP development.

DSP training will be inter-agency training and refresher training will take place on a regular basis, not exceeding a three-year period.

All practitioners will receive safeguarding training and will be regularly updated during the year as appropriate from the DSP. All practitioners will receive specific awareness raising training within a 3-year period.

Members of school governing bodies should also receive safeguarding training and the Chair of governors and the nominated governor for safeguarding should undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by or to the standards agreed by the Safeguarding Children Board.

In addition to the safeguarding Children and/or adults training, all staff must complete Group 1 training on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) as outlined in the National Training Framework and should also be trained through the Home Office Workshop to Raise Awareness (WRAP) of the Prevent programme. Links to online PREVENT training are contained in Appendix 8.

All Educational settings and partners working with children and adults at risk in Blaenau Gwent must keep records of training and carry out regular audits to ensure that all practitioner training for safeguarding is kept up to date. All educational settings must ensure that all practitioners receive this training within timescales and the training record must show this. Educational establishments and partner agencies will be required to provide information on practitioner training to the Council and the Safeguarding Board upon request.

The Designated Senior Person for safeguarding at this school/setting is:-

.....

The Deputy Designated Senior Person for safeguarding at this school/setting is:-

.....

The designated governor for safeguarding at this school is:-

.....

The Council's Safeguarding in Education Manager is:-

Sarah.Dixon@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Social Services can be contacted as follows:-

Telephone- **01495-315700** / Out of hours number **0800 328 4432**

This policy was updated on _____ by _____

This policy was presented and accepted by the Governing Body on _____

This staff were made aware of this policy and or updates on _____

This policy will be reviewed on _____

Contact Information:

Safeguarding in Education Manager (Safeguarding and Quality Assurance team, Children's Services)	Sarah.Dixon@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Safeguarding Manager (Safeguarding and Quality Assurance team, Children's Services)	Leanne.Tetley@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
PREVENT Lead	Helena.hunt@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) for Education Directorate	Michelle.Jones@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service, Social Services	01495 315700 Children - DutyTeam@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk Adults - DutyTeamAdults@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
South East Wales Emergency Duty Team (SEWEDT) - after 5pm, weekends and Bank Holidays.	0800 328 4432

Example policy template for Early Years, Childcare and play**Safeguarding Policy for (Name of Setting)**

.....(setting) believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to safeguarding all children in our care from harm. The practitioners at (setting) fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguard children and complies with Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, Gwent Safeguarding Children's Board and Blaenau Gwent authority's safeguarding policy.

We recognise the key role that.....(setting) can play in working with children and their families to seek early help to address any emerging concerns to help prevent problems from escalating, in preventing abuse by providing our children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Our setting will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, respected and valued, where children are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- ensure that all children know there is an adult in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- encourage positive emotional health and well-being, self-esteem and self-assertiveness;
- promote a caring, safe and secure environment;
- have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the child and their family (including, for example language) whilst recognising the paramountcy of safeguarding the individual;
- liaise and work together with all other support services and those agencies involved in early intervention services and the safeguarding of children and young people;
- providing continuous support to a child about whom there have been concerns;

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of National and Gwent Children's Safeguarding Boards' guidance and protocols that seek to protect children, namely:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requiring local authorities and non-maintained settings to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the well-being and welfare of the children on their care.
- Children Act 1989. Children and Family (Wales) Measure 2010
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

- Domestic abuse (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019
- The UNCRC seven core aims for children and young people in Wales
- Relevant Welsh Government guidance on safeguarding children

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working at
(setting).

We aim to:-

- Ensure that all children are never placed at risk while in the care of(setting);
- Support child's health and development in ways that foster security, confidence and independence;
- Ensure that the child's best interests are paramount and as far as reasonably practicable, have regard to the child's views, wishes and feelings, so that they receive the care and support they need before a problem escalates;
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times;
- Ensure parents are fully aware of our safeguarding/child protection policies and procedures when they register with the setting and are kept informed of all updates when they occur;
- Practitioners should always seek to be transparent with people they are working with about circumstances where they may need to share information with social services and/or the police;
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents;
- Ensure that all staff have regard to this guidance when fulfilling their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse - safeguarding and promoting the welfare, health and well-being of children in their care;
- Ensure that all staff regularly revise Safeguarding issues and procedures and sign a declaration that they have understood and will adhere to the setting's policies and procedures;
- That practitioners understand their duty to seek early help to address any emerging concerns to help avoid problems escalating;
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm;
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff;
- To develop a structured procedure within(setting) which will be followed by all members of staff;
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters

including attendance at initial and review child protection conferences and core groups and support with the submission of written reports.

- To ensure that all adults within the setting, who have access to the children, have been checked as to their suitability (including visitors);
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) will be notified of any allegations made against staff, managers, any volunteers, students and/or outside agencies in the setting.

Safe recruitment

..... (the setting) operate safe recruitment procedures and ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new practitioners and volunteers who will work with children, including disclosure and barring checks (DBS) in line with current guidance. We abide by CIW requirements in respect of references and suitability checks for practitioners and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children. All practitioners and temporary practitioners/volunteers providing cover during short-term absences and who will be working with children are given clear guidance of the setting's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities during induction.

Children with additional learning needs

We recognise that statistically children and young people with behavioural difficulties and disabilities have an increased risk of being abused compared with their non-disabled/non sensory impaired peers. We also recognise that adults who support children and young people with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

Appointed Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and their responsibilities.

The setting's Designated Safeguarding Person is who will be responsible for supporting practitioners in liaising with Social Services, Gwent Safeguarding Children's Board and CIW regarding any child protection matter. The setting's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person is who will be responsible for supporting practitioners in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Person and their Deputy will:

- act as a source of advice and support within (the setting) and provide a point of contact for practitioners who have concerns or information that child or young person may be suffering abuse;
- co-ordinate any necessary reports to Social Services, **however** individual practitioners have a duty to report and the responsibility for raising concerns, completing report information, informing Social Services and involvement in any

safeguarding processes that follow after a report is made. (e.g. requests for information, attending case conferences etc.);

- support those practitioners in our setting who have been involved with a child who has suffered, or was at risk of suffering harm, who may find the situation stressful and upsetting;
- ensure that(the setting) contributes fully to the safeguarding processes e.g. by providing reports, attending meetings or conferences when needed;
- ensure that all practitioners and parents/carers are aware of and have access to our setting's safeguarding policy and procedures and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures;
- disseminate safeguarding information gained from training and other sources to all practitioners in our setting and ensure that newly appointed practitioners are aware of their child protection/safeguarding responsibilities;
- inform CIW of any allegations that have been made against managers, practitioners and volunteers.

Practitioner Commitment

The (setting) is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities in respect of child protection and safeguarding through the provision of support and training to practitioners. Therefore,(setting) will ensure that:-

- all practitioners have up to date safeguarding training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of harm, abuse and neglect;
- implement safe recruitment practices for all practitioners, students and volunteers, including verified references and full and up to date enhanced DBS checks;
- all practitioners and volunteers are given a copy of the Safeguarding policy during their induction, and have its implications explained to them;
- all practitioners are alert to children's needs including any potential or suspected risk of abuse or harm and understand what action they should take;
- any practitioner, student or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, will be subject to the provisions of the setting's Disciplinary Policy;
- all practitioners and volunteers receive regular staff meetings and supervision where opportunities to discuss Safeguarding/Child Protection issues will be made and further support provided if necessary;
- all practitioners are aware of any early intervention services that could help prevent any problems escalating;
- all practitioners should familiarise themselves with the culture and beliefs of those families they work with. Practitioners should not be afraid to ask about particular behaviours and the reasons for them in a sensitive manner and should never overlook potential harmful practices on the basis of cultural sensitivity;
- all practitioners are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All students and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the DSP or setting's manager;

- All visitors/contract/external workers will sign a visitor's book and be formally identified before accessing the setting. They will be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.

