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

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

Dydd Mercher, 14 Chwefror 2024 Dydd Mercher, 14 Chwefror 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**CABINET**

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held in Ar MS Teams on Dydd Mercher, 21ain Chwefror, 2024 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 Cynghor 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.

### **DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU**

Derbyn unrhyw ddatganiadau buddiant neu oddefebau.

### **PENDERFYNIADAU**

#### **4. CABINET 5 - 8**

Ystyried penderfyniadau cyfarfod y Cabinet a gynhaliwyd ar 10 Ionawr 2024.

### **MATERION CYFFREDINOL**

#### **5. CYNADLEDDAU, CYRSIAU A DIGWYDDIADAU 9 - 10**

Ystyried cynadleddau, cyrsiau a digwyddiadau.

### **PORTFFOLIO CORFFORAETHOL A PHERFFORMIAD**

#### **6. BLAENRAGLEN GWAITH – 10 EBRILL 2024 11 - 14**

Derbyn y flaenraglen gwaith.

#### **7. GRANTIAU I SEFYDLIADAU 15 - 16**

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

#### **8. STRATEGAETH GWEITHLU 2021-2026 17 - 42**

Ystyried adroddiad y Pennaeth Datblygu Sefydliadol.

#### **9. MONITRO'R GYLLIDEB CYFALAF, RHAGOLWG AR GYFER BLWYDDYN ARIANNOL 2023/24 (FEL AR 31 RHAGFYR 2023) 43 - 66**

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

#### **10. MONITRO CYLLIDEB REFENIW 2023/2024 RHAGOLWG ALLDRO HYD AT 31 MAWRTH 2024 (FEL AR 31 RHAGFYR 2023) 67 - 92**

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

11. **FFIOEDD A CHOSTAU DISGRESIWN 2024/2025** 93 - 178

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

12. **CYLLIDEB REFENIW 2024/2025** 179 - 794

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

### **PORTFFOLIO LLE AC AMGYLCHEDD**

13. **TROSOLWG O BARTHOU TELEDU CYLCH CYFYNG  
CANOL TREF BLAENAU GWENT 2023/24** 795 - 862

Ystyried adroddiad y Rheolwr Gwasanaeth Polisi a Phartneriaethau.

### **PORTFFOLIO POBL AC ADDYSG**

14. **ADRODDIAD PERFFORMIAD CYNNYDD 6-MIS  
CYFARWYDDWR CORFFORAETHOL  
GWASANAETHAU ADDYSG EBRILL 23 – MEDI 23** 863 - 982

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Interim Addysg.

15. **RHAGLEN DREIGL CYMUNEDAU DYSGU  
CYNALIADWY** 983 - 994

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Interim Addysg.

16. **DEILLIANNAU CYFNOD ALLWEDDOL 4 2023** 995 -  
1006

Ystyried aeroddiad Cyfarwyddwr corfforaethol Interim Addysg.

### **PORTFFOLIO POBL A GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL**

17. **ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL 2023/24 (CHWARTERI 1 A 2) CYFARWYDDWR GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL.** 1007 - 1066

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Interim Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol.

**EITEM(AU) EITHREDIG**

18. **GWYBODAETH DIOGELU PERFFORMIAD AR GYFER GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL 1 EBRILL I 30 MEDI AC ADDYSG TYMOR HAF-2023** 1067 - 1126

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Chyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Interim Addysg.

**PORTFFOLIO LLE AC ADFYWIO**

19. **PERFFORMIAD CYFARWYDDIAETH GWASANAETHAU CYMUNEDOL AC ADFYWIO – CHWARTERI 1 A 2 - 2023/24** 1127 - 1196

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

To: S. Thomas (Cadeirydd)  
H. Cunningham  
J. C. Morgan  
H. Trollope  
S. Edmunds

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

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

**SUBJECT: CABINET – 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2024**

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

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

**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: Interim Chief Executive  
Chief Officer Resources  
Chief Officer Customer & Commercial  
Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services  
Interim Corporate Director Social Services  
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance  
Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships  
Press & Public Relations Officer

**DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

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

No. 2	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received for Councillor H. Cunningham, Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member Place &amp; Environment, and the Interim Corporate Director of Education.</p>
No. 3	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>
	<p><b><u>DECISIONS</u></b></p>
No. 4	<p><b><u>CABINET</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the decisions of the Cabinet Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2023.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the decisions be received as a true record of proceedings.</p>
	<p><b><u>CORPORATE AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO</u></b></p>
No. 5	<p><b><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY, 2024</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Scrutiny &amp; Democratic Officer.</p> <p>It was reported that the Forward Work Programme for the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2024 would be revised to take account of the budget report, and arrangements would be made for a Special Cabinet if required.</p> <p>RESOVLED accordingly.</p>
	<p><b><u>PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO</u></b></p>

<p><b>No. 6</b></p>	<p><b><u>ADOPTION OF LITTER &amp; DOG BIN POLICY</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration &amp; Community Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted, and the proposed Litter Bin Policy be agreed as attached at Appendix 1 (Option 1).</p>
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>DISABLED FACILITIES ADAPTATIONS (DFG'S) – QUARTER 2 – BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration &amp; Community Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted. (Option 1)</p>
	<p><b><u>JOINT PORTFOLIO - PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE AND REGENERATION &amp; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</u></b></p>
<p><b>No. 8</b></p>	<p><b><u>MYNYDD BEDWELLTE WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration &amp; Community Services.</p> <p>It was proposed that the following be added to Option 1 of the report:</p> <p>‘a further report be submitted to Cabinet for formal decision on the option.’</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• and the Council enters into an Option Agreement on terms to be agreed with EDPR for rights of access over Bryn Bach Parc to facilitate a wind farm development. This option will only be triggered if planning consent for the wind farm is granted;</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• and a further report be submitted to Cabinet for formal decision on the option. (Option 1)</li></ul> |
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# Agenda Item 5

*Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

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

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February, 2024**

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

Portfolio Holder: **General Matters**

Report Submitted by: **Democratic Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	X				27.09.23		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

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

## 2. Scope of the Report

### 2.1 2024 Royal Garden Party

To nominate a representative to attend one of the Royal Garden Parties which will be held in London on the following dates:- 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2024; 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2024.

## 3. Options for Consideration

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

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# Agenda Item 6

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 06.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme – 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Portfolio Holder: **All Portfolio Holders**

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance and Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	07.02.24				21.02.24		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Cabinet Work Programme is a key aspect of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and supports the requirements of the Constitution.
  - 2.2 The topics set out in the Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
  - 2.3 All Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet Forward Work Programmes have been aligned to the Council Forward Work Programme.
  - 2.4 As the document is fluid there is flexibility to allow for regular review between the Chair and the Committee.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 **Option 1**  
To agree the Forward Work Programme as presented for the Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.
  - 3.2 **Option 2**  
To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

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## Forward Work Programme

**Cabinet Meeting Date:** Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas:** Monday 18<sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Portfolio:</b> Leader / Corporate and Performance			
Local Well-being Partnership - Local Well-being Plan	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To monitor progress of the Plan.	Sarah King Andrew Parker	Partnership – 22.02.24
<b>Portfolio:</b> People and Education			
Improving Schools Programme	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with an update on any inspection report findings and progress within schools that are causing concern or subject to Council intervention.	Luisa Munro-Morris	People – 19.03.24
Education Digital Strategy	<b>Decision</b> To consider and approve the Draft Strategy.	Luisa Munro-Morris	People – 19.03.24
School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education <b>Statutory deadline for the policy to be published by 15<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Decision</b> To approve the School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2024/25.	Luisa Munro-Morris	People – 19.03.24
Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) Annual Return 2022/23	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to consider Blaenau Gwent's performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards.	Joanne Sims <i>Invitee: ALT</i>	Partnership – 22.02.24

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: CABINET**

**REPORT SUBJECT: GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

**REPORT AUTHOR: RHIAN HAYDEN**

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

**ABERTILLERY**

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

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Abertillery Scout Group £112

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

1. Brynmawr Musical Theatre Company £100

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

1. Six Bells Tennis Club £100  
2. Royal Regiment of Wales Abertillery Branch £100

**Cwmtillery Ward – Councillors M. Day & J. Wilkins**

1. K Style £50

**Llanhilleth Ward – Councillor L. Parsons**

1. Abertillery Bluebirds FC £300  
2. Dainton Evans £150

**EBBW VALE**

**Beaufort Ward – Councillor G. Thomas**

- |    |                    |     |
|----|--------------------|-----|
| 1. | Beaufort Bulls RFC | £50 |
|----|--------------------|-----|

**Rassau & Garnlydan Ward – Councillor G. Davies**

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | Rhos y Fedwen School (Retrospective Approval) | £160 |
|----|---|------|

**Ebbw Vale South Ward – Councillor S. Edmunds**

- |    |                      |      |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 1. | Rhos y Fedwen School | £395 |
|----|----------------------|------|

**NANTYGLO & BLAINA**

**Blaina Ward – Councillor L. Winnett**

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 1. | Cwmcelyn Biodiversity (Retrospective Approval) | £225 |
|----|--|------|

**CHIEF OFFICER RESOURCES**



# Agenda Item 8

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 06.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21 February 2024**

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

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

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	14.12.23	07.02.24			18.01.24	21.02.24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide progress against the Council's Workforce Strategy delivery plan for 2022/23, progress to date in 2023/24 and deliverables for 2024/25.

## 2. Scope and Background

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

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

2.3 The five-year Strategy is underpinned by an annual delivery plan that supports its implementation. The delivery plans are developed and prioritised following engagement with key stakeholders including senior management and trade union representatives. Engagement will be with Headteachers in the new year following the end of the action short of strike.

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

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

2.5 The delivery plan for 2022/23 focused on supporting the future working model - “Agile Services delivered by an Agile Workforce” and set out the key actions under each of the priority outcomes. The key actions delivered in 2022/23 are set out in Appendix 2 and include:

- Annual workforce profiles published and an internal review of recruitment and retention, diversity and age in the current workforce to support the development of directorate workforce plans.
- Introduction of a new workforce planning framework. All Directorates have workforce plans that feed into the Workforce Delivery Plan for the Workforce Strategy.
- A leadership development model has been developed and discussions have taken place with a neighbouring authority with a view to developing a joint delivery model.
- A review of agile working has been carried out which engaged the workforce through a pulse survey, a series of focus groups, a dedicated session with trade unions to gain feedback and suggestions for improvement. Facilitated workshops with the Corporate Leadership Team and Wider Corporate Leadership Team focussed on developing actions to improve senior leadership visibility and the opportunity for collaboration across the workforce.
- Review of the Agile Working and Flexible Working policies commenced.
- Equal Pay audit commissioned and carried out with the draft report due summer 2023.
- Further development of the ITrent HR/Payroll system with the implementation of working patterns and a development plan in place in readiness for 2023/24.
- A facilities review was completed of the Agile Working hubs. Action plans are in place for all hubs to make improvements and a management structure developed as part of the Corporate Business Support Service.
- Medium / long term actions developed as part of corporate decarbonisation plan.
- Continued focus on wellbeing with for example; Weekly Wellbeing bulletins published including a range of provisions for supporting staff wellbeing, Care First awareness sessions for managers and Mental Health Wellbeing sessions for employees.
- A range of policies were developed and implemented which included a suite of Disciplinary policies, pay policy, employer supported volunteer policy.
- Annual review of sickness absence reported to CLT, Scrutiny and Cabinet.

2.6 The delivery plan for 2023/25 has been developed and builds on the progress (appendix 3) of the previous year and takes account of the key national, regional and local drivers, workforce trends and financial challenges that will be facing the Council. In addition, it has taken account of the Wales Audit Office Review, Springing Forward which was reported in 2022/23. The new framework for workforce planning prioritises the recommendations above and was rolled out at a directorate level, key themes and actions from this process have been aligned to the Strategy priority outcomes. These include recruitment and retention, workforce planning and wellbeing. The delivery plan for 2023/25 is attached at Appendix 3.

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

3.1 This report and delivery plan has been reviewed and prioritised with the Corporate Leadership Team and was considered at the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee on the 18 January 2024. The Committee supported Option 1.

3.2 **Option 1:** The Cabinet to review and note the progress against the 2022/23 delivery plan and endorse the 2023/25 delivery plan.

3.3 **Option 2:** The Cabinet to review and note progress against the 2022/23 delivery plan and considers the 2023/25 delivery plan making suggestions/amendments for improvement.

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

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

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

##### 5.1 **Impact on Budget**

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

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

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

##### 5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

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

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

##### 5.5 **Health and Safety**

The health and safety of the workforce is a key strand in the Workforce Strategy and delivery plans. There are no direct health and safety implications associated with this report.

#### 6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 Performance information and data as at the end of March 2023:

Headcount 2953, Council 1650, Schools 1303

Labour turnover Council 15.05%, Schools 8.55% (academic year 2022/23)

Council – 34% agile workers, 8% homeworkers, 58% service based (frontline workers)

69% of those who declared describe themselves as British, Welsh, Scottish, English, Northern Irish – 500 staff with no declaration

Average days lost per employee due to sickness 15.45 days with the top 5 reasons for sickness:

- 30.94% psychiatric/mental health
- 21.1% Musculo-skeletal and injuries
- 11.21% Covid 19
- 6.93% gastro- intestinal
- 5.72% infectious disease

33% short term sickness and 67% long term sickness

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

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

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

The Strategy is a 5-year commitment aiming to create a good place to work.

**6.4 Preventative focus**

Not applicable

**6.5 Collaboration / partnership working**

Continued collaboration at a local, regional and national level to ensure that delivery actions in the Strategy are modern and in line with any legislative changes.

**6.6 Integration (across service areas)**

The Strategy will continue to promote a 'one Council' approach.

**6.7 Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

Medium to long term workforce actions have been developed as part of the corporate decarbonisation plan.

**6.8 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

The Strategy will actively promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the workforce and as an organisation.