Supporting Practitioners

We recognise that all practitioners working in the setting who has been involved with a child who has suffered, or is at risk of suffering harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support the practitioner by providing opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Person and to seek further support if needed.

Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse can manifest itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, an institution or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger.

Indicators of abuse (although this is by no means an exhaustive list)

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Inappropriately clothed

Types of Harm

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others;
- **sexual abuse** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be: not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development;
- **Identity Neglect** – not recognising or addressing the child or young person's needs in terms of (for example) culture, religion, gender and sexuality;

- **Emotional Neglect** – It also includes not saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child’s successes, not showing any emotions in interactions with a child.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures:
<https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

What to do if a practitioner has a concern

The action that (the setting) take to safeguard children will be in line with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

It is not the role of any practitioner in our setting to investigate and attempt to seek out evidence on matters relating to safeguarding concerns and they must not attempt to do so. Practitioners in our setting all have a role in assisting social services and/or the police and/or CIW by providing information for safeguarding/child protection enquiries. They recognise that sharing information for the purposes of safeguarding is essential and that safeguarding the individual overrides the need to keep information confidential.

Practitioners in our setting will inform the Designated Safeguarding Person of:

- any concerns that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to be suffering some form of abuse;
- any allegations of abuse against a practitioner;
- any disclosures of abuse.

Any child currently on the Child Protection Register who is absent without explanation for two days will be referred to the social services team.

Not all child protection information results in a report to Social Services, but small pieces of information may be significant on their own to create a wider picture.

The practitioner who is making the report should seek to obtain consent from parent or carer. This supports positive working relationships between children/young persons and their families. The child and parent/s wish not to report may be over-ridden if it is considered by practitioners that there is still a need for a report.

It may not be appropriate to seek parent consent:

- ❖ the possibility that the child would be put at further risk;
- ❖ the possibility that a child would be threatened or otherwise coerced into silence;
- ❖ a strong likelihood that important evidence would be destroyed/lost;
- ❖ the parent identified as the alleged abuser
- ❖ the child in question not wishing the parent to be involved at that stage and is competent to take that decision;
- ❖ it is in the public interest.

Practitioners should discuss whether it is appropriate to seek consent from the child and parents with their agency's designated safeguarding person (DSP). If the decision is

made not to seek consent this decision must be recorded.

Information that should be included in a report:

- Date of disclosure/concern
- Date and time of the record being made
- Name, address and date of birth of the child/children
- Details about the **cause for concern** regarding risk of harm
- A factual report of what happened, what was witnessed or said – use the child's own words!
- Detailed description of any injuries sustained and any allegations, for example sexual abuse, their sources, timing and location
- A note of any other people involved, family circumstances
- Whether the child is safe currently or is in need of immediate protection and actions taken so far
- Whether consent has been obtained and if not, why not
- Any discussions held with the parent/s (where deemed appropriate)
- Name of the person making the report and their job title
- Signature

The Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) should be informed and given the record. The member of staff should contact Social Services via telephone, to express their concern and Social Services will advise if a report should be made.

- Note the time of the telephone call to Social Services;
- Note the name of the person that is dealing with the telephone call;
- Note the actions to be taken;

If a report is to be made the DSP will support the practitioner (report maker) in completing the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) and processing the report. Further guidance and the relevant Multi Agency Referral Form to make a referral can be found through the Gwent Safeguarding website, at

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

***Remember to create the Picture** so that the person reading the report gets a clear understanding of why you have concerns about a child or children. Make it factual – how you are involved, what did you see, what did you hear, what happened, where did it happen, when did it happen, who else is involved and why you are reporting.

Third Party Information

Practitioners 'must not leave it to the member of public to contact social services or just advise the person to contact social services directly'. The practitioner has a Duty To Report concerns raised by a member of the public. Practitioners have a responsibility to report any concerns they are alerted to by the general public – both in their work and

private lives. When making a report that comes from a third party or the public Practitioners must:

- Record exactly what has been said by the member of public,
- Give the information provided to them,
- Establish what evidence the member of public has regarding the risk of harm. For example - have they witnessed the abuse, spoken to the individual who is at risk of harm, or heard something?
- Explain that whilst respecting any wish to remain anonymous this may not always be possible, for example if a crime is suspected.

Where possible, members of the public should be encouraged to provide contact details.

The Prevent Duty

As a registered childcare provider we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

As a childcare provider, we as a setting, understand our role in identifying the possible risk to children in our care who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in their own family or outside.

.....(setting) is committed to:

- Taking appropriate action when observing concerning behaviour,
- Training practitioners so that they are able to identify families and children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation,
- Build children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values,
 1. Democracy
 2. Rule of law
 3. Independent liberty
 4. Mutual respect and tolerance
- Assist in promoting children’s learning in their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world,
- Report any concerns following our setting’s safeguarding procedures.

Allegations against a practitioner

If an allegation of any form of child abuse is made against a practitioner, the following procedure will be adhered to:-

- All allegations of abuse of children by a professional or practitioner must be taken seriously and treated accordingly;
- All practitioners are made aware and understand that they can approach social services or the police, independently, to discuss any worries they have about abuse, neglect or harm and that they should always do so if;
 - ❖ They have concerns that their manager, designated practitioners or proprietors may be implicated;
 - ❖ They have concerns that the manager, designated practitioners or proprietor will not take the matter seriously and/or act appropriately to protect the child; or
 - ❖ They fear intimidation and/or have immediate concerns for their own or for the service user's safety,
- All allegations and suspicions of professional abuse must be referred to Social Services, CIW or to the Police. The setting will follow their safeguarding procedures and submit a report,
- All allegations and concerns must be recorded, dated and signed.
- The setting will have high regard to;
 - ❖ Any concerns about a practitioner's behaviour towards their own children/family members,
 - ❖ If there are concerns about the practitioner's behaviour towards children unrelated to their employment or voluntary work,
 - ❖ When an allegation is made about historical abuse,
- A responsible senior manager from Social Services will meet with the setting's manager for an initial discussion and establish if further action is to be taken. Social Services will provide guidance and inform the setting's manager on how to proceed,
- If further action is to be taken, the responsible senior manager will arrange a strategy discussion with the police to consider any immediate action to be taken to protect the child, and to arrange a strategy meeting,
- At any point after an allegation is made the setting's manager may decide to suspend the practitioner,
- The practitioner should be informed that an allegation has been made at the earliest opportunity. Details of what can be shared will be discussed during the strategy discussion,
- The child's parents/carers will be informed of details of the allegations and the procedures to be followed,
- On no account should the allegation be discussed and direct questioning should be avoided if the police wish to interview the practitioner,
- During the strategy discussion, a decision will be made regarding a Professional Strategy Meeting (PSM). If a PSM is to be held, this will be convened by Children's Services. The PSM should develop an action plan with time scales in order to avoid any necessary delay,

- The practitioner will be informed that the child protection enquiry will be carried out in accordance with child protection procedures. The practitioner will be reassured that every effort will be made to preserve confidentiality, however information gained which is relevant to disciplinary or criminal proceedings may be disclosed for this purpose,
- If the practitioner is a member of a trade union or other professional association they should be advised to contact that organisation. They can request copies of the minutes of the Professional Strategy Meeting if they so wish,
- At the conclusion of the investigation the member of staff must be informed, in writing, within 5 working days about the allegation that was made, the procedures followed and the outcome,
- Arrangements should be made to keep the child and their parents/carers informed of the outcomes,
- Where a practitioner is dissatisfied with the enquiries/investigation, or the outcome reached, they should be informed of grievance, complaints or appeals procedures which may be applicable.

Record Keeping

Children's records are freely accessible to parents. However, a written request must be made for personal files on the children as we must take into account data protection rules when disclosing records that refer to third parties.

The designated safeguarding person will ensure that:

- a chronological record of concerns about a child is maintained even if there is no need to make an immediate report;
- all such records are kept confidentially and secure;
- a file is maintained with copies of safeguarding reports, child protection conference minutes, observations, feedback from Social Services, record of injuries, reasons of absence, copies of emails are headed with the child's name, Social Workers name and contact, Health Visitors name and contact and kept within the child's file.

Safe Caring

All practitioners will make:-

- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when practitioners, students or volunteers are left alone with a child. If practitioners are left alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another practitioner should be informed,
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a practitioner this will be recorded fully in the Incident Record Book,
- Practitioners will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, a practitioner will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, a practitioner should not accompany children into the toilet. Practitioners are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued,

- Practitioners will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.

Confidentiality

Practitioners cannot keep confidential a disclosure or allegation of abuse and must refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Person and/or other senior member of staff. It is important that each practitioner deals with this sensitively. When responding, the practitioner should explain that they must inform the appropriate people who can help, but they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. Practitioners should reassure the child/young person and tell them that their situation will not be common knowledge within the setting. Be aware that it may well have taken significant courage to disclose the information and they may also be experiencing conflicting emotions, involving feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disloyalty (if the abuser is someone close) and hurt.

All reports should be made with the knowledge that during any subsequent investigation, the source (i.e. the setting) will be made known to the family.

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

Other practitioners may need to be alerted to concerns about a child or young person, possibly in order to monitor the concern or to gather further evidence prior to a report being made, or to assist in providing appropriate support to a child or young person once a report has been made. Information should only be shared on a strict need to know basis.

Relevant Telephone Numbers

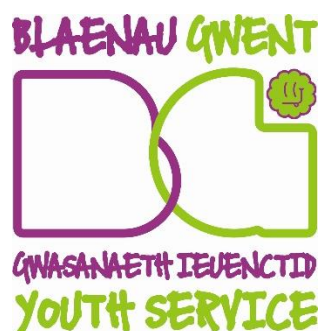
Social Services IAA Team	01495 315700
Social Services out of hours service	0800 328 4432
Gwent Police	01633 838111
Care Inspectorate Wales	0300 7900 126

This policy was updated on _____ by _____

Staff were made aware of this policy and or updates on _____

This policy will be reviewed on _____

Policy template for Blaenau Gwent Youth Service



Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service is committed to safeguarding the welfare of the young people who engage with us through creating and maintaining an environment where young people are listened to and are able to talk safely about any concerns that they may have.

Legislation

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child states that children have:

'the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them.'

It further states that protective measures should, as appropriate, include:

'effective procedures for prevention, identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow up of instances of child maltreatment.'

The Children Act 1989 (updated in 2004 following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry) legislates for Children in England & Wales. The principles of the Act are to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children and young people under the age of 18 are met. This also includes the need to be protected from harm.

Part V of the Act relates to this and states that in addition to **Social Services** only the **Police** and the **NSPCC** have the legal right and responsibility to investigate concerns about child abuse.

However, when working with children and young people **you have a duty of care** and should report any concerns that you may have. If any person has knowledge, concerns or suspicions that a child or young person is suffering, has suffered or is likely to be at

risk of harm, it is their responsibility to ensure that the concerns are referred to one of the agencies that have a statutory duty to make enquiries and intervene when necessary.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, takes into account the above legislation and should be used as the main basis for all child protection in Wales. **A copy of this document is available via <https://safeguarding.wales/> and the South East Wales Safeguarding Board (<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>) and can be downloaded as an App. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise yourself with the document and its location.** This policy does not replace this document but provides you with the necessary information and guidance needed to assist you with your duty of care to safeguard young people.

This policy sits underneath the **Corporate Safeguarding Policy** and **Local Government Education Services (LGES) Policy**.



BGCBC
Safeguarding in Edu

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

All practitioners should be aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect in the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, as well as the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. This is essential in order to communicate concerns about harm in a meaningful way.

S.130 (4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines a **child at risk** as a child who:

1. Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm;
2. Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect:

‘Abuse’ means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place. ‘Financial abuse’ includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

'Neglect' means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being for example, impairment of the person's health

'Harm' means abuse or the impairment of (a) physical or mental health, or (b) physical, intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development, (including that suffered from seeing or hearing another person suffer ill treatment)

Types of Harm

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others;
- **sexual abuse** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be: not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse, Neglect and Harm In a Child

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures:
<https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

Safeguarding

If you have a concern that a young person may be at risk of harm (e.g their safety or welfare), but are not in immediate danger or at significant risk then this has to be noted and passed onto your line manager. This may be something that you have heard, seen or had disclosed to you. These cases can be difficult to judge and therefore should be discussed with your line manager, as soon as possible, with action to be taken within the next 24 hours.

Child Protection

If you have a concern, or a young person has made a disclosure that makes you believe that an individual may be at risk of significant or immediate harm you must respond urgently to secure their safety and inform your line manager as soon as possible to inform them of your course of action.

Safeguarding Young People and Staff

(taken from the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019)

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales Act 2014, specifies the duty to report both adults and children at risk or where there is reasonable cause to suspect are at risk of harm. You have a duty to report concerns, suspicions, observations or disclosures made to you regarding safeguarding/child protection which involves a member of staff. Note the date, time, location and who was present and report to your line manager. Notes should also be kept of meetings/discussions with clear agreement about what action is to be taken and by whom. If the decision is made that no further action is to be taken, this should also be recorded with the reasons for the decision. These notes should be kept in a confidential file should they be required at a later date. Should there be serious concerns, agencies must not make their own internal decisions about whether it is a disciplinary issue or a child protection matter. These complex considerations should only take place with the involvement of social services and the police. The police have the statutory powers and responsibility for determining whether a criminal investigation is to be undertaken.

Informing Young People

As a youth worker it is important to let young people know, where possible before they make a disclosure, that if you have concerns for their wellbeing that you may need to pass that information on to ensure that they are kept safe from harm. Should a concern need to be referred on, be open and honest with the young person, keeping them informed, as much as possible, of the process and steps taken to secure their safety and/or wellbeing.

Informing Parents/Carers

Where possible parents should be informed that a report to Social Services is being made. Consent should be given by the parent/carer for this to happen. If the parent does not consent, yet the concern is still of enough significant for a report to Social Services then a report should still be submitted. It should be made clear on the form the reasons for consent not being given or reasons that parents could not be contacted to inform them of the report.