**7. Monitoring Arrangements**

The Strategy has an annual delivery plan and this will be monitored on an annual basis by the Corporate Leadership Team, Corporate and Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2026

Appendix 2 – Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan 2022-23 Headline Achievements

Appendix 3 – Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan 2023-24 and 2024-25

# Workforce Strategy 2021 - 2026

*“Agile Services delivered  
by an Agile Workforce”*



## FOREWARD

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

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

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

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

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



Councillor Nigel Daniels  
Leader of the Council



Michelle Morris  
Managing Director

## AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

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

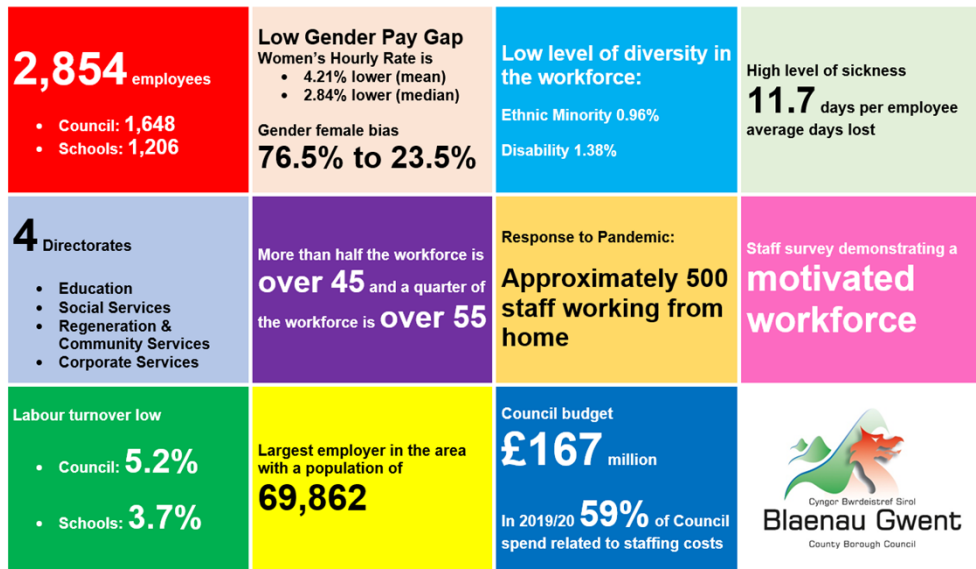


## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

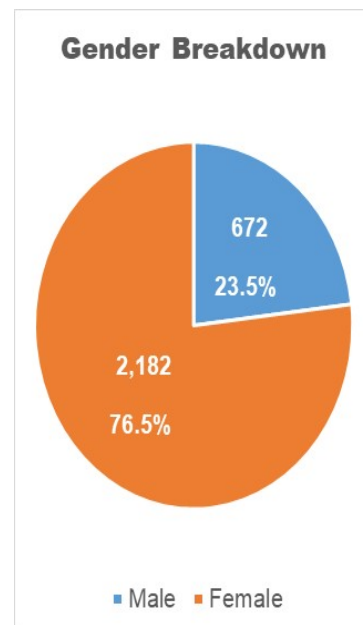
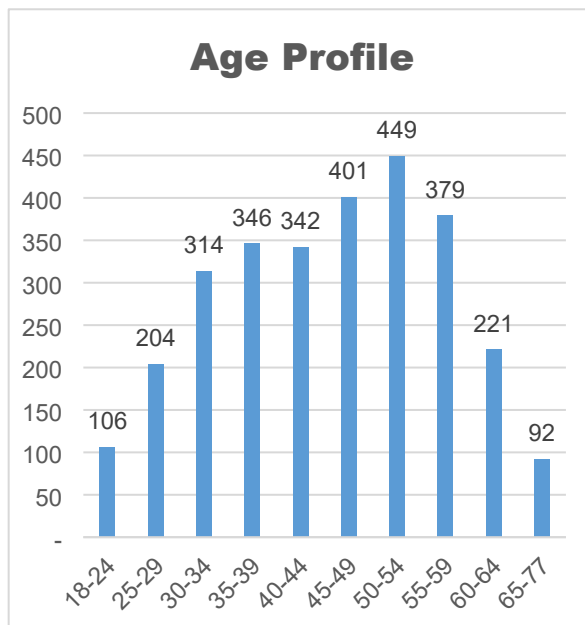
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Blaenau Gwent serves a population of just under 70,000 with 62.1% of whom are of working age and 24.7% who are economically inactive. It is expected that funding will continue to be a challenge over the next 5 years, while demand for services and demographic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

## What do we currently look like?



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

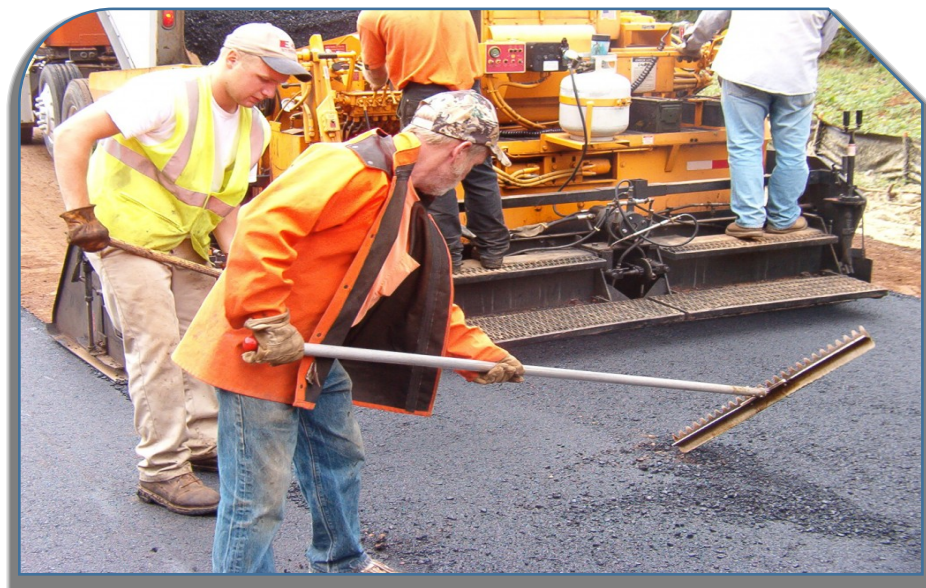




## Workforce Engagement

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

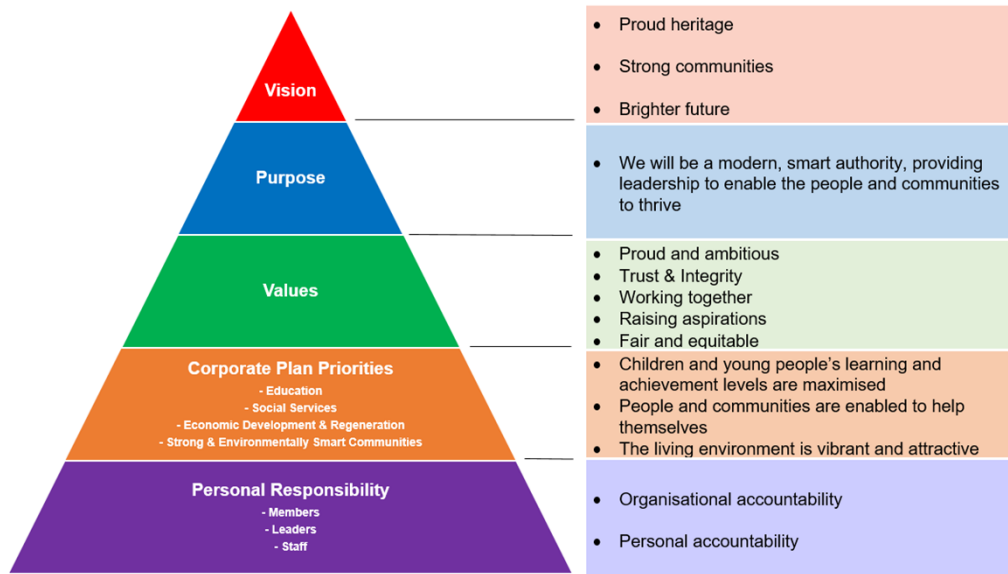
- Regular one to one performance coaching
- Annual performance review
- Team meetings
- Staff meetings
- Management team meetings
- Wider Leadership group
- Regular newsletter from the Managing Director
- Staff newsletter
- Managers brief
- Engagement in financial planning
- A dedicated engagement and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



## WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

### The Council's Vision and Organisational Ambition

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



## WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL NEED TO LOOK LIKE?

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

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



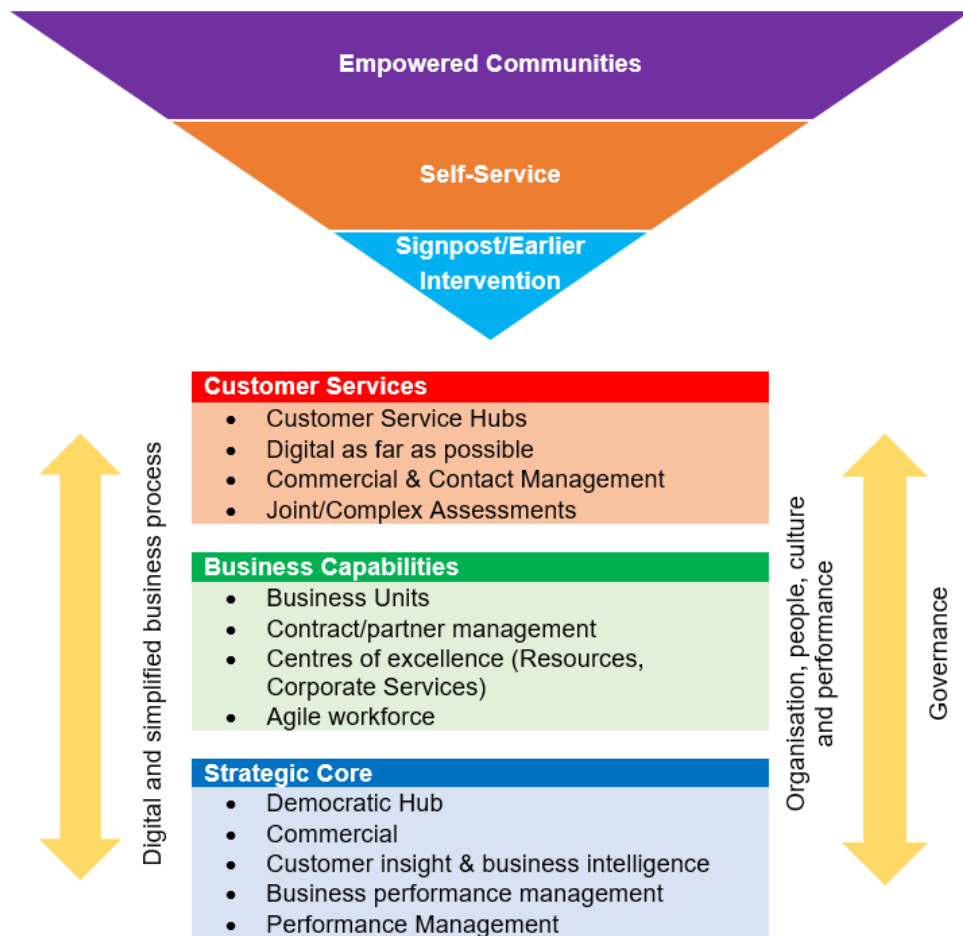
## THE FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

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

This will be achieved by:

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

The following diagram illustrates the future service delivery model:



## HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

### Workforce Strategy Priority Outcomes

#### *Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership*

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

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

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

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

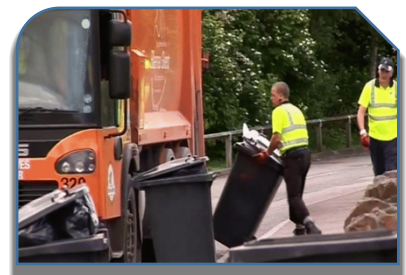
- Suggestions and feedback are valued – organisational listening and action
- Modern ongoing opportunities to engage
- Equipped to be flexible to respond to future challenges
- Staff empowered to make decisions and participate in service delivery and development

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

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

#### *Modern Employer of Choice*

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



## WORKFORCE STRATEGY: ACTION PLAN 2021/2022

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

### *Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership*

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

### *Excellence in management across the Council*

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

### *Modern Employer of Choice*

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

### *A highly motivated and engaged workforce*

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

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

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

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
<b>Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership</b>	• Workforce Strategy Year 1 - Progress Review	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 December 2022	• Completed – reported to Scrutiny and Cabinet		
	• Workforce Strategy Year 2 - Action Plan	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 December 2022	• Completed – reported to Scrutiny and Cabinet		
	• Review of Agile Working	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce engagement through pulse survey and focus groups November/December 2022</li> <li>• Results communicated to the workforce and Elected Members briefing completed</li> <li>• Review of Agile and Flexible Working commenced</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of actions to improve agile working</li> <li>• Implementation of reviewed agile working and flexible working policies</li> <li>• Final report to CLT and Scrutiny with reviewed agile working and flexible working policies</li> </ul>
	• Development of leadership delivery model	Head of OD	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft leadership development model developed</li> <li>• Discussions held with neighbouring council to consider a joint delivery model</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options to be developed for a delivery model and facilitation</li> <li>• Issues with resources, affordability and lack of budget</li> </ul>
	• Senior management recruitment	Head of OD	Leader and Council	31 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and appointment process for Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community Services completed</li> <li>• Interim arrangements in place for Chief Executive, Corporate Director of Social Services, Corporate Director of Education to include back fill arrangements</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of Chief Executive</li> <li>• Review of senior leadership arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Excellence in management across the Council</b>	• Facilitation of elected member training specific to workforce policy	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and Head of Governance and Partnership	30 September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Training on the appeals process</li> <li>➢ Health and Safety training</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	• New suite of disciplinary policies - Disciplinary training for managers	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and CLT	30 November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Disciplinary policies implemented</li> <li>➢ Training delivered to managers during October to November 2022 – 116 managers trained</li> <li>➢ Webinar developed which is available on the intranet for those that did not attend and new managers</li> <li>➢ Disciplinary Procedure for school-based staff</li> <li>➢ Managers Guide to Handling Disciplinary Matters</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	• Enable managers in managing workforce attendance and reducing levels of sickness absence	OD Manager HR	Head of OD, CLT and Scrutiny	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual review of sickness and report completed</li> <li>• Quarterly statistics and briefing papers to CLT</li> <li>• Management reporting tools within ITrent</li> <li>• Ongoing support with sickness absence case management to include regular review of top 20 sickness cases on a directorate basis.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More detailed review of hotspots based on 22/23</li> <li>• Audit of compliance to be undertaken of hotspots</li> <li>• Ongoing support with sickness absence case management</li> </ul>

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable managers to achieve high performing teams and respond to instances of poor performance, attendance, and behaviour, strengthening the management of employee relations and casework</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and CLT	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Management on an ongoing basis with individual case management which has increased in complexity and demand.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing support with case management</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed the principles of working in social partnership</li> </ul>	Chief Officer Commercial & Customer	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities agreement with trade unions reviewed – secondment arrangements agreed for the GMB and additional time for teaching trade union</li> <li>Establishment of health and safety corporate working group chaired by trade unions</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing Social Partnership working</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a corporate approach for lone working</li> </ul>	Service Manager Customer Experience and Transformation	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process in place in managing risk with line management – Lone Worker Policy in place</li> <li>Exploration of a digital system (smart phone based with Digital Team) to support the Council with managing lone working – trial of system postponed to 2024</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action carried forward for 2024/25</li> </ul>
<b>Modern Employer of Choice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of recruitment and retention</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with Wider CLT</li> <li>Briefing and presentation delivered to CLT</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Recruitment module in ITrent and enhancement to the applicant experience including marketing and website content.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the implications of 2022/23 pay award on the pay structure</li> </ul>	OD Manager Payroll	CLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet & Council	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay Policy 23/24</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Council	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed – Pay Policy agreed at Council and published</li> <li>Completed Pay Policy for Schools</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of the agile working workspace</li> </ul>	Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services	CLT	31 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - Review of facilities management of the agile working hubs completed</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update HR &amp; Health and Safety policies</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR & Payroll	CLT Scrutiny and Council	Rolling timetable of reviews	Policies reviewed and published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Adverse Weather Guidance</li> <li>➤ Capability Policy</li> <li>➤ Paternity/Maternity Support Leave</li> <li>➤ Code of Conduct</li> <li>➤ Critical Illness &amp; Working Guidelines</li> <li>➤ Right To Request Flexible Working Policy</li> <li>➤ Post Entry Training Policy</li> <li>➤ Annual Leave &amp; Holiday Pay - A Manager's Guide</li> <li>➤ Schedule of Leave of Absence</li> <li>➤ Adoption and Surrogacy Leave</li> <li>➤ Maternity and Parental Leave</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing reviews in line with timetable</li> </ul>



## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement neuro-diversity guidance</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance developed and implemented July 22</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training for managers to be facilitated</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an Employer Supported Volunteering Policy</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Council	31 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - Policy developed and implemented</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver initiatives to further promote diversity of the workforce</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research completed, briefing papers prepared and to be presented to OD DMT</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and implement key actions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver initiatives to support the ageing workforce</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research completed, briefing papers prepared and to be presented to OD DMT</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and implement key actions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a network of equalities and inclusivity champions, who will act as representatives for all staff with protected characteristics; working in collaboration with the Equalities Team and the Trade Unions to drive the equalities agenda locally</li> <li>To develop and facilitate targeted events, promotions, and initiatives to celebrate diversity.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to enhance equalities training provision</li> </ul>	Head of Governance & Partnerships	CLT	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of a network for Equalities and inclusivity Champions is yet to be progressed.</li> <li>Members continue to show support to national and regional equality campaigns.</li> <li>The organisation continues to champion national and international equality campaigns from both professional and political leadership. We have delivered organisational campaigns and events for International Women’s Day 2023, International Holocaust Memorial Day 2023, and LGBTQ+ History Month. Each of the above examples have had active participation of the Council’s Member Champion for Equalities, Welsh Language and Diversity, Cabinet Members and Senior management.</li> <li>Regular educational bulletins are prepared to provide schools with key equality and diversity information, resources, policy information, training and support.</li> <li>A series of equalities training opportunities have been made available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Racial equality – delivered to Leadership Team and being rolled out further to staff and Members in early 2024</li> <li>➤ Cultural Diversity</li> <li>➤ Unconscious Bias – online training module available to all staff</li> </ul> </li> <li>In addition, we have developed a new Integrated Impact Assessment and associated guidance document for staff which is available on the intranet for staff to use.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is the intention to consider the development of equalities and inclusivity advocates in-line with the newly developed action plans within the Strategic Equality Plan for 2024/28.</li> <li>Racial equality training to be rolled out further to staff and Members in early 2024</li> </ul>

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decarbonisation - embed the new operating model and assess its impact in terms of decarbonisation.</li> <li>Decarbonisation - consider how to further reduce commute / travel impact in wider areas of the business e.g., Schools and Social Services.</li> <li>Decarbonisation - explore how staff can be encouraged to switch to ULEV.</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT / Decarbonisation Board	31 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New operating model embedded and impact assessed</li> <li>Representation at Board and position statement and action plan considered and agreed at DMT and fed into board</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver on action plan</li> </ul>
<b><i>A highly motivated and engaged workforce</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver the internal Communications Plan</li> </ul>	Chief Officer Commercial & Customer	CLT	In line Communication Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campaign based approach to communications</li> <li>Regular Chief Executive newsletter to all workforce – to include to personal email addresses</li> <li>Regular managers brief</li> <li>Weekly email Wellbeing Wednesday</li> <li>Chief Executive ‘live call’ – Teams meeting with invite to all staff in December 2023</li> <li>Workforce Facebook page live</li> <li>Implementation of various Microsoft tools to include chat, sway, teams channels</li> <li>Weekly advertisement of job opportunities in the Council</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to implement the internal communications plan</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of delivery options for workforce development - paper to CLT to include investment</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	February / March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Workforce Development Model for a modern local government worker developed</li> <li>Discussions with neighbouring Council to develop a joint delivery model to be able to afford as part of the Joint Workforce Development Service progressing</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise plans and develop options for delivery model</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement of a learner management / experience system to support workforce development and training</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alpha phase of a collaborative project with 3 other Councils to procure a learner management/experience system completed – to include successful bids for funding to support the project</li> <li>All 22 Councils and other agencies have declared an interest in the system</li> <li>Beta phase of project started to move to procurement of system</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop joint commissioning and contract arrangement</li> <li>Plan procurement of system</li> <li>Plan implementation</li> </ul>
<b><i>Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Directorate Workforce Plans</li> </ul>	Head of OD / CLT	DMT’s and CLT	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - directorate workforce plans implemented</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual sickness absence review and reporting</li> </ul>	Head of OD/CLT	CLT, Scrutiny and Cabinet	30 September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - Annual review and report to Scrutiny and Cabinet and briefing session delivered to Members with CLT in attendance</li> </ul>		

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual workforce profiles (data dashboard) - Directorates &amp; Schools to inform workforce planning</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	DMT's / Schools and CLT	31 October 2022 (Schools) 30 May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - Annual Corporate, Service and Schools workforce profile published.</li> <li>Review of the presentation of the sickness data and workforce profiles in readiness for publishing in 2023</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly sickness performance data to CLT and Elected Members</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Scrutiny	In line performance framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - quarterly sickness performance data published</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and implementation of digital solutions to support delivery of modern HR/Payroll service – Paper to CLT to scope and plan including investment</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of working patterns in iTrent – August 2022 – January 23</li> <li>Report to CLT setting out capacity requirement to deliver key modules in iTrent - Plan moving forward agreed</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement developments in iTrent as agreed by CLT</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal Pay Audit</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal pay audit commissioned</li> <li>Draft report received and response provided</li> <li>Further work required to refine data for report which was delayed as a result of capacity</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to be presented to CLT on findings and recommendations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support schools causing concern</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Education and OD	Education Directorate	2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted support provided on an ongoing basis</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing support</li> </ul>

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## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 and 2024/25

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress to date	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
<b>Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Strategy Year 2 progress review and Year 3 &amp; 4 priorities</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to be presented to CLT in December 2023 and Scrutiny January 2024</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Strategy Year 3 &amp; 4 progress review and Year 5 priorities</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	Autumn 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Years 23/24 and 24/25 delivery plans have been combined</li> <li>Progress review to Corporate Leadership Team and Scrutiny autumn 2024</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agile Working - implementation of actions to improve further to review of Agile Working</li> <li>Report to CLT and Scrutiny</li> <li>Implementation of reviewed agile working and flexible working policies</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops with CLT and Wider CLT to consider feedback and develop actions completed</li> <li>CLT reaffirmed wellbeing principles for agile working</li> <li>Agile working and Flexible working policies reviewed</li> <li>Report on the conclusion of the review / policy approval being developed</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership development                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Delivery model and facilitation to be developed</li> <li>➤ Delivery of Workforce Planning Training for Senior Managers</li> <li>➤ Delivery of Race Awareness Training</li> <li>➤ Delivery of Health and Safety Training</li> <li>➤ Delivery of social partnership training</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Planning training - OD held on 31.07.23 and 03.08.23</li> <li>Workforce Planning training session with CLT 23.10.23 and with Wider CLT</li> <li>Race Awareness training delivered to Wider CLT</li> <li>Leadership/management training opportunities offered via the Infuse and CEIC programmes.</li> <li>Leadership training offered through the Summer and Winter schools</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of Chief Executive</li> </ul>	Head of OD	Leader and Council	31 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment timeline developed and agreed</li> <li>Advert and recruitment pack developed and agreed</li> <li>Selection processes agreed</li> <li>Advert closing – 23.11.23, Shortlisting -28.11.23</li> <li>Assessment Centre - 06.12.23 – no appointment</li> <li>Work with the Leader and Deputy Leader to develop solution for Chief Executive role</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan for review of senior management</li> </ul>	TBA	TBA	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not commenced subject to arrangements for Chief Executive – to be determined</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and refresh senior leadership performance review and coaching</li> </ul>	Head of OD and Chief Executive	Leader and Council	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not commenced</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and modernise induction in line with the implement of digital Learner Management Experience system</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not commenced</li> </ul>		
<b>Excellence in management across the Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable managers to achieve high performing teams and respond to instances of poor performance, attendance, and behaviour, strengthening the management of employee relations and casework</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and CLT	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Management on an ongoing basis with individual case management which has increased in complexity</li> </ul>		

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 and 2024/25

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress to date	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable managers in managing workforce attendance and reducing levels of sickness absence</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD, CLT and Scrutiny	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued support with sickness absence management</li> <li>Detailed review of 'hotspots' for 22/23 undertaken and presented to CLT</li> <li>Audit of compliance of 'hotspots' for 22/23 being undertaken by internal audit</li> <li>Outcome of audit / 'hotspots' to be reported to CLT and Cabinet</li> <li>Tender review process commenced for the Occupational Health Service and Employee Assistance Programme</li> <li>Briefing sessions on attendance management facilitated</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed the principles of working in social partnership</li> </ul>	Chief Officer Commercial & Customer	CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of trade union engagement framework completed</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a corporate approach for lone working</li> </ul>	Service Manager Customer Experience and Transformation	CLT	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploration of digital solution to support the lone working policy with use of smart phones</li> </ul>		
<b>Modern Employer of Choice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundamental review of the Recruitment Policy</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy reviewed and drafted</li> <li>Unions consulted</li> <li>Report and policy to be presented to CLT December 23</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of annual pay awards</li> </ul>	OD Manager Payroll	CLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council	In line with nationally agreed pay negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023/24 Pay Awards implemented                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Teachers - 28.11.23</li> <li>➤ JNC Chief Executive - 28.11.23</li> <li>➤ JNC Chief Officers -28.05.23</li> <li>➤ NJC Local governments services - 28.11.23</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Pay Policy 24/25</li> <li>Annual Pay Policy 25/26</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Council	31 March 2024 31 March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not commenced</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of short, medium, and long-term plans for Agile Working Hubs and Council buildings</li> </ul>	Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services	CLT	31 March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Position statement on all buildings developed highlighting issues/risks and opportunities</li> <li>Bid for funding to further develop the Blaina ICC has been submitted</li> <li>Facilities management arrangements in place for Agile Working Hubs as part of the Corporate Business Support Service</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update HR &amp; Health and Safety policies</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR & Payroll	CLT Scrutiny and Council as appropriate	Rolling timetable of reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies reviewed and published:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In the Interests of Efficiency of the Service Policy</li> <li>➤ Induction - A Manager's Guide</li> <li>➤ Redundancy Policy</li> <li>➤ IVF Policy</li> <li>➤ Dignity at Work Policy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 and 2024/25

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress to date	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Health and Safety Report</li> </ul>	OD Manager Payroll	CLT, Scrutiny	31 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - report presented to CLT and Scrutiny</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and align School's Grievance Policy</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Governing Bodies	31 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed - Policy finalised and published</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a Foster Friendly Policy</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT Scrutiny and Council as appropriate	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft policy developed based on best practice and in line with the Foster Network fostering friendly employers' scheme</li> <li>Union consultation undertaken</li> <li>Policy finalised to be progressed to CLT – December 2023</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate training to support the implementation of the neurodiversity guidance</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secured WULF and internal funding to run awareness raising training.</li> <li>Sessions to be organised and run for the Manager Cohort in new year 2024</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver initiatives to further promote diversity of the workforce                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate Wider CLT training on race funding through WULF and marketed by Unison</li> <li>Update recruitment charter to include diverse interview panels</li> <li>Consider ways to capture further field of candidates including statements in job adverts to encourage applications from under-represented groups,</li> <li>Proactively promote diversity events through staff communications</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Head of Governance and Partnerships	CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Race Awareness training delivered to Wider CLT</li> <li>Recruitment policy reviewed and progressing through approval processes</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver initiatives to support the ageing workforce                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of workforce planning template to incorporate                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the potential number of staff likely retire in the next 5 years</li> <li>Analysis of sickness and workplace injuries, explore the reasons within Attendance Management meetings</li> <li>Identifying skills gaps as a result of experienced staff retiring</li> <li>Review of future demands and challenges and consider the resilience of the services</li> </ul> </li> <li>Delivery of retirement seminars</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Workforce Planning template to commence January 2024</li> <li>7 Retirement seminars delivered 2023/24                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24 April 2023</li> <li>4 May 2023</li> <li>26 June 2023</li> <li>5 September 2023</li> <li>17 October 2023</li> <li>21 November 2023</li> <li>11 December 2023</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

**WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 and 2024/25**

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress to date	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To consider the development of equalities and inclusivity advocates in-line with the newly developed action plans within the Strategic Equality Plan for 2024/28.</li> <li>To develop and facilitate targeted events, promotions, and initiatives to celebrate diversity.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to enhance equalities training provision</li> </ul>	Head of Governance & Partnerships	CLT	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Racial equality – delivered to Leadership Team and being rolled out further to staff and Members in early 2024</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how to further reduce commute / travel impact in wider areas of the business e.g., Schools and Social Services.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run data to analyse which groups of staff are claiming the most business mileage, report to be developed for CLT.</li> <li>Communicating with staff on impact of mileage, looking at most efficient routes and encouraging travel in a smarter way i.e., diary management, type of vehicle using, car sharing</li> </ul> </li> <li>Explore how staff can be encouraged to switch to ULEV.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Car Loans and proposal for new scheme</li> <li>Fuel types to be added to iTrent to allow us to provide further data on the types of vehicles staff are using for business mileage.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions carried forward as a result of staff capacity</li> <li>Audit completed on staff mileage to support move to agile working and development of new mileage policy</li> <li>Tusker car scheme continues to be offered</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further roll out of staff benefits</li> </ul>	Head of OD	DMT and CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology and cycle to work schemes have been rolled out a number of time over last 2 years</li> <li>Further promotion of the Vectus Card benefits scheme</li> <li>Tusker car scheme continues to be available</li> <li>Lots of offers through Wellbeing Wednesday</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review existing contract arrangements                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occupational Health</li> <li>Employee Assistance Programme</li> <li>Midland iTrent</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Head of OD	DMT and CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning meetings held with procurement</li> <li>Direct award for Employee Assistance Programme – new provider will be in place March 2024</li> <li>Draft specification developed for Occupational Health Service and tender process commenced</li> <li>Planning meetings held with procurement to review contract arrangements with Midland for iTrent</li> <li>Meetings planned with Midland December 2023 and new year 2024</li> </ul>		
<b><i>A highly motivated and engaged workforce</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of delivery options for workforce development - paper to CLT to include investment</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	February / March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion held with Caerphilly CBC and interest confirmed in developing joint arrangement. Awaiting meeting with Corporate Director of Caerphilly CBC to develop CLT report. Models for leadership and workforce developed as well as a draft delivery model.</li> </ul>		



**WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 and 2024/25**

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress to date	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement of a learner management / experience system to support workforce development and training</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BG leading on commissioning and contracting for collaboration. Successful bid for further funding to support project management</li> <li>Preparation and planning for implementation</li> <li>Development of project management arrangements to implement corporately</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop process for staff survey and facilitate staff survey</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	Autumn 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not commenced</li> </ul>		
<b>Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Planning                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitation of Workforce Planning development session for OD and Wider CLT</li> <li>Review workforce planning framework further to learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Head of OD / CLT	DMT's and CLT	31 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Planning development sessions for OD held with LGA on 31.07.23 and 03.08.23 and session with CLT held 23.10.23</li> <li>Presentation to CLT on workforce planning completed agreed ongoing reviews to be undertaken as part of wider CLT business planning sessions.</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual sickness absence review and reporting                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More detailed review of 'hotspots' based on 22/23 outturn</li> <li>Audit of compliance to be undertaken of Hotspots</li> </ul> </li> <li>Annual sickness absence review and reporting</li> <li>Ongoing support with sickness absence case management</li> </ul>	Head of OD/CLT	CLT, Scrutiny and Cabinet	30 November 2023  30 September 2024  Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and report completed for consideration at CLT 28.09.23</li> <li>Report progressed to Corporate and performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet</li> <li>Detailed review of 'hotspots' for 22/23 undertaken and presented to CLT</li> <li>Audit of compliance of 'hotspots' for 22/23 being undertaken by internal audit</li> <li>Outcome of audit and hotspots to be reported to CLT and Cabinet</li> <li>Tender review process commenced for the Occupational Health Service and Employee Assistance Programme</li> <li>Briefing sessions on attendance management facilitated as required</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual workforce profiles (data dashboard) - Directorates &amp; Schools to inform workforce planning</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	DMT's / Schools and CLT	2023/24 2023/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023/24                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual corporate profiles published and circulated</li> <li>Annual Schools profiles published and to be discussed as part of annual visits</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly sickness performance data to CLT and Elected Members</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Scrutiny	In line performance framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023/24                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023/24 Quarter 1 sickness stats and briefing note to CLT 03.08.23</li> <li>2023/24 Quarter 2 sickness stats and briefing note to CLT 27.10.23</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and implementation of digital solutions to support delivery of modern HR/Payroll service                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Recruitment Module within iTrent module in iTrent and enhancement to the applicant experience including marketing and website content</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	Subject to scoping document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project group set up to support development of recruitment and onboarding</li> <li>Two scoping session held on current processes</li> <li>Further scoping work on the website and app form to include communications</li> <li>Scoping day with Midland held 19.10.23</li> <li>Awaiting scoping document from Midland</li> </ul>		

**WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 and 2024/25**

Strategic Priority Outcome	Actions	Lead Officer	Governance	Timescale	Progress to date	BRAG	Actions Carry Forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal Pay Audit</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised equal pay report received and response provided</li> <li>Final report received</li> <li>Report to be presented to CLT on equal pay audit findings and recommendations and agree next steps</li> <li>Actions to be determined</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal Pay claim (Care Staff)</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	ET timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responding to claim form 80+ care staff at an Employment Tribunal</li> <li>Preliminary Hearing held October 2023</li> <li>Further preliminary hearing scheduled for January 2024</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support schools causing concern</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Education and OD	Education Directorate	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted support provided on an ongoing basis</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Council financial savings plans which includes downsizing the workforce</li> </ul>	Head of OD	DMT's and CLT	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial business case proposals drafted</li> <li>Discussions held with trade unions and elected members</li> <li>Communication issued to staff on expression of interest</li> <li>Workforce plan to be developed for statutory consultation – January 2024</li> </ul>		

# Agenda Item 9

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.02.24

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024

**Report Subject:** Capital Budget Monitoring, Forecast for 2023/2024  
Financial Year (As at 31 December 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)
	01/02/2024	07.02.24			20/02/24 (briefing)	21/02/24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of each Portfolio's actual and forecast capital expenditure against funding approvals for the 2023/2024 financial year, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:
- Forecast financial position to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 across all portfolios.
  - 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 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members accept the report and

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

### 3.2 Option 2

Do not accept the report.

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

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

## 5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 The current capital programme is approximately £115m and is funded by: -

WG Grant - £81m

Other grant funding - £12m

Council Resources - £22m

It is forecast that expenditure of £68.52m will be incurred on capital projects / schemes during 2023/24, with the remainder allocated for use in future years.

The overall financial position as forecast at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 indicates a breakeven position against a total in year capital budget of £68.52m.

The overall position across all Portfolios is shown below: -

Total Approvals Q3 (Dec 2023)	Future funding	In year funding	Forecast Expenditure to 31/03/2024	Actual Expenditure to 31/12/2023 (Month 9)	Forecast Variance underspent / (overspent)
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
115,255	46,731	68,524	68,524	39,096	-

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 has been presented to Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Panel, we are still awaiting Ministerial approval. In anticipation of the variation request being approved the project has been shown as fully funded.

### 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 If funding re-profile cannot be agreed and capital schemes are not kept within budget, then capital reserves may be committed beyond affordable levels, with the consequence that projects that have not yet commenced may be deferred or not undertaken, so impacting upon future Capital Programmes.
- 5.2.3 If capital schemes do not achieve the required level of expenditure within the correct financial year and further peaks of the Covid-19 pandemic results in projects facing significant delay, funding may be lost to the Authority and be detrimental to the Authority's chances of securing future funding.
- 5.2.4 Welsh Government's statement (17 October 2023) on the 2023/24 Financial Position advises of a reduction to the Education and Welsh Language Capital budget. Whilst this will not affect funding that has already been agreed and awarded, any applications for new and / or additional funding may be impacted.
- 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 The Capital Programme is currently £115m. Appendix 2 provides information of funding changes since the previous report.

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

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

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

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***  
The Capital Programme is developed to support the Council's strategic priorities and is considered and agreed by full Council. Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinets 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 – Funding Changes

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Summary

<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure To:</i> <i>December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio	1,139,967	621,856	518,111	122,680	499,176	621,856	0
Social Services Portfolio	5,176,020	3,627,191	1,548,829	642,643	2,984,548	3,627,191	0
Economy Portfolio	21,686,501	11,516,655	10,169,846	5,508,171	6,008,484	11,516,655	0
Education and Active Living	34,488,138	19,949,664	14,538,474	7,647,318	12,302,346	19,949,664	0
Environment Portfolio	5,698,127	1,464,103	4,234,024	824,184	639,919	1,464,103	0
Infrastructure Portfolio	42,720,163	30,849,823	11,870,340	24,343,556	6,506,267	30,849,823	0
All Portfolios	4,346,969	494,948	3,852,021	7,904	487,044	494,948	0
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>	<b>115,255,885</b>	<b>68,524,240</b>	<b>46,731,645</b>	<b>39,096,456</b>	<b>29,427,784</b>	<b>68,524,240</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>Corporate Services Portfolio</b>								
<b>Corporate Services</b>								
327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wor	263,959	263,959	0	10,685	253,274	263,959	0
327103	Civic Centre Decommissioning	60,000	60,000	0	59,313	687	60,000	0
327106	ICT Roadmap	501,111	166,000	335,111	0	166,000	166,000	0
327107	Data Centre Move	244,000	61,000	183,000	47,500	13,500	61,000	0
328090	CCTV Upgrade	70,897	70,897	0	5,182	65,716	70,897	0
<b>Corporate Services</b>		<b>1,139,967</b>	<b>621,856</b>	<b>518,111</b>	<b>122,680</b>	<b>499,176</b>	<b>621,856</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Corporate Services Portfolio</b>		<b>1,139,967</b>	<b>621,856</b>	<b>518,111</b>	<b>122,680</b>	<b>499,176</b>	<b>621,856</b>	<b>0</b>



**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Social Services Portfolio</b>								
<b>Flying Start Projects</b>								
324719	Flying Start - Cwm 2	30,000	30,000	0	28,680	1,320	30,000	0
324721	Flying Start - Ebbw Vale North	1,531	0	1,531	0	0	0	0
324724	Flying Start - Sirhowy Primary	3,503	0	3,503	0	0	0	0
324728	Flying Start - Blaina ICC	235,000	0	235,000	0	0	0	0
324734	Flying Start Garnlydan Hub	18,739	18,739	0	0	18,739	18,739	0
324735	Flying Start Brynithel FS Centre	606	0	606	0	0	0	0
324736	Flying Start Additional Works	24,883	24,883	0	22,193	2,690	24,883	0
324737	Flying Start Capital (Covid-funding)	12,863	0	12,863	0	0	0	0
324738	FS Covid Recovery - Cwm Dev. Garden Spac	108,630	0	108,630	0	0	0	0
324739	FS Covid Recovery - Scout Hall	49,178	0	49,178	0	0	0	0
<b>Flying Start Projects</b>		<b>484,933</b>	<b>73,622</b>	<b>411,311</b>	<b>50,873</b>	<b>22,749</b>	<b>73,622</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Childcare Offer Projects</b>								
324771	Childcare Offer - Badminton Scheme	1,962,500	1,140,444	822,056	2,023	1,138,421	1,140,444	0
324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	909,819	619,080	290,739	30,855	588,225	619,080	0
324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	94,110	94,110	0	90,658	3,452	94,110	0
324774	Childcare Offer - Small Grants Scheme	346,636	346,636	0	179,213	167,423	346,636	0
<b>Childcare Offer Projects</b>		<b>3,313,065</b>	<b>2,200,270</b>	<b>1,112,795</b>	<b>302,749</b>	<b>1,897,521</b>	<b>2,200,270</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Childrens Services</b>								
323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	5,574	5,574	0	1,807	3,767	5,574	0

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
323155	Childrens Residential Home - Mons Calpe	432,775	432,775	0	1,100	431,675	432,775	0
323156	Childrens Residential Home - Madison Hou	432,775	432,775	0	0	432,775	432,775	0
	<b>Other Childrens Services</b>	<b>871,124</b>	<b>871,124</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,907</b>	<b>868,217</b>	<b>871,124</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Adult Services</b>							
323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	26,405	1,682	24,723	1,682	0	1,682	0
323120	Disabled equipment	285,000	285,000	0	281,608	3,392	285,000	0
323144	ICF Main Capital Programme	73,584	73,584	0	0	73,584	73,584	0
323147	Intermediate Care Fund	3,133	3,133	0	0	3,133	3,133	0
323149	Better Care Capital Project	27,878	27,878	0	1,200	26,678	27,878	0
323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	45,898	45,898	0	1,624	44,274	45,898	0
323165	Community Meals Electric Vehicles	45,000	45,000	0	0	45,000	45,000	0
	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>506,898</b>	<b>482,175</b>	<b>24,723</b>	<b>286,114</b>	<b>196,061</b>	<b>482,175</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Social Services Portfolio</b>	<b>5,176,020</b>	<b>3,627,191</b>	<b>1,548,829</b>	<b>642,643</b>	<b>2,984,548</b>	<b>3,627,191</b>	<b>0</b>

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Economy Portfolio</b>								
<b>Tredegar Regeneration</b>								
326163	Tredegar HLF	680,123	96,032	584,091	0	96,032	96,032	0
	<b>Tredegar Regeneration</b>	<b>680,123</b>	<b>96,032</b>	<b>584,091</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96,032</b>	<b>96,032</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transforming Towns</b>								
326191	TT - Placemaking Grant	345,002	345,002	0	121,476	223,526	345,002	0
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel	1,801,738	1,209,995	591,743	0	1,209,995	1,209,995	0
326266	Brynmawr Retail Development	747,720	5,000	742,720	5,000	0	5,000	0
	<b>Transforming Towns</b>	<b>2,894,460</b>	<b>1,559,997</b>	<b>1,334,463</b>	<b>126,476</b>	<b>1,433,521</b>	<b>1,559,997</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Valleys Regional Park</b>								
326200	VRP Ebbw Fach Trail	899	0	899	0	0	0	0
326205	VRP - Discovery Gateway	35,191	35,191	0	31,139	4,052	35,191	0
326207	Parc Bryn Bach - Co Working Space	298	0	298	0	0	0	0
	<b>Valleys Regional Park</b>	<b>36,388</b>	<b>35,191</b>	<b>1,197</b>	<b>31,139</b>	<b>4,052</b>	<b>35,191</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Industrial Units</b>								
326251	Constrained Units	105,659	105,659	0	24,502	81,157	105,659	0
326252	Constrained Units - Roseheyrworth	17,988	17,988	0	8,125	9,863	17,988	0
326253	Constrained Units - Blaenant Industrial	26,199	26,199	0	8,783	17,416	26,199	0
326254	Constrained Units - Cwm SBC	80,970	80,970	0	10,917	70,053	80,970	0
326255	Constrained Units - Cwmdraw Industrial E	60,856	60,856	0	0	60,856	60,856	0

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
327050	Constrained Units - Pond Road Industrial	49,698	49,698	0	21,235	28,463	49,698	0
	<b>Industrial Units</b>	<b>341,370</b>	<b>341,370</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73,563</b>	<b>267,807</b>	<b>341,370</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>The Works Site</b>								
325097	Big Arch	27,662	0	27,662	0	0	0	0
325103	Learning Works	37,985	37,985	0	0	37,985	37,985	0
325220	Site Investigation Works	19,001	0	19,001	0	0	0	0
326180	Lime Avenue Business Park	368,655	16,933	351,722	16,933	0	16,933	0
326183	Regain 2	3,758,789	3,179,781	579,008	3,179,781	0	3,179,781	0
	<b>The Works Site</b>	<b>4,212,092</b>	<b>3,234,699</b>	<b>977,393</b>	<b>3,196,713</b>	<b>37,986</b>	<b>3,234,699</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Regeneration</b>								
326006	Tech Valley s Initiative	390,980	0	390,980	0	0	0	0
326184	Brexit Schemes	189,375	0	189,375	0	0	0	0
326193	TRI - Town Centre COVID-19 recovery adap	482,204	0	482,204	0	0	0	0
326225	Heat Networks Project	17,385	0	17,385	0	0	0	0
326227	Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID	20,586	5,704	14,882	5,704	0	5,704	0
326265	Victoria Business Park - Development	8,734	0	8,734	0	0	0	0
326268	Covid Recovery for Town Centres	15,285	1,400	13,885	1,400	0	1,400	0
326269	HiVE – Hi Value Engineering Centre - Mon	12,183,100	6,240,000	5,943,100	2,070,914	4,169,086	6,240,000	0
326271	Land Release Fund - Pithead Baths	214,419	2,262	212,157	2,262	0	2,262	0
	<b>Other Regeneration</b>	<b>13,522,068</b>	<b>6,249,366</b>	<b>7,272,702</b>	<b>2,080,280</b>	<b>4,169,086</b>	<b>6,249,366</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Economy Portfolio</b>	<b>21,686,501</b>	<b>11,516,655</b>	<b>10,169,846</b>	<b>5,508,171</b>	<b>6,008,484</b>	<b>11,516,655</b>	<b>0</b>