Sharing Information Among Professionals

A failure to share information is a common finding of practice reviews.

Effective sharing and exchange of information between professionals is essential in order to safeguard children and young people.

The law is rarely a barrier to disclosure of information. There is no restriction in the Data Protection Act or any other legislation that prevents concerns regarding individuals being highlighted and shared between agencies for the purpose of protecting children. The Bichard and Carlile reports both confirm the need to be aware that concerns from a number of sources, which individually may not be of any significance, can build up a picture which may suggest a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm and therefore requires professionals to act to protect them.

Whenever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties, but in the public interest in child protection always overrides the public interest in maintaining confidentiality or obtaining consent from families. A child's safety is the paramount consideration in weighing these interests.

Any discussion relating to a young person's welfare should be noted. Note the date, time and who was present at the meeting/discussion. At the end of the meeting/discussion there should be a clear agreement about what action is to be taken and by whom. If the decision is made that no further action is to be taken, this should also be recorded with the reasons for the decision. All concerns about a child or young person's welfare should be documented whether or not further action is taken. These notes should be kept in a confidential file should they be required at a later date.

Pointers for Practice: Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing – taken from Wales Safeguarding Procedures. (<https://www.safeguarding.wales/en/>)

A failure to share information is a common finding of practice reviews. There are seven golden rules for sharing information developed by HM Government, 2018. These are

- 1. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately. What you have shared, with whom and for what purpose*
- 2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.*

3. *Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.*
4. *Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.*
5. *Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.*
6. *Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely ([see principles](#)).*
7. *Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record.*

Supervision

In addition to regular supervision for staff, where there is a safeguarding/child protection concern, line managers should make additional provision for staff to ensure that procedures have been followed and that support and guidance is given to the referring member/s of staff.

Training

All staff will be expected to keep up to date with child protection policies and procedures. Where this necessitates training then staff will be required to attend. Training in respect of safeguarding and child protection will be ongoing and identified by the youth service. Staff will be informed of when this will take place and will be expected to treat this as a diary priority.

Youth Work Staff Located Offsite

All staff should adhere to the Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures of the youth service. Where a youth provision is based within another setting e.g. schools, then staff

should obtain and familiarise themselves with the child protection procedures of that setting and have available the name and contact details of the designated safeguarding person. Should a safeguarding/child protection issue be raised, staff should firstly seek advice from their line manager. Following this, the designated safeguarding person at the setting should be informed of the concern and any action taken.

Youth Work Staff Working in Out of Hours Provision

Staff working out of hours should adhere to the Child Protection/safeguarding procedures of the youth service. Where concerns are raised then the procedures for Out of Hours Service should be followed.

Protection of Adults at Risk

As youth workers we provide services to young people aged 11-25 years. This means that we may come into contact with adults who may need intervention from Social Services. Just as with safeguarding/child protection, we have the same duty of care for adults at risk. This means that staff should act if they:-

- Witness abuse;
- Receive information about abuse, suspected abuse or concerns about the care or treatment of a vulnerable adult;
- Have concerns or suspicions about possible abuse or inappropriate care

As with younger aged young people, adults at risk have the same rights to be fully informed and involved in the safeguarding process and make decisions about their safety and welfare. Adults at risk, if they have the mental capacity, should also have their wishes respected if they seem able to make an informed decision about action and/or intervention unless:

- There is a statutory duty to intervene e.g. a crime has been committed or may well be
- It is in the public interest e.g. another person/s are being put at risk
- It is suspected that they are under the undue influence or someone else

Who are Adults at Risk?

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act states that an 'adult at risk' is an adult who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs);

- as a result of those needs, is unable to protect him/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

This definition may include a person who:

- Has learning disabilities
- Has mental health problems
- Is an older person with support/care needs
- Is physically frail or has a chronic illness
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Misuses drugs or alcohol
- Has social or emotional problems
- Has an autistic spectrum disorder

Abuse can be physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial (includes theft, fraud, pressure about money, misuse of money. It can take place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place.

Neglect describes a failure to meet a person's basic needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person well-being. It can take place in a range of settings, such as private dwelling, residential or day care provision.

The following behaviours could place the adult at risk of abuse or neglect (this list is **not** exhaustive):

- Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV)
- Modern Slavery
- Domestic abuse and violence against men
- Criminal exploitation
- Financial abuse
- Institutional abuse
- Discrimination and hate crime e.g. racial, homophobic, disability
- Forced marriage
- Abuse by another vulnerable adult
- Abuse by children

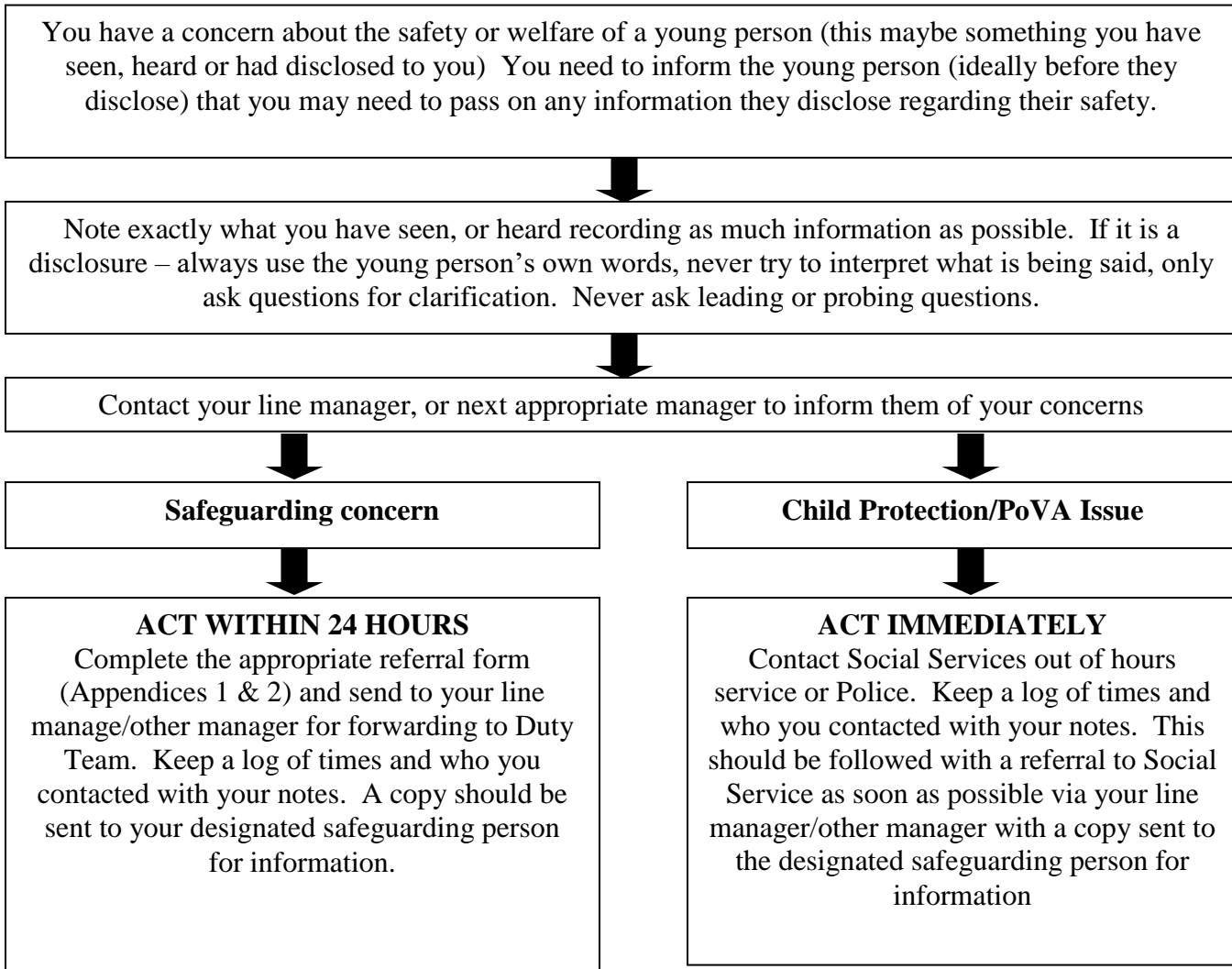
Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse and Neglect in an Adult at risk

When making the decision to report an adult at risk, you should apply the same procedures as safeguarding/child protection and may need to refer to **the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise yourself with these procedures and how to access them, <https://safeguarding.wales/>**

The referral numbers for adults at risk are the same as Child Protection with the referral form attached in appendix 2.

Full time provision - Safeguarding/Child Protection Procedures

Flow chart



Useful Numbers

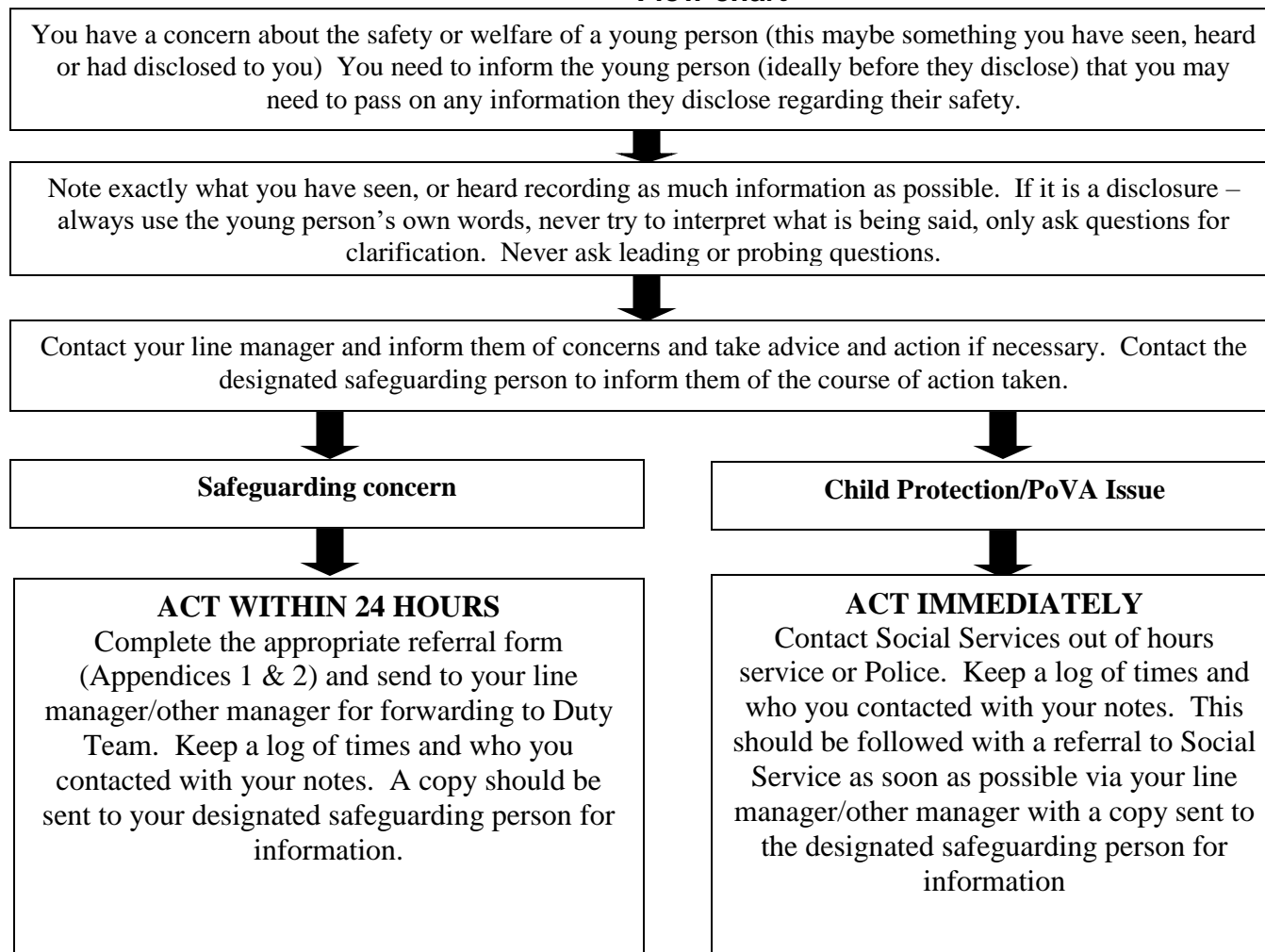
Joanne Sims	Young People and Partnerships Manager	07772 755435
Claire Madden	Team Manager – Emotional Wellbeing/ Designated Safeguarding Person	07581 628601
Ben Arnold	NEETS Projects Manager	07791 443612
Kristian Gay	Detached Manager	07970 828877
Stephanie Watkins	Inspire 2 Achieve Team Lead	07970 828899
Liam Thomas	Engagement and Progression Coordinator	07854 937489

Social Service Referral Telephone Number	01495 315700
Out of Hours Social Services Telephone Numbers	0800 3284432 01495 767045
Police	01633 838111
NSPCC Helpline (for professional advice)	0808 800 5000

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service

Full time Provision located Offsite – Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures

Flow chart



Useful Numbers

Management & Team Leads		
Joanne Sims	Youth Service and People and Partnerships Manager.	07772755435 Joanne.Sims@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Claire Madden-Southcott	Team Manager – Emotional Wellbeing Designated Safeguarding Lead	07581628601 Claire.Madden@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Ben Arnold	Inspire 2 Achieve NEETS Projects Manager.	07791443612 Ben.Arnold@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