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Education and Active Living</b>								
<b>Education Services</b>								
324201	Class Size - Willowtown	9,738	9,738	0	8,689	1,049	9,738	0
324203	Period Poverty	5,028	0	5,028	0	0	0	0
324207	St. Josephs s106	13,439	2,867	10,572	2,867	0	2,867	0
324519	Digital 2030 Capital Grant - Post 16	4,621	0	4,621	0	0	0	0
324530	ALN	259,772	237,473	22,299	0	237,473	237,473	0
324532	Ebbw Fawr ASD	3,890	0	3,890	0	0	0	0
324534	ALN - Penycwm	14,540	14,540	0	14,540	0	14,540	0
324535	ALN - River Centre	45,400	45,400	0	45,400	0	45,400	0
324580	Brynmawr 3G Pitch	31,833	31,833	0	31,741	92	31,833	0
324581	Pen Y Cwm Old School Site - Demolition	200,000	200,000	0	450	199,550	200,000	0
<b>Education Services</b>		<b>588,261</b>	<b>541,851</b>	<b>46,410</b>	<b>103,687</b>	<b>438,164</b>	<b>541,851</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Schools Capital Maintenance</b>								
324125	Education Minor Works	379	115	264	115	0	115	0
324138	Education Capital Maintenance	18,359	13,305	5,054	13,305	0	13,305	0
324144	St Marys - Refurbishment	188,419	188,419	0	159,549	28,870	188,419	0
324145	Tredegar Comp - Food & Technology	21,520	0	21,520	0	0	0	0
324147	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Services and Acces	3,450	0	3,450	0	0	0	0
324148	Coed y Garn Roof & Remedial Works	28,950	0	28,950	0	0	0	0
324149	Brynbach Primary Disabled Adaptations	8,663	0	8,663	0	0	0	0
324151	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Electrical Supply	34,275	0	34,275	0	0	0	0

Page 54

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
324152	Brynmawr Refurbishment	64,536	64,425	111	64,425	0	64,425	0
324156	River Centre Boiler	3,367	0	3,367	0	0	0	0
324157	Tredeggar Comprehensive Kitchen Electrics	31,944	0	31,944	0	0	0	0
324161	Pen Y Cwm - Refurbishment Works	167,758	17,479	150,279	17,479	0	17,479	0
324166	Beaufort Hill Boiler	12,262	12,262	0	0	12,262	12,262	0
324167	Soffryd Boiler	13,265	0	13,265	0	0	0	0
324168	St Marys Boiler	44,138	44,138	0	0	44,138	44,138	0
324175	River Centre Classroom and Toilets	16,900	16,900	0	16,900	0	16,900	0
324179	Ebbw Fawr Internal Remodelling	29,137	29,137	0	24,056	5,081	29,137	0
324189	St Josephs Boiler	130,000	130,000	0	90,820	39,180	130,000	0
324190	Tredeggar Caretakers House	134,409	134,409	0	134,409	0	134,409	0
324191	Schools Toilet Upgrades	60,000	60,000	0	13,472	46,528	60,000	0
324192	Bryn Bach Primary Boiler	110,000	110,000	0	104,154	5,846	110,000	0
324193	All Saints Fire Alarm, Water Heater plus	49,731	49,731	0	14,982	34,749	49,731	0
324194	School Estate Fencing - Safeguarding	45,000	45,000	0	10,300	34,700	45,000	0
324195	Schools Lighting Upgrades	50,000	50,000	0	49,794	206	50,000	0
324196	CCTV - Replacement columns	50,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	50,000	0
324197	Bryn Bach Nursery Demountable	50,000	50,000	0	13,967	36,033	50,000	0
324198	Abertillery Campus - Canopies	100,000	100,000	0	4,327	95,673	100,000	0
324199	Tredeggar Comprehensive - Toilet Refurbis	100,000	100,000	0	91,748	8,252	100,000	0
<b>Schools Capital Maintenance</b>		<b>1,566,462</b>	<b>1,265,320</b>	<b>301,142</b>	<b>823,800</b>	<b>441,520</b>	<b>1,265,320</b>	<b>0</b>

### Sustainable Communities for Learning

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
324743	21st Century Schools Six Bells Project	138,924	68,563	70,361	22,551	46,012	68,563	0
324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	13,079,655	9,784,345	3,295,310	842,079	8,942,266	9,784,345	0
324751	Band B - New Primary Ebbw Fawr Valley	6,359,952	6,359,952	0	4,910,160	1,449,792	6,359,952	0
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredegar	1,425	1,425	0	1,425	0	1,425	0
324755	Band B - Welsh Medium Remodelling Bro He	382,070	62,017	320,053	1,832	60,185	62,017	0
324756	Band B - Rhosyfedwen	246,027	246,027	0	246,027	0	246,027	0
324760	Band B - Ebbw Fawr Secondary Extension	111,226	111,226	0	111,226	0	111,226	0
324761	Band B - Secondary Schools Remodelling	9,542,989	0	9,542,989	0	0	0	0
	<b>Sustainable Communities for Learning</b>	<b>29,862,268</b>	<b>16,633,555</b>	<b>13,228,713</b>	<b>6,135,300</b>	<b>10,498,255</b>	<b>16,633,555</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Universal Free School Meals</b>							
324250	Electrical Upgrade - Blaen y Cwm	6,196	6,196	0	5,994	202	6,196	0
324251	Electrical Upgrade - Georgetown	1,990	1,990	0	1,840	150	1,990	0
324252	Electrical Upgrade - Glanhowy	4,156	1,820	2,336	1,820	0	1,820	0
324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment	253,153	5,869	247,284	5,869	0	5,869	0
324255	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Brynmawr RC P	109,379	1,080	108,299	1,080	0	1,080	0
324256	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Ystruth Prima	69,937	68,548	1,389	68,548	0	68,548	0
324257	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Roseheyworth	10,966	10,966	0	10,966	0	10,966	0
324258	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Willowtown Pr	62,122	13,280	48,842	1,622	11,658	13,280	0
324259	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Illtydds P	2,935	2,935	0	2,935	0	2,935	0
324260	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Sofrydd Prima	2,427	2,427	0	1,856	571	2,427	0
324261	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Tillery Campu	480	480	0	0	480	480	0
324264	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Ysgol Bro Hel	3,750	3,750	0	3,745	5	3,750	0



# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
324265	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Coed y Garn P	6,190	6,190	0	6,190	0	6,190	0
324267	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-All saints RC	2,636	2,636	0	2,436	200	2,636	0
	<b>Universal Free School Meals</b>	<b>536,317</b>	<b>128,167</b>	<b>408,150</b>	<b>114,900</b>	<b>13,267</b>	<b>128,167</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Community Focused Schools</b>								
324182	CFS - Brynmawr Running Track	125,000	125,000	0	109,913	15,087	125,000	0
324183	Swffryd	25,000	25,000	0	6,781	18,219	25,000	0
324187	CFS - Pen y Cwm - Outdoor Provision	8,555	8,555	0	5,050	3,505	8,555	0
324188	Ebbw Fawr Primary CFS	1,215	1,215	0	0	1,215	1,215	0
324208	CFS-Brynmawr Foundation - Food Technolog	350,000	350,000	0	1,250	348,750	350,000	0
324209	CFS-Coed y Garn - Imp. Learning Spaces	300,000	300,000	0	24,823	275,177	300,000	0
324210	CFS-Cwm School & Youth Centre	200,000	200,000	0	0	200,000	200,000	0
324211	CFS-Sofrydd Comm Hub & Meeting space	450,000	0	450,000	0	0	0	0
	<b>Community Focused Schools</b>	<b>1,459,770</b>	<b>1,009,770</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>147,817</b>	<b>861,953</b>	<b>1,009,770</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Active Living Services</b>								
329088	Bryn Bach Park Roof	12,439	0	12,439	0	0	0	0
329089	Abertillery LC Demolition	952	0	952	0	0	0	0
329092	ALC - Changing Room Refurbishment	11,048	0	11,048	0	0	0	0
329095	AWPOG - Play Equipment	14,928	4,910	10,018	4,910	0	4,910	0
329097	Play Equipment	75,843	72,600	3,243	25,898	46,702	72,600	0
329100	Six Bells Tennis Court Refurbishment	6,923	6,923	0	4,439	2,484	6,923	0
329101	Brynmawr LAC - PV & Battery Storage Syst	61,288	11,293	49,995	11,293	0	11,293	0

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

<b>Management Reports</b>	<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9</i>	

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
329102	Ebbw Vale LAC - PV & Battery Storage Sys	50,000	33,636	16,364	33,636	0	33,636	0
329104	Solar PV Tredegar Leisure Centre	68,429	68,429	0	68,429	0	68,429	0
329105	Solar PV Abertillery Leisure Centre	173,210	173,210	0	173,210	0	173,210	0
	<b>Active Living Services</b>	<b>475,060</b>	<b>371,001</b>	<b>104,059</b>	<b>321,815</b>	<b>49,186</b>	<b>371,001</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Education and Active Living</b>	<b>34,488,138</b>	<b>19,949,664</b>	<b>14,538,474</b>	<b>7,647,318</b>	<b>12,302,346</b>	<b>19,949,664</b>	<b>0</b>

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Environment Portfolio</b>								
<b>Environmental Services</b>								
327035	Central Depot - New Fire Escape	49,931	49,931	0	49,931	0	49,931	0
327036	WPT Business Resource Centre (SS)	105,000	105,000	0	105,000	0	105,000	0
327039	Kerbside Collections	2,052	0	2,052	0	0	0	0
327044	AHP Waste Collections	52,380	0	52,380	0	0	0	0
327045	BRC Decommissioning Project	191,777	0	191,777	0	0	0	0
327046	Repair Cafe	1,066	0	1,066	0	0	0	0
327061	CATS	204,189	140,000	64,189	0	140,000	140,000	0
327065	Re:Fit	2,059,244	59,763	1,999,481	40,291	19,472	59,763	0
327067	Market Hall - Asbestos Removal	18,606	0	18,606	0	0	0	0
327068	Cemeteries Investment Programme	9,137	0	9,137	0	0	0	0
327070	WRAP Cymru Capital Funding	3,792	0	3,792	0	0	0	0
327071	Education Centre	57,065	57,065	0	0	57,065	57,065	0
327074	New Vale HWRC Refurbishment Works	145,439	57,090	88,349	57,090	0	57,090	0
327077	Local Places for Nature	743,400	353,900	389,500	476	353,424	353,900	0
327080	Cemetery Capacity - Cefn Golau Tredegar	322,237	7,196	315,041	2,985	4,211	7,196	0
327081	Cemetery Capacity - Dukestown Tredegar	216,055	985	215,070	985	0	985	0
327082	Cemetery Capacity - Brynmawr	131,285	0	131,285	0	0	0	0
327083	Cemetery Capacity - Brynithel Abertiller	93,084	0	93,084	0	0	0	0
327090	Fly Tipping CCTV	961	0	961	0	0	0	0
327110	Allotment Support Grant	7,894	7,894	0	6,487	1,407	7,894	0

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

**Management Reports**

*Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9*

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Environmental Services</b>	<b>4,414,594</b>	<b>838,824</b>	<b>3,575,770</b>	<b>263,245</b>	<b>575,579</b>	<b>838,824</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Housing Environmental Health</b>							
328221	Remediation of Contaminated Land/Derelic	102,564	0	102,564	0	0	0	0
350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	909,142	532,470	376,672	532,470	0	532,470	0
350550	Support for Independent Living	112,897	92,800	20,097	28,460	64,340	92,800	0
350560	Empty Property Grants	158,930	9	158,921	9	0	9	0
	<b>Housing Environmental Health</b>	<b>1,283,533</b>	<b>625,279</b>	<b>658,254</b>	<b>560,939</b>	<b>64,340</b>	<b>625,279</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Environment Portfolio</b>	<b>5,698,127</b>	<b>1,464,103</b>	<b>4,234,024</b>	<b>824,184</b>	<b>639,919</b>	<b>1,464,103</b>	<b>0</b>

# Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates

## Capital Report 2023/24

### Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9

### Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2023	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Infrastructure Portfolio</b>								
<b>Engineering Services</b>								
328280	Coal Tip Safety	735,002	405,077	329,925	120,133	284,944	405,077	0
328315	Local Transport Fund - Project Retention	9,309	0	9,309	0	0	0	0
328318	Active Travel Fund	1,029,386	1,029,261	125	339,704	689,557	1,029,261	0
328323	Resilient Roads Fund	15,346	7,673	7,673	6,288	1,385	7,673	0
328328	Aberbeeg Road - Resilient Roads Fund	830,000	830,000	0	0	830,000	830,000	0
328340	LTF Metro Plus	1,498,785	1,466,470	32,315	1,466,470	0	1,466,470	0
328344	LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure	2,958	2,958	0	0	2,958	2,958	0
328346	Bus Infrastructure Fund	83,867	83,867	0	83,867	0	83,867	0
328360	Rail Infrastructure Programme	37,328,363	26,000,000	11,328,363	21,627,534	4,372,466	26,000,000	0
328370	20mph Core Allocation	521,424	521,424	0	271,196	250,228	521,424	0
<b>Engineering Services</b>		<b>42,054,440</b>	<b>30,346,730</b>	<b>11,707,710</b>	<b>23,915,193</b>	<b>6,431,537</b>	<b>30,346,730</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Highways Network Management</b>								
328063	Bridge Strengthening Works	1,857	0	1,857	0	0	0	0
328270	Highways Improvement Works	561,425	503,093	58,332	428,363	74,730	503,093	0
328334	LGBI - Trinant Hall	8,735	0	8,735	0	0	0	0
328404	Flood Damage - Emergency Repairs	828	0	828	0	0	0	0
328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	92,878	0	92,878	0	0	0	0
<b>Highways Network Management</b>		<b>665,723</b>	<b>503,093</b>	<b>162,630</b>	<b>428,363</b>	<b>74,730</b>	<b>503,093</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Infrastructure Portfolio</b>	<b>42,720,163</b>	<b>30,849,823</b>	<b>11,870,340</b>	<b>24,343,556</b>	<b>6,506,267</b>	<b>30,849,823</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