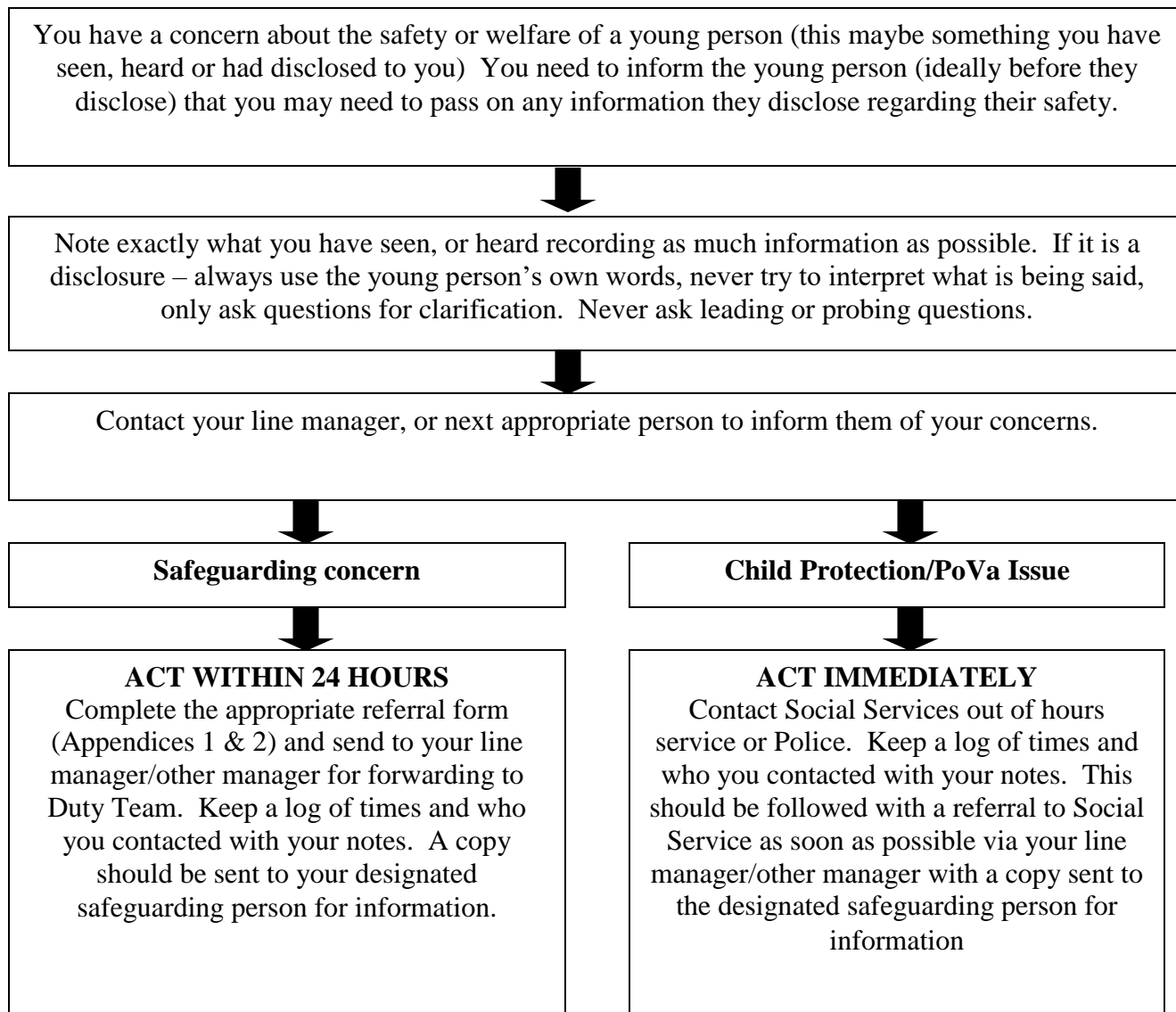
Kristian Gay	Detached & Youth Club Team Manager.	07970828877 kristian.gay@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Stephanie Watkins	Inspire 2 Achieve Team Lead.	07970 828899 Stephanie.Watkins@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Social Service Referral Telephone Number	01495 315700
Out of Hours Social Services Telephone Numbers	0800 3284432 01495 767045
Police	01633 838111
NSPCC Helpline (for professional advice)	0808 800 5000

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service

Out of Hours Provision – Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures

Flow chart



Useful Numbers

Management & Team Leads		
Joanne Sims	Youth Service and People and Partnerships Manager.	07772755435 Joanne.Sims@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Claire Madden-Southcott	Team Manager – Emotional Wellbeing Designated Safeguarding Lead	07581628601 Claire.Madden@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Ben Arnold	Inspire 2 Achieve NEETS Projects Manager.	07791443612 Ben.Arnold@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Kristian Gay	Detached & Youth Club Team Manager.	07970828877 kristian.gay@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Stephanie Watkins	Inspire 2 Achieve Team Lead.	07970 828899 Stephanie.Watkins@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Liam Thomas	Engagement & Progression Co-Ordinator. Youth & Community Team Lead.	07854937489 Liam.Thomas@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Social Service Referral Telephone Number	01495 315700
Out of Hours Social Services Telephone Numbers	0800 3284432 01495 767045
Police	01633 838111
NSPCC Helpline (for professional advice)	0808 800 5000

Types of Harm

All practitioners should be aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect in the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, as well as the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. This is essential in order to communicate concerns about harm in a meaningful way.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

S.130 (4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines a **child at risk** as a child who:

3. Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm;
4. Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act states that an 'adult at risk' is an adult who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs);
- as a result of those needs, is unable to protect him/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Types of Harm

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others;
- **sexual abuse** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be: not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures: <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

How to make a Report

LISTEN

If you are concerned because of something a child or adult at risk is saying, you should not attempt to take any action directly but **you should**:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully, do not directly question him or her, instead use open questions; what, where, when, who?
- Never stop them talking if they are freely recalling significant events
- Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform (see below)
- Never promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record what was said, when and where it happened and who else was present

SHARE

Any safeguarding concerns should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Person in the respective service area. With the support of the Designated Safeguarding Person the decision to report a concern to Social Services will be made and responsibility for reporting will be agreed i.e. the staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Person will make the report.

Should the concerns relate to a professional, the same procedure will apply. Educational settings must also contact the safeguarding in education manager. Reports in relation to a concern about a child, young person or adult should be made to Social Services as soon as possible and certainly **within 24 hours**.

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on: **01495 315700**

Outside office hours, reports should be made to the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team or if there is immediate risk, to the Police.

The Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on: **0800 328 4432**
Practitioners and providers should be aware that they **cannot remain anonymous** when making a report.

The Duty Worker taking the report should be given as much information as possible if it is available to the reporter. This will include the following:

- Full name of the subject of the concern
- Their date of birth or age
- Their address
- The nature of the concern

- Who may be responsible
- Their name and relationship (if any)
- What happened
- When and where
- What has been done in response
- Whether or not the Police have been informed
- The names and relationship of those with caring responsibility
- The names and ages of any other adults living in the household
- The names of any professionals known to be involved e.g. school, GP
- Any information affecting the potential safety of staff
- The allocated social worker or team if known/if applicable

RECORD

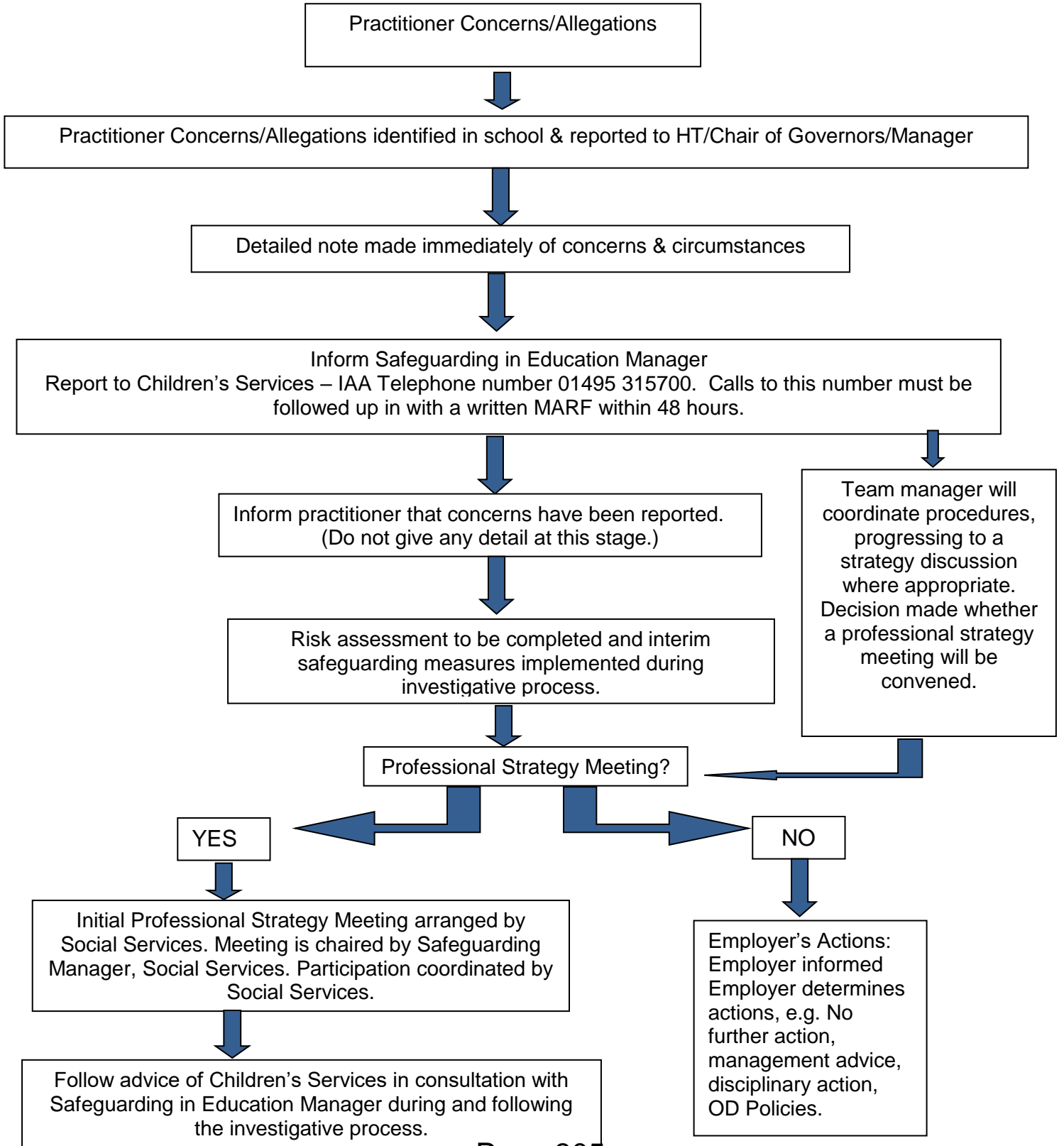
All telephone reports should be confirmed in writing within two working days.

- For Children, a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) should be used:
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>
- For an Adult, a Duty to Report form should be used.
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

LISTEN, SHARE, RECORD

PRACTITIONER CONCERNS/ALLEGATIONS AND MANAGING COMMUNICATION

This Flowchart should be used as a brief checklist of procedure for practitioner concerns/allegations
Detailed procedures are outlined in Wales Safeguarding Procedures, section 5
Also refer to Safeguarding Children in Education: Handling Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff 009/2014



Communication Guidance Framework
Managing communication with the practitioner subject to a safeguarding allegation/concern

The following communication considerations must be made when handling any allegation/concerns about education practitioners
 When an allegation is made/concern raised about a practitioner, the process under part 5 of the Wales Safeguarding procedures must be followed. The Safeguarding in Education manager must also be informed of all practitioner concerns/allegations; advice and guidance will be provided.

Communication - the following factors need to be considered:

<p>Initial communication upon receipt of allegation/concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial information sharing is minimal due to the potential for any future investigation by statutory agencies • Support to the individual – what can be offered? <i>Remind them of Care First and Trade Union support. Discuss how they will be supported both in and out of work.</i> • Initial safeguarding arrangements implemented and shared with practitioner • Risk management plan - record and share initial plan directly with practitioner. <i>Remember it is SLT responsibility to communicate and implement the plan (where the subject is a HT, the CoG has this responsibility)</i> 	<p>Action taken/summary of discussion: <i>Record dates/times</i></p>
<p>Considerations prior to a weekend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of information reaching practitioner through other means if not informed prior to weekend • <i>Potential detrimental impact on practitioners' mental wellbeing across the weekend</i> • Assess their support network available over weekend <i>and implement additional support as agreed with practitioner.</i> 	<p>Action taken/summary of discussion: <i>Record dates/times</i></p>
<p>Review schedule</p>	<p>Action taken/summary of discussion: <i>Record dates/times</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication intervals and method of communication to be agreed with practitioner.</i> • <i>Establish Review schedule for the risk management plan.</i> 	
<p><i>School closure periods/holidays</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication over these periods to be discussed and mutually pre-agreed with practitioner.</i> • <i>Agreement reached to be documented in risk management plan</i> 	<p><i>Action taken/summary of discussion: Record dates/times</i></p>

Review schedule

The communication schedule to be reviewed alongside the risk management plan:

<p>Date of review: Summary of any amendments to the communication schedule:</p>

<p>Date of review: Summary of any amendments to the communication schedule:</p>

<p>Date of review: Summary of any amendments to the communication schedule:</p>

Safeguarding File - Transfer of Records

A receiving school must be made aware of the existence of a Child's Safeguarding file prior to the child transferring from their original school.

The confidential Safeguarding File must be securely transferred to the new school either in Person, or via secure mail that requires a signature of receipt. This Transfer of Records form should be completed and forwarded with the file to the new school. Either the Head teacher or the Designated Senior Person for safeguarding should sign receipt for the file.

Sending Schools should retain a copy of the signed Transfer of Records forms as evidence of the transfer, and ensure appropriate signatures are obtained.

Child Name	
DOB	

Name of sending school/setting:		
Date record ended at this school/setting (pupil end date):		
Name of receiving school/setting:		
Date of contact with new school/setting		
Has sensitive and urgent information been shared with new school/setting?	Yes / No	If No, why not?

Name of DSP sending records	
Date file sent	
File passed to (name):	

This section to be completed by the receiving school if file delivered by hand.

Receiving School/setting	
Signed	
Print name and position	
Date	

This section to be completed by the sending school with the postage receipt reference if file sent via secure post as proof of sending.

Reference number of postage receipt	
Name and address of recipient	
Date of postage	

Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism

Our school/setting is committed to providing a safe environment for all of our children, staff and any visitors. There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school/setting.

Community cohesion is the term used to describe how everyone in a geographical area lives alongside each other with mutual understanding and respect. A cohesive community is where a person has a strong sense of belonging. It is safe, vibrant and able to be resilient and strong when tensions occur.

Those involved in supporting terrorism look to exploit and radicalise vulnerable people, including children and young people. Since July 2015, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a statutory duty on us 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'

We are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which spring from a variety of sources including the internet. At times students, visitors or parents may themselves reflect or display views that may be considered as discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language; this will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with.

Education is a powerful deterrent against this and we will strive to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and resilience to challenge and discuss such issues in a facilitated and informed way. This way our students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity where they can thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

We have a clear safeguarding framework on how to manage and respond to issues where a pupil develops or expresses extreme views and ideologies, which are considered inflammatory and against the community cohesion ethos of our school.