**Management Reports**

*Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9*

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>All Portfolios</b>								
<b>All Portfolios</b>								
300300	City Deal	3,662,700	0	3,662,700	0	0	0	0
303990	OS Capital Admin/Design & Supervision	474,000	474,000	0	0	474,000	474,000	0
321112	Disabled Access - Special Programme	14,304	14,304	0	5,960	8,344	14,304	0
324672	The Company Shop - Tred	195,965	6,644	189,321	1,944	4,700	6,644	0
<b>All Portfolios</b>		<b>4,346,969</b>	<b>494,948</b>	<b>3,852,021</b>	<b>7,904</b>	<b>487,044</b>	<b>494,948</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>All Portfolios</b>		<b>4,346,969</b>	<b>494,948</b>	<b>3,852,021</b>	<b>7,904</b>	<b>487,044</b>	<b>494,948</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2023/24 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2023/24**

<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2024/9</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2023</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>		<b>115,255,885</b>	<b>68,524,240</b>	<b>46,731,645</b>	<b>39,096,456</b>	<b>29,427,784</b>	<b>68,524,240</b>	<b>0</b>

End of Report

Page 64



## New Approvals and/or material Funding Changes in Quarter Three

Portfolio	Cost Centre	Scheme	Amount (£)	Funding Body	Type	Additional Information
<b>Economy</b>						
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel		-1,083,394	Welsh Government	Transforming Towns	Removal of original grant approval. Replaced with the grant awards below
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel		824,438	Welsh Government	Transforming Towns	Grant award for internal fit out of the property to provide community orientated services
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel		206,778	Welsh Government	Low Carbon Heat Grant	Grant award for low carbon technologies within Trinity Chapel
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel		310,521	Welsh Government	Repayable Town Centre Loan	Town Centre Loan for refurbishment and associated works for relocation & enhancement of Abertillery Library
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel		300,000	Welsh Government	Transformational Capital Grant	Grant award for refurbishment and associated works for relocation & enhancement of Abertillery Library
326195	TT - Trinity Chapel		160,000	UKSPF		Grant award for internal fit out of the property to provide community orientated services
<b>Education, Active Living and Learning</b>						
324152	Brynmawr Canopy		19,230	Blaenau Gwent	Education Capital Maintenance	Income from District Valuer
324190	Tredegar Caretakers House		46,613	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
324530	ALN		-64,979	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
324534	ALN - Penycwm		7,440	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
324535	ALN - River Centre		10,926	Welsh Government	ALN	Transfer to individual projects within the ALN scheme
324250	Electrical Upgrade - Blaen y Cwm		-6,050	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324251	Electrical Upgrade - Georgetown		-21,282	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment		219,274	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324254	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Beaufort Hill		-59,710	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324255	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Brynmawr RC Primary		-10,650	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324256	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Ystruth Primary		-1,288	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324257	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Roseheyworth Campus		-3,444	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324258	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Willowtown Primary		48,842	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324259	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Iltydds Primary		-11,860	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324260	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Sofrydd Primary		-78,262	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324261	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Tillery Street Campus		-14,454	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324262	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Marys CIW primary		-9,683	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324263	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Josephs Primary		-10,125	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324265	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Coed y Garn Primary		-8,810	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324266	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Deighton Primary		-76,621	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324267	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-All saints RC primary		1,274	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324268	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Rhosyfedwen Primary		-8,057	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects within the UFSM scheme
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredegar		1,425	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Transfer to individual projects within the Band B scheme
324756	Band B - Rhosyfedwen		222,294	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Transfer to individual projects within the Band B scheme
324760	Band B - Ebbw Fawr Secondary Extension		47,017	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Transfer to individual projects within the Band B scheme
329097	Play Equipment		22,600	Blaenau Gwent	Income	Correction to include income carried forward from Community Group

**Environment**

<b>327036</b>	WPT Business Resource Centre	105,000	Blaenau Gwent	RCCO & Capital Reciepts	Final Payment Invest 2 Save loan repayment
<b>327077</b>	Local Places for Nature	743,400	Welsh Government	Local Places for Nature Funding	New Approval

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

# Agenda Item 10

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**  
Date of meeting: **21 February 2024**  
Report Subject: **Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 Forecast Outturn to 31 March 2024 (As at 31 December 2023)**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas – Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member Corporate Overview & Performance**  
Report Submitted by: **Gina Taylor – Service Manager Accountancy**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	01/02/24	07.02.24			20/02/24 (briefing)	21/02/24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with the forecast financial outturn position across all portfolios for the financial year 2023/2024 (as forecast at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023).

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

- Forecast financial position to the end of March 2024 across all portfolios
- Forecast of Reserves to be applied during the period
- Action Plans to address cost pressure areas

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

## 3. Options for Recommendation

### 3.1 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

- Members to consider and provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report
- Note the application of reserves
- Consider and challenge the Action Plans attached at Appendix 2

### 3.2 Option 2

Members do not accept the report.

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

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's 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 forecast outturn across all portfolios as of 31 December 2023, is a favourable variance of £1.6m before an expected transfer from specific reserves. This favourable variance increases to £2.35m with the application of £0.46m and £0.31m from specific and general reserve respectively. As a consequence, the £4.2m planned use of Specific Reserves to balance the 2023/2024 budget (originally agreed by Council) is now forecast to be £1.85m.

5.1.2 The forecast overall financial position across all portfolios is shown in the table below:

5.1.3 Table 1 – Portfolio Summary

Portfolio/ Committee	2023/2024 Revised Revenue Budget	2023/2024 Forecast Outturn @ 31 Dec 2023	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance (after Net transfers to/from Reserves)	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance (after Net transfers to/from Reserves) As at Qtr. 2	Appendix ref:
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	18.07	16.61	1.46	1.68	1.57	1a
Social Services	54.40	54.82	(0.42)	(0.30)	(0.69)	1b
Education & Leisure	73.57	73.41	0.16	0.16	0.09	1c
Economy	1.98	1.82	0.16	0.17	0.01	1d
Environment	34.57	33.85	0.72	0.68	0.48	1e
Planning	1.54	1.74	(0.19)	(0.04)	(0.04)	1f
Licensing	0.15	0.15	0	0	0	1f
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>184.28</b>	<b>182.40</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>2.35</b>	<b>1.42</b>	
FSM Direct Payment – School Holidays	0	0.31	(0.31)	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>184.28</b>	<b>182.71</b>	<b>1.58</b>	<b>2.35</b>	<b>1.42</b>	

5.1.4 The favourable variance £2.35m is mainly due to:

5.1.5 Corporate Services – A favourable variance of £1.68m (an increase of £109,000 compared to quarter 2)

This is mainly due to the Surplus on Council Tax collection forecasting a favourable variance of £143,000 compared to £68,000 at quarter 2. The current assessment of bad debt indicates a reduced requirement for the provision when compared to quarter 2.

Community hubs are now forecasting a favourable variance of £49,000 compared to £6,000 adverse at quarter 2, this is due to the identification and utilisation of grant funding to support specific workstreams within the service.

5.1.6 Education – A favourable variance of £161,000 (an increase of £72,000 compared to quarter 2)

The improved position is mainly as a consequence of updated forecasts being available with regards placements and transport contracts, together with the financial impact of delays in filling vacant posts.

5.1.7 Economy – A favourable variance of £166,000 (an increase of £158,000 compared to quarter 2)

The improvement is mainly due to the updated forecast information being available and the maximisation of grant income against the departmental budget, with a favourable variance of £157,000 compared to £51,000 at quarter 2. There has also been a favourable movement in the General Offices budget with an increase in income, partly due to a renegotiated rental agreement, resulting in a favourable variance of £42,000 compared to an adverse variance of £13,000 at quarter 2.

5.1.8 Environment – A favourable variance of £678,000 (an increase of £193,000 compared to quarter 2)

This is due to the projected increase in Welsh Government Specific Grant for Universal Free School Meals. Welsh Government have reviewed the meal rates payable from January 2024, increasing the favourable variance against the Catering budget to £642,000 from £558,000 at quarter 2.

Additionally, Traffic Orders are forecasting a favourable variance of £40,000 compared to £3,000 at quarter 2, due to additional income received in respect of road closures. The Concessionary fares and Support to Operators budget has moved to a favourable variance of £65,000 compared to £8,000 at quarter 2 as a result of additional grant income being received in-year.

5.1.9 Social Services – Adverse variance of £298,000 (an improvement of £393,000 compared to quarter 2)

The reduction in the forecast adverse variance is mainly due to the maximisation of the Families 1<sup>st</sup> Grant of £200,000 within Children's Services which has been

utilised to fund existing support worker posts within the Placement, 14+, Supporting Change and Locality Teams.

The number of residential placements has reduced by 2 to 9, one of which transferred to a living independent placement, therefore achieving a net reduction of £190,000.

5.1.10 The remaining portfolios are forecasting small variances that remain consistent with the previous forecast.

5.1.11 **Use of Reserves**

5.1.12 The forecast draw from general and specific reserves total £2.6m (compared to the agreed £4.5m), this includes:

General Reserve

- £313,000 supplementary budget to fund the Free School Meals direct payment through the 2023 summer holidays.

Specific Reserves

- £75,000 contribution from South East Wales Collaboration Reserve
- £53,000 – displaced grant funding from 2022/2023
- £215,000 contribution from Supporting Capacity, Community Safety, Resettlement Reserve and Business Support Hybrid Model
- £99,000 – ICT Reserve towards costs for Planning software
- £57,000 contribution from the Building Control Reserve
- £1.85m - In agreeing the 2023/2024 budget, Members agreed to utilise £4.2m of specific reserves (Financial Resilience Reserve, Future Interest Rates Reserve and Inflation & Service Cost Pressures Reserve. Based on the current forecast, the draw from these reserves will be £1.85m after taking into consideration the draw from alternative specific reserves (as detailed above).

There is also an appropriation to Specific Reserves:

- £42,000 contribution to the Tai Calon Highways Maintenance Reserve in relation to commuted sums.

5.1.13 Except for the use of reserves identified in 5.1.12, as the overall forecast is a favourable variance, it has been assumed that the additional costs, related to the pay award (in excess of the agreed budget) and forecast cost pressures are funded from within underspending budgets, and not specific reserves.

5.1.14 **In Year Cost Pressures**

5.1.15 Appendix 1a to 1f provides details of the favourable and adverse variances across services within each portfolio.

5.1.16 Where a portfolio is reporting an overall adverse variance, and where a service is forecasting an adverse variance in excess of £50,000, Action Plans have been developed providing reasons and mitigating actions, these are attached at Appendix 2 for Social Services.

- 5.1.17 Action Plans have not been included for cost pressures within underspending Portfolios as they are being managed within the overall portfolio budget.
- 5.1.18 **Budget Virements**
- 5.1.19 Budget virements are actioned to address in year overspends, cost pressures or to realign budgets to reflect service needs.
- 5.1.20 The Constitution requires budget virements in excess of £250,000 to be approved by Cabinet, during the period October to December no virements over this amount were required.
- 5.1.21 **Bridging the Gap – Forecast Achievement 2023/2024**
- 5.1.22 In setting the 2023/2024 budget, Members approved bridging the gap proposals totalling £3m. The table, attached at Appendix 3 shows the current assessed achievement against the target.
- 5.1.23 It is currently forecast to achieve £2.2m against the overall programme. A number of proposals will not deliver against the initial target and these are:
- Review of Electronic Document Management & Retention (£103,630) – This project is ongoing but will not deliver efficiencies in the current financial year. In year efficiencies have been identified against other system expenditure to mitigate in part this cost pressure and further work is ongoing to identify further opportunities.
  - Fortnightly Green Waste Collection (£75,000) – Due to demand for green waste collection, this service was reinstated. However, the cost pressure is currently being funded within the overall waste budget.
  - Legal Fees Children’s Services (£175,000) – The need to use external legal services has continued during the current financial year for existing cases whilst transitioning services over to Caerphilly CBC.
  - Prevention & early Intervention (£416,000) – The establishment of the MYST team was an invest to save project to reduce the number of children looked after (CLA) going into care. Whilst this has been successful in delivering cost avoidance by preventing CLA entering into care, numbers have remained stable within residential placements. It is anticipated that numbers will reduce early in the financial year 2024/25.
  - Review of Operational Buildings (£250,000) – A review of property and assets is underway, however it is not anticipated that it will deliver cost efficiencies during the current financial year.
- 5.1.24 The estimated shortfall of £0.8m is included with the overall forecast favourable variance of £2.35m and is being mitigated from within existing resources.

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

5.2.1 There is a risk that Action Plans will not address the cost pressures identified.

Action Plans will be monitored as part of the Budget Monitoring and Reporting framework and the impact reported to Cabinet. Continuing, new and emerging Cost Pressures will be considered as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Budget Setting process.

5.2.2 There is a risk that continued high inflation and energy costs will be higher than the current forecast, increasing the cost pressures facing the Council.

Costs will continue to be monitored and reported and Action Plans developed to address the cost pressure in year.

5.2.3 Welsh Government have indicated that there will be an overall reduction in the specific grant for 2023/2024 to fund the roll out of universal free school meals to assist in mitigating in year cost pressures. This has been based on the current overall forecast underspend and is not expected to impact upon the amount received by Blaenau Gwent.

Grant claims will be submitted monthly based on actual take up. Should any shortfall in funding be identified this will be reported as part of the budget monitoring process and discussions will take place with WG.

5.3 ***Legal***  
N/A

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

5.5 ***Health and Safety***  
N/A

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

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

6.1.1 The overall forecast outturn across all Portfolios as of 31 December 2023, is a favourable variance £2.35m after utilising £2.62m from reserves. Whilst there is a significant use of reserves forecast, this is an improving position compared to quarter 2 when the forecast was a favourable variance of £1.42m including a forecast use of reserves of £3.5m.

6.1.2 Performance information is detailed throughout this report and a summary page for each portfolio is attached at Appendices 1a to 1f.

### 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)***

CLT have considered the forecast financial position for 2023/2024 (as at 31 December 2023).

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

6.4.1 For new and emerging cost pressures identified during the financial year, budget holders will produce Action Plans to address the cost pressure during the year.

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

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

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

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

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

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

N/A

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

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

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

N/A

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

7.1 Financial reporting 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 Summaries*

*Appendix 2 – Action Plans*

*Appendix 3 – Bridging the Gap Proposals 2023/24 – Progress on Financial Achievement*

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## CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER RECHARGEABLE SERVICES</u></b>				
Corporate Services Department	63,560	(15,418)	78,978	13,791
Resources Department	42,210	(44,834)	87,044	105,125
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>105,770</b>	<b>(60,252)</b>	<b>166,022</b>	<b>118,916</b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Archives	156,710	156,712	(2)	(2)
Festival Park	114,630	123,221	(8,591)	0
Housing Benefit	(116,270)	(99,750)	(16,520)	(16,981)
ICT Service	(103,630)	(43,121)	(60,509)	(75,614)
Cross Cutting	(107,310)	(137,383)	30,073	30,073
Community Hubs	222,190	173,338	48,852	(6,460)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>166,320</b>	<b>173,017</b>	<b>(6,697)</b>	<b>(68,984)</b>
<b><u>LEGAL &amp; CORPORATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES</u></b>				
Registration of Electors	20,830	34,421	(13,591)	(2,168)
Conducting Elections	0	(14,406)	14,406	0
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	58,860	90,013	(31,153)	(27,474)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>79,690</b>	<b>110,028</b>	<b>(30,338)</b>	<b>(29,642)</b>
<b><u>GOVERNANCE &amp; PARTNERSHIP SERVICES</u></b>				
Corporate Management (inc Audit Fees)	109,510	116,275	(6,765)	(4,015)
Democratic Representation and Management	1,349,180	1,312,143	37,037	31,276
CCTV Cameras	208,680	201,472	7,208	34,573
Civil Contingencies	114,110	105,549	8,561	19,934
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,781,480</b>	<b>1,735,439</b>	<b>46,041</b>	<b>81,768</b>
<b><u>RESOURCES SERVICES</u></b>				
Corporate Management	355,790	370,964	(15,174)	(2,046)
Non Distributed Costs	648,690	512,660	136,030	182,340
Apprenticeship Levy	358,430	401,930	(43,500)	(63,035)
Council Tax Collection	(1,304,930)	(1,447,560)	142,630	67,839
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	10,404,540	9,703,094	701,446	700,729
N.N.D.R. Collection	(106,820)	(111,006)	4,186	3,597
Grants and Subscriptions	79,500	79,500	0	0
Cross Cutting Budget	847,940	270,990	576,950	576,950
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>11,283,140</b>	<b>9,780,572</b>	<b>1,502,568</b>	<b>1,466,374</b>
<b><u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u></b>				
Corporate Recharges	4,658,340	4,658,334	6	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4,658,340</b>	<b>4,658,334</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,074,740</b>	<b>16,397,138</b>	<b>1,677,602</b>	<b>1,568,432</b>

## SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Children's Services - Commissioning and Social Work	4,247,760	3,993,020	254,740	52,182
Children Looked After	7,314,350	8,414,876	(1,100,526)	(1,476,360)
Family Support Services	203,070	211,202	(8,132)	(1)
Youth Justice	276,080	250,930	25,150	57
Other Children's and Family Services	2,537,840	2,580,180	(42,340)	(94,200)
Older People Aged 65 or Over	7,974,610	7,727,428	247,182	257,845
Adults Aged Under 65 with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	7,880	7,880	0	0
Adults Aged Under 65 with Learning Disabilities	4,005,310	3,894,221	111,089	174,490
Adults Aged Under 65 with Mental Health Needs	570,690	522,215	48,475	10,835
Other Adult Services	494,760	540,356	(45,596)	(3,003)
Community Care	20,007,270	19,810,004	197,266	355,447
Support Service and Management Costs	948,740	933,614	15,126	31,650
Corporate Recharges	5,803,660	5,803,659	1	1
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>54,392,020</b>	<b>54,689,586</b>	<b>(297,566)</b>	<b>(691,056)</b>

## EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b>SCHOOLS BUDGET</b>				
Individual Schools Budget	52,689,210	52,689,210	0	0
Education Improvement Grant	272,910	263,700	9,210	8,484
Other Costs	676,210	668,613	7,597	7,597
Supporting Special Education Needs	1,802,350	1,788,712	13,638	3,508
<i>Schools Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>55,440,680</u>	<u>55,410,235</u>	<u>30,445</u>	<u>19,589</u>
<b>LEA BUDGET</b>				
Strategic Management	2,446,040	2,433,989	12,051	12,050
Assuring Access to Schools	3,462,020	3,410,627	51,393	27,599
Facilitating School Improvement	376,350	371,753	4,597	(403)
Supporting Special Education Needs	307,460	314,206	(6,746)	5,721
<i>LEA Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>6,591,870</u>	<u>6,530,575</u>	<u>61,295</u>	<u>44,968</u>
<b>OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES</b>				
Further Education and Training	146,840	131,212	15,628	9,949
Youth Service	365,940	360,805	5,135	5,528
Other Expenditure	143,850	131,298	12,552	5,088
Education Departmental Budget	(18,310)	(31,994)	13,684	3,734
<i>Other Education Services Total Expenditure</i>	<u>638,320</u>	<u>591,321</u>	<u>46,999</u>	<u>24,300</u>
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES</b>				
Corporate Support Recharges	6,251,110	6,251,107	3	0
<i>Corporate Charges Total Expenditure</i>	<u>6,251,110</u>	<u>6,251,107</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Education Total Expenditure</b>	<u>68,921,980</u>	<u>68,783,238</u>	<u>138,742</u>	<u>88,856</u>
<b>LEISURE TRUSTS</b>				
<b>LEISURE TRUSTS</b>				
Aneurin Leisure Trust	3,170,640	3,170,641	(1)	(1)
Awen Leisure Trust	221,000	220,998	2	2
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>3,391,640</u>	<u>3,391,639</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>RETAINED SERVICES</b>				
Corporate Recharges	1,259,190	1,236,775	22,415	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,259,190</u>	<u>1,236,775</u>	<u>22,415</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Lesire Trusts Total Expenditure</b>	<u>4,650,830</u>	<u>4,628,414</u>	<u>22,416</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>EDUCATION PORTFOLIO TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>73,572,810</u>	<u>73,411,652</u>	<u>161,158</u>	<u>88,857</u>

## ECONOMY PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</b>				
Economic Strategy and Development - Departmental Budget	6,600	(150,876)	157,476	50,535
Estates Management - Rechargeable	0	82,635	(82,635)	(78,846)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>6,600</u>	<u>(68,241)</u>	<u>74,841</u>	<u>(28,311)</u>
<b>ECONOMY SERVICES</b>				
CSCS	(10,200)	1,636	(11,836)	(11,211)
Destination Management	10,200	10,200	0	2,040
Financial Support to Business	4,410	4,410	0	0
General Offices	(110,780)	(152,849)	42,069	(13,320)
Industrial Land	7,390	5,690	1,700	0
Inspire	0	0	0	0
Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	(867,330)	(921,889)	54,559	55,328
Pentagon	0	0	0	0
Regeneration Projects	5,100	5,163	(63)	(1,079)
Estates Management Non Rechargeable	(96,600)	(100,979)	4,379	4,379
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(1,057,810)</u>	<u>(1,148,618)</u>	<u>90,808</u>	<u>36,137</u>
Corporate Recharges	3,030,620	3,030,620	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u><u>1,979,410</u></u>	<u><u>1,813,761</u></u>	<u><u>165,649</u></u>	<u><u>7,826</u></u>

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Environment Department - Corporate Division	0	(137,414)	137,414	142,434
Environmental Services Division	0	(49,508)	49,508	13,947
Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	(110)	(9,990)	9,880	4,122
Enforcement	40,000	57,301	(17,301)	(10,939)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>39,890</b>	<b>(139,611)</b>	<b>179,501</b>	<b>149,564</b>
<b><u>WASTE COLLECTION</u></b>				
Household and Trade Waste Collection	705,840	661,225	44,615	30,272
Recycling Collection	3,096,940	3,113,839	(16,899)	(17,549)
Bulky Waste Collection	25,880	24,723	1,157	804
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,828,660</b>	<b>3,799,787</b>	<b>28,873</b>	<b>13,527</b>
<b><u>WASTE TRANSFER</u></b>				
Civic Amenity Sites	57,400	55,640	1,760	1,982
HWRC Roseheyworth	118,550	118,650	(100)	(16,780)
Transfer Station	224,530	166,108	58,422	77,616
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>400,480</b>	<b>340,398</b>	<b>60,082</b>	<b>62,818</b>
<b><u>SILENT VALLEY TRANSFER</u></b>				
Combined Waste Services	1,690,660	1,608,787	81,873	115,760
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,690,660</b>	<b>1,608,787</b>	<b>81,873</b>	<b>115,760</b>
<b><u>WASTE DISPOSAL</u></b>				
Disposal Of Waste	1,360,380	1,345,954	14,426	(31,387)
Recycling Disposal	290,080	305,437	(15,357)	1,727
Trade Waste Collection, Transfer & Disposal	(20,170)	(39,858)	19,688	19,105
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,630,290</b>	<b>1,611,533</b>	<b>18,757</b>	<b>(10,555)</b>
<b>Sub Total - WASTE SERVICES</b>	<b>7,550,090</b>	<b>7,360,505</b>	<b>189,585</b>	<b>181,550</b>
<b><u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u></b>				
County Borough Cleansing	1,222,290	1,179,653	42,637	52,946
Public Conveniences	0	20,839	(20,839)	(20,839)
Cemeteries / Crematorium	(147,440)	(115,934)	(31,506)	(24,805)
Grounds Maintenance	1,181,760	1,118,324	63,436	46,455
Countryside Recreation Sites	37,420	34,680	2,740	1,993
General Entertainment	2,690	3,654	(964)	(964)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2,296,720</b>	<b>2,241,216</b>	<b>55,504</b>	<b>54,786</b>
<b><u>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</u></b>				
Corporate Landlord	2,012,380	2,342,640	(330,260)	(321,351)
Corporate Property	43,260	43,265	(5)	0
Building Cleaning	463,980	583,344	(119,364)	(104,482)
Catering Account	1,066,520	424,789	641,731	558,380
Appetite For Life	44,590	44,590	0	0
School Breakfast Club	471,680	455,606	16,074	33,724
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4,102,410</b>	<b>3,894,234</b>	<b>208,176</b>	<b>166,271</b>
<b><u>HIGHWAYS &amp; ROADS SERVICES</u></b>				
Highways - Street Care Team	0	(3,449)	3,449	4,098
Non Operational Land	1,490	0	1,490	0
Licensing (Highway Permits)	(52,210)	(52,184)	(26)	(139)
Shopping Arcade, Abertillery	2,830	4,096	(1,266)	282
Road and Street Works Acts	(16,590)	(73,260)	56,670	46,842
Multi-Storey Car Parks	258,120	327,108	(68,988)	(51,634)
On Street Parking	1,120	0	1,120	0
Surface Car Parks	32,420	24,310	8,110	0
Public Transport Co-Ordination	920	(268)	1,188	34

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
Bridges	79,140	79,140	0	0
Structural Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	197,850	216,755	(18,905)	(7,001)
Environmental Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	19,830	17,799	2,031	0
Safety Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	75,450	74,755	695	1,009
Routine Repairs (Principal and Other Roads)	933,190	973,236	(40,046)	(28,589)
Street Lighting	1,984,050	1,984,051	(1)	0
Winter Maintenance	416,530	452,936	(36,406)	(22,981)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,934,140</b>	<b>4,025,025</b>	<b>(90,885)</b>	<b>(58,079)</b>
<b>TRANSPORT SERVICES</b>				
Traffic Orders	(16,840)	(57,080)	40,240	2,654
Highways Adoptions	(9,950)	(31,090)	21,140	21,736
Traffic / Accident Research	16,000	13,700	2,300	2,301
Traffic Management	6,900	6,900	0	0
Civil Parking Enforcement	2,100	(23,828)	25,928	21,215
Road Safety Education	25,640	25,025	615	725
Crossing Patrols	182,420	187,740	(5,320)	(16,580)
Concessionary fares and Support to Operators	284,390	219,005	65,385	8,397
Local Transport Plans	2,680	2,463	217	214
Home to School Transport	0	0	0	0
Transport and Heavy Plant	240,760	213,090	27,670	16,414
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>734,100</b>	<b>555,925</b>	<b>178,175</b>	<b>57,076</b>
<b>CULTURAL &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>				
General Administration and Markets	(25,870)	(18,286)	(7,584)	(7,597)
Countryside Programme and Management	1,720	(21,217)	22,937	5,151
Landscaping and Afforestation	20,720	18,330	2,390	0
Reservoirs, Tips, Quarries and Mines	10,330	12,121	(1,791)	(2,453)
Flood Defence And Land Drainage	56,490	47,254	9,236	3,759
ENRaW	0	0	0	0
City Deal	99,150	99,150	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>162,540</b>	<b>137,352</b>	<b>25,188</b>	<b>(1,140)</b>
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,819,890</b>	<b>18,074,646</b>	<b>745,244</b>	<b>550,028</b>



## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>PUBLIC PROTECTION</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Environmental Health	0	(40)	40	19,521
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>0</u>	<u>(40)</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>19,521</u>
<b><u>CARAVAN SITES</u></b>				
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(41,090)	(6,278)	(34,812)	(47,633)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(41,090)</u>	<u>(6,278)</u>	<u>(34,812)</u>	<u>(47,633)</u>
<b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u></b>				
Food Safety	6,400	1,167	5,233	5,228
Control of Pollution	9,580	14,810	(5,230)	(18,972)
Dog Wardens	0	0	0	0
Animal Health and Welfare	23,830	23,827	3	0
Pest Control	63,240	58,221	5,019	4,937
Littering and Dog Control Orders	0	0	0	0
Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	1,540	(807)	2,347	2,300
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>104,590</u>	<u>97,218</u>	<u>7,372</u>	<u>(6,507)</u>
<b><u>HOUSING SERVICES</u></b>				
Homelessness	269,120	280,551	(11,431)	(24,481)
20 Church Street	16,120	26,219	(10,099)	(1,761)
General Properties	(8,160)	(6,173)	(1,987)	(1,987)
Housing Access	76,950	61,845	15,105	10,944
Works in Default	(250)	(3,510)	3,260	3,255
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,060	0	1,060	1,061
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>354,840</u>	<u>358,932</u>	<u>(4,092)</u>	<u>(12,970)</u>
<b><u>TRADING STANDARDS</u></b>				
Trading Standards	0	(8,208)	8,208	4,360
Inspection and Enforcement	4,440	4,400	40	(1,144)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>4,440</u>	<u>(3,808)</u>	<u>8,248</u>	<u>3,216</u>
<b>PUBLIC PROTECTION TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>422,780</u>	<u>446,024</u>	<u>(23,244)</u>	<u>(44,374)</u>
<b><u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u></b>				
Fire Service	3,932,600	3,953,469	(20,869)	(20,869)
Coroner's Court	152,010	175,450	(23,440)	0
Corporate Recharges	11,244,670	11,244,666	4	0
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>15,329,280</u>	<u>15,373,585</u>	<u>(44,305)</u>	<u>(20,869)</u>
<b>Overall Portfolio Total</b>	<u>34,571,950</u>	<u>33,894,255</u>	<u>677,695</u>	<u>484,785</u>

## PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Building Control	0	42,323	(42,323)	(26,727)
<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES</u></b>				
Building Regulations	35,870	35,860	10	10
Dangerous Structures	23,100	(4,397)	27,497	15,476
<i>Building Control Total Expenditure</i>	<i>58,970</i>	<i>73,786</i>	<i>(14,816)</i>	<i>(11,241)</i>
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Management	0	8,741	(8,741)	(11,898)
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u></b>				
Dealing with Applications	(202,310)	(141,055)	(61,255)	(39,032)
Planning Appeals	3,320	3,320	0	0
Enforcement	(10)	(843)	833	357
<i>Development Management Total Expenditure</i>	<i>(199,000)</i>	<i>(129,837)</i>	<i>(69,163)</i>	<i>(50,573)</i>
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Plans	0	(20,405)	20,405	19,722
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Plans	100,460	75,578	24,882	1
<i>Development Plans Total Expenditure</i>	<i>100,460</i>	<i>55,173</i>	<i>45,287</i>	<i>19,723</i>
Corporate Recharges	1,582,760	1,582,760	0	0
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,543,190</b>	<b>1,581,882</b>	<b>(38,692)</b>	<b>(42,091)</b>

**PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Item	Revised Estimate 2023/2024	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2024	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 23
	£	£	£	£
<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY</b>				
Licensing	94,650	95,447	(797)	(2,581)
Internal Recharges	55,090	55,090	0	0
<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>149,740</b>	<b>150,537</b>	<b>(797)</b>	<b>(2,581)</b>

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## Action Plan

## Social Services

## 2023/24 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2023)

Service Area	2022/2023 Variance Outturn 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at June 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Sept 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Dec 2023 £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Looked After Children					<b><u>Reason for Adverse Variance</u></b>		Loredana Moruz
Children's Homes	(816,202)	(646,761)	(855,184)	(321,437)	The Looked After Children's budget has seen an overall reduction of £306,000. The main adverse variances being Children's Homes and Fostering & Independent Living Placements. These changes are mainly due to the following: -		
Fostering & Independent Living Placements	(139,176)	(251,599)	(417,897)	(646,060)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Grant is now being fully utilised within Children's Homes - £278,000 has been transferred from Community Care, to assist in mitigating this cost pressure in year.</li> <li>• The number of residential placements reduced by 2 to 9, one of which moved to a supported living placement which are less costly – a reduction of £256,000.</li> <li>• The number of in-house foster placements increasing by 1, and kinship placements increasing by 6 – an increase of £34,000</li> <li>• The number of IFA's reduced by 2 to 35, one of which turned 18 but was accounted for within the forecast for the full year– a reduction of £22,000.</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

## Social Services

## 2023/24 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2023)

Service Area	2022/2023 Variance Outturn 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at June 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Sept 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Dec 2023 £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The supported living placement that transferred from Residential Placements increased the costs by £66,000.</li> <li>A new Mother &amp; Baby placement of £150,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement from the Head of Service (HOS) is required for all residential placements.</li> <li>Each placement is being reviewed on a monthly basis by the Head of Service with Team Managers.</li> <li>There are a number of preventative services in place, which include the Supporting Change Team and MYST, both initiatives will potentially reduce the number of children within residential placements in the long term.</li> <li>In house provision of a Children's Residential Home and a multi-use provision is currently in the development stage, identified savings will be built into Bridging the Gap to support the Council's budget pressures in 2025/26 and future years.</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

## Social Services

## 2023/24 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2023)

Service Area	2022/2023 Variance Outturn 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at June 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Sept 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Dec 2023 £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Looked After Children					<b><u>Reason for Adverse Variance</u></b>		Rachel Price / Andrea Jones
Legal Fees	(335,729)	(200,000)	(250,000)	(250,000)	<p>The reason for the adverse variance is due to the requirement of using the external provider to finalise existing cases. All cases supported by the external provider will cease as at the end of October 2023</p> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BGCBC has entered an SLA with Caerphilly CBC to provide Children's legal services. This arrangement commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and will mitigate this cost pressure for future years.</li> <li>A two-tier system will remain in place for the current financial year 2023/24 until the existing cases have been finalised by the external provider. All new cases will be dealt with by Caerphilly CBC and will be funded through the SLA.</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

## Social Services

## 2023/24 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2023)

Service Area	2022/2023 Variance Outturn 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at June 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Sept 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Dec 2023 £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Other Children's and Family Services					<b><u>Reason for Adverse Variance</u></b>		Loredana Moruz
Permanency Allowances	(44,538)	(51,711)	(92,679)	(104,762)	The reason for this adverse variance is due to the number of Special Guardianship allowances gradually increasing, plus interagency fees.		
When I'm Ready	(52,974)	(64,320)	(64,320)	(62,262)	The reason for this adverse variance is the number of placements continually increasing, placements have increased by 3 since March 2023.		
					<b><u>Actions</u></b>		
					The long-term plan is to cease commissioning costly Independent Fostering Agency Placements in line with Welsh Government's strategy to eliminate profit making provision for Children in Care by 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2027.		
					The Authority's focus will be to bring Independent Foster Carers in house and promote and provide alternative care provision such as Special Guardianship Orders which		



## Action Plan

## Social Services

## 2023/24 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2023)

Service Area	2022/2023 Variance Outturn 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at June 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Sept 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Dec 2023 £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
					<p>will reduce the CLA population in Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>The savings achieved from reducing IFA's &amp; Residential Placements will mitigate this cost pressure and fund the expected increase in the alternative care provision in the future.</p>		
<b>Older People (Aged 65 or Over)</b>  <b>Cwrt Mytton</b>	(437,937)	(113,115)	(121,946)	(77,347)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse Variance</u></b></p> <p>The reason for the adverse variances in Cwrt Mytton &amp; Support Living bungalows is due to an increase in staffing costs, in relation to the use of agency staff to cover vacant posts, sickness absences and the pay award. There is also reduced income due to current tenant vacancies within our Supported Living Services</p> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A staff restructure and recruitment drive has been undertaken within Provider Services to address the staffing issues currently encountered, these actions have improved the financial position from the Outturn.</li> </ul>		Hannah Baulch / Joanne Hawkins
<b>Learning Disabilities Aged 65 and Under</b>  <b>Supported Living Bungalows</b>	(124,323)	(49,451)	(71,847)	(129,707)			Alison Minett / Helen Beecham

## Action Plan

## Social Services

## 2023/24 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2023)

Service Area	2022/2023 Variance Outturn 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at June 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Sept 2023 £	2023/2024 Variance as at Dec 2023 £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update Jan 24 - The staffing levels at both Cwrt Mytton and Supported Living service has improved as a result of reducing staff absences and successful staff recruitment and subsequently our reliance on agency staff use has reduced. A full review of staffing contracts has been completed in Cwrt Mytton and the process across our Supported Living service is due to be completed by the end of January 24.</li> </ul>		

<b>Project Ref:</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Approved Saving 2023/2024</b>	<b>Forecast Achievement</b>	<b>Favourable / Adverse Variance</b>
			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><i>Proposals have been agreed for which there is a clear delivery plan</i></b>					
CS01	Corporate Services	Third Party Spend (Establish a Professional Buying Team)	396,550	396,550	0
CS04	Corporate Services	Review of Telephony	48,000	48,000	0
CS05	Corporate Services	Review of Electronic Document Management & Retention System (EDRM)	103,630	0	(103,630)
CS09	Corporate Services	Members Remuneration	50,000	50,000	0
CS11	Corporate Services	Members Grants (Special Levy)	8,910	8,910	0
RES03	Corporate Services	Reduction in the Transformation Fund	270,995	270,995	0
RES04	Corporate Services	Removal of Commercial and Contract management budget	270,995	270,995	0
RES02	Cross Cutting	Review of Fees & Charges for income generating services across the Council	100,000	185,680	85,680
CS10	Economy	General Offices Income Generation	60,000	67,227	7,227
ENV18	Economy	Regeneration Income	30,000	30,000	0
ENV25	Economy	Industrial Units	100,000	87,929	(12,071)
RE01	Economy	Growth Strategy - Housing (increase on council Tax)	150,000	306,635	156,635
ED06	Education	Review of SLA Contracts	20,000	35,000	15,000
ENV12	Environment	Closure of Mechanical Link	41,000	41,000	0
ENV23	Environment	Removal of Dog Waste Bag provision	14,596	14,596	0
ENV24	Environment	Move to Fortnightly Collection for Green Waste	75,000	0	(75,000)
RES05	Leisure	Removal of Additional Pension Costs Budget - Aneurin Leisure Trust	152,000	152,000	0
SS01	Social Services	Reduction in Legal Fees Budget (Childrens Social Services)	175,000	0	(175,000)
SS02	Social Services	Utilisation of the Children & Communities Grant	21,025	21,025	0
SS06	Social Services	Review of Provider Manager Capacity (Supported Living and Augusta / Community Options)	25,000	25,000	0
SS07a	Social Services	Reduction in Community Options (day services bases)	143,170	143,170	0
SS07b	Social Services	Reduction in Transport at Community Options	58,200	58,200	0
	Social Services	Prevention & Early Intervention - Establishment of MYST Team - Invest to Save Scheme	416,000	0	(416,000)

<b>Project</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Approved Saving 2023/2024</b>	<b>Forecast Achievement</b>	<b>Favourable / Adverse Variance</b>
<b>Ref:</b>			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Economy	Commercial Activity & Investment	50,000	50,000	0
CC02	Environment	Review of Operational Buildings	250,000	0	(250,000)
		<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>3,030,071</b>	<b>2,262,912</b>	<b>(767,159)</b>

# Agenda Item 11

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21 February 2024**

Report Subject: **Discretionary Fees & Charges 2024/2025**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Steve Thomas, Leader / Cabinet Member  
Corporate Overview and 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)
	1/2/24				19/2/24	21/2/23	27/2/23	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to approve the discretionary fees & charges to be applied for the 2024/2025 financial year, including the core fees & charges to be operated by the Aneurin Leisure Trust.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Income Policy was agreed by Council in May 2014 and included the following:
    - Relevant legislation which allows councils to generate a range of fees and charges and that income is a budget and funding tool;
    - The range of areas in scope;
    - Key principles such as the rationale for charging, ability to charge, service cost recovery, subsidies and concessions, trading, income collection, debt management and income management;
    - A decision tree for deciding whether to charge;
    - Detailed principles;
    - Income management which included the creation of a fees and charges register.
  - 2.2 Income from Fees & Charges contributes £14.5m (approx. 8%) to the overall funding the Council receives to deliver its services to the residents of Blaenau Gwent.
  - 2.3 The Council is facing significant financial challenges over the next 5 years with an estimated budget gap of £34m, with increasing costs resulting from high inflation, increasing demand and higher than anticipated pay awards.
  - 2.4 The Bridging the Gap Programme includes a Strategic Business Review on Discretionary Fees & Charges to ensure that the Council is maximising its income by ensuring fees and charges are set at a level that covers the costs of delivering the goods and services it provides where appropriate.
  - 2.5 The current Fees and Charges register has been reviewed to:

- Ensure all fees & charges included on the register are relevant for 2024/2025.
- Reflect changes in local and national policy and charges.
- Reflect the impact on discretionary fees & charges of the assumption included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) where appropriate.
- Reflect the impact on discretionary fees & charges of the business case proposal to increase income by £100,000 for 2024/2025.

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

#### 3.1 **Option 1**

1. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council the register of Fees & Charges for 2024/2025 attached at Appendix 1 and for discretionary fees & charges approve:

- a fee uplift of 4% in line with the assumption for inflation within the MTFS
- the alternative fee proposed as detailed in paragraphs 5.1.4 to 5.1.14.
- Planning Fees attached at Appendix 2

2. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council that they approve delegated power and responsibility to the Interim Director of Social Services for setting the fees and charges for 2024/2025 relating to the provision of external social care as detailed in paragraph 5.1.6.

3. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council to approve the core price increases relating to Aneurin Leisure Trust attached at Appendix 3.

#### 3.2 **Option 2 (Preferred Option)**

1. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council the register of Fees & Charges for 2024/2025 attached at Appendix 1 and for discretionary fees & charges approve:

- a fee uplift of 5% in line with the proposed business case (attached at Appendix 4)
- the alternative fee proposed as detailed in paragraphs 5.1.4 to 5.1.14.
- Planning Fees attached at Appendix 2.

2. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council that they approve delegated power and responsibility to the Interim Director of Social Services for setting the fees and charges for 2024/2025 relating to the provision of external social care as detailed in paragraph 5.1.6.

3. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council to approve the core price increases relating to Aneurin Leisure Trust attached at Appendix 3.

### 3.3 **Option 3**

1. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council not approve the register of Fees & Charges for 2024/2025 and core price increases for Aneurin Leisure Trust and propose alternative fee increases.

2. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council not to approve the delegation to the Interim Director of Social Services for setting the fees and charges for 2024/2025 relating to the provision of external social care

3. Members consider and recommend to Cabinet and Council not to approve the core price increases relating to Aneurin Leisure Trust attached at Appendix 3.

## 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 Corporate Plan outcome “an ambitious and innovative Council delivering the quality services at the right time and in the right place”.

4.2 Income from Fees & Charges contributes funding (approx.8%) towards delivering Council priorities and supports the Councils’ financial resilience.

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

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

5.1.1 The assumption in the Medium term Financial Strategy and the 2024/2025 draft estimates assumes that income budgets will increase by 4% in line with the assumption for inflation. Inflation is currently 4.6% (October 2023) and with pay awards expected to continue around 5% for 2024/2025 (2023/2024 average pay award 6.4%), costs of delivering services are increasing significantly.

5.1.2 As a consequence of the increased costs that the Council is experiencing and is expecting to continue during 2024/2025, Council is asked to consider a 5% uplift to all Discretionary Fees & Charges in line with the proposed Business Case.

5.1.3 The proposed 2024/2025 register of Fees & Charges is attached at Appendix 1. The register includes the charge for 2023/2024, the fee levels for 2024/2025 if increased by 4% and 5% or alternative % increases proposed by officers.

5.1.4 Licensing Fees have been included on the Register for completeness and these were considered by Licensing Committee on 30 January 2024 and subsequently approved by the Director of Environment

5.1.5 Fees & Charges where no fee increase is proposed.

5.1.6 No fee increase is proposed for regulated fees which are specified by Government or other regulated bodies. Should these fees increase subsequently, the Fees & Charges Register will be updated to reflect the revised fee.

#### 5.1.7 **Social Services**

- Care Fees - These fees are currently under negotiation with Providers to reflect the appropriate increase to cover the additional cost of the Real Living Wage, energy costs etc.
- Blaina ICC – Light and sensory room hire at £3 per hour. No increase applied as the current charge represents full cost recovery.

#### 5.1.8 **Corporate Services**

- Registrars non statutory ceremonies to remain at £455 - proposed fees to remain cash flat as the current fees are significantly higher than neighbouring councils (e.g. Caerphilly CBC £137 and Torfaen CBC is £255)

#### 5.1.9 **Environment**

- Outdoor Street Markets to remain cash flat – to encourage new market traders to take up stalls.
- Pest Control – These fees are paid direct to the contractor.
- Planning & Estates fees – These are currently under review.
- Licensing Fees- Powys County Council agrees the fee for licenses relating to animals.

5.1.10 Fees & Charges where the uplift proposed is greater than 5%:

#### 5.1.11 **Social Services**

- Bert Denning Hydrotherapy Pool – Proposed fee increase between 30% (£12.50) and 47% (£11.84) to reflect full cost recovery.
- Blaina ICC Room Hire – Proposed Fee