Where such cases are identified a Duty to Report form is to be completed and submitted to Children's Services. The Local Authority Lead Officer for PREVENT should also be contacted.

Safeguarding Channel Panel

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to working with our partners to protect and support our students, and where a Duty to Report form leads to one of our Students needing safeguarding, we will support the Channel programme.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by identifying individuals at risk; assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about ensuring that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

Training

We are committed to ensuring that all staff in our school have access to PREVENT training and are encouraged to make use of other counter-terrorism related training modules and the reference material below.

Key Points of Contact

..... School's/Setting's Safeguarding Lead

Helena Hunt, Prevent Lead for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Email: Helena.hunt@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk Tel: 07791 875737

Reference Material

<https://gov.wales/respect-and-resilience-developing-community-cohesion>

This guidance aims to provide information to all schools, including a range of external resources, advice and support via established referral processes, regarding the causes of violent extremism and preventative measures that can be taken.

Included within this guidance is a self-assessment tool, to support schools to assess their levels of compliance with best practice in the creation of a safe learning community, and to keep learners safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Prevent Duty Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Channel Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

E-learning training on PREVENT:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>

PREVENT Referrals:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/preventreferrals>

Channel Awareness:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/channelawareness>

Website: <http://educateagainsthate.com> Resources for parents and teachers

Secure and Shelter Procedure (example)

Secure and Shelter (Lockdown) procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school)
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc.)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose

The school's secure and shelter plan is as follows:

Signal for secure and shelter	
Signal for all clear	

Actions - dependent upon the cause of the activation of Safe and Secure (amend as required)

- *Who sounds the alarm / other form of notification (specify)*
- **Pupils who are outside of the school buildings** are brought inside as quickly as possible and return to their *classroom / other location (specify)* (outside staff will be informed by a senior member of staff)
- **Those inside the school** should remain in their classrooms and check corridors and toilets for pupils or staff
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are closed (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors must also be closed).
- If the cause of the secure and shelter is air pollution, close air vents and switch off extractor fans / air conditioning.
- Blinds should be drawn and pupils sit quietly
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for via the internal telephone system and instigate an immediate search for anyone missing
- Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm
- The school office will establish communication with the Emergency Services
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and the usual fire evacuation procedure will then take place
- Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable via Parentmail and the website (only when appropriate via guidance from Emergency Services)
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a safe and secure situation.

All situations are different, once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services.

This can then be communicated to staff and pupils. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

All Clear

Once the incident has been assessed as safe all classrooms will be either visited by a senior member of staff or via classroom telephone and told the situation is under control and the class can resume activities as normal.

Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the Lockdown.

Emergency Services and Corporate Communications will support the decision of the Headteacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents.

Safe and Secure Drill

It is of vital importance that the school's Safe and Secure procedures are familiar to all members of the school staff. To achieve this, a drill should be undertaken at least once a year.

Staff will ALWAYS have advance notice of a Safe and Secure drill, therefore if the signal occurs without warning staff must assume it is NOT A DRILL.

Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable of the drill via Parentmail and the website.

Associated Policies, Guidance and Advice

APPENDIX 10

- Wales Safeguarding Procedures
<https://safeguarding.wales/>
- [Keeping Learners Safe \(gov.wales\)](#)
- Recruitment:
[http://intranet/organisational-development-\(hr\)/schools-hr/recruitment.aspx](http://intranet/organisational-development-(hr)/schools-hr/recruitment.aspx)
- <https://gov.wales/handling-allegations-abuse-against-teachers-and-staff>
Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff | GOV.WALES
- [Blaenau Gwent Corporate Safeguarding Policy | Blaenau Gwent CBC \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](#)
- <https://gov.wales/whistleblowing-schools-guidance-governors>
Blaenau Gwent Whistleblowing policy:
- <http://intranet/media/160180/Whistleblowing-Policy-September-2019.pdf>
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/safe-and-effective-intervention-use-of-reasonable-force-and-searching-for-weapons.pdf>
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/educational-records-school-reports-and-the-common-transfer-system-the-keeping-disposal-disclosure-and-transfer-of-pupil-information.pdf>

Gwent Safeguarding:

- [Welcome to the Gwent Safeguarding website - Gwent Safeguarding](#)

BAWSO:

- [Bawso | Supporting ethnic minorities affected by violence and exploitation](#)

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV):

- [Live Fear Free helpline | GOV.WALES](#)
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/vawdasv>
- [Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence \(VAWDASV\) educational toolkit | GOV.WALES](#)
- [guidance-for-governors_0.pdf](#)

Modern Slavery:

- [Live Fear Free: Slavery campaign | GOV.WALES](#)

Keeping safe online:

- [Keeping safe online - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)

Peer-on-peer sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour:

- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-10/guidance-for-education-settings-on-peer-sexual-abuse-exploitation-and-harmful-sexual-behaviour.pdf>
- [Incidence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment among secondary school pupils in Wales: government response \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

- [We don't tell our teachers - Experiences of peer-on-peer sexual harassment among secondary school pupils in Wales | Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [Experiences of peer-on-peer sexual harassment among secondary school pupils in Wales - Supporting resources \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [Everybody's affected \(senedd.wales\)](#)

Challenging Bullying: Rights, respect, equality:

[Rights, respect, equality: guidance for schools | GOV.WALES](#)

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Safeguarding Data Protocol

Introduction

The governing body of a maintained school is responsible for the conduct and standards of the school; the Council shares the responsibility for standards in schools and discharges these responsibilities for the overall provision of education services in Blaenau Gwent.

The Council provides governing bodies with support through strategic support services that there

In order to manage the improvement process, there is a need to share information on a timely basis to ensure that appropriate monitoring, evaluation and reporting occurs and where appropriate timely intervention takes place.

The Council and its schools take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously and the purpose of this protocol is to articulate the timeframes in which the data will be shared.

Background

This protocol sets out good practice for the exchange of safeguarding information between schools and the local authority in the discharge of statutory functions.

Principles

The Council has a dedicated Safeguarding in Education Manager who will manage the information and the return of the data from schools. Data is to be returned twice a year, by end of October and April each year. These exact dates will be communicated to schools by the Safeguarding in Education Manager at the commencement of the academic year

Protocol

The information required is detailed below. The request for information will be generated by a member of Business Support and all information will be submitted through the use of Microsoft Forms by the dates specified.

The Safeguarding in Education Manager will maintain effective oversight of the information and use it to inform training and support programmes.

Any identified trend which requires immediate intervention will be managed by the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

Training:	<p><i>Dates of safeguarding training that have taken place since the previous data submission for the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school staff training - date and numbers completing • Designated and Deputy Designated Senior Person – date and title of course • Chair of governors and lead governor for safeguarding - training date • Individual governors – numbers completing training <p><i>Date of training and number completing for the following types of training:</i></p> <p><i>PREVENT</i> <i>VAWDASV Group 2 training</i> <i>Team Teach</i> <i>Equalities</i></p>
Policy adoption:	<p><i>Policy adoption dates will be sourced from EAS for safeguarding policies reviewed and distributed to schools</i></p>
Governors	<p><i>Training as listed above</i> <i>Number of governors with current DBS certificate</i></p>
Volunteers:	<p><i>Start date of volunteer</i> <i>Confirmation of DBS issue date</i> <i>Reference details</i> <i>Date of safeguarding training</i></p>

Training

Any training requirements for reporting of the data should be made to the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

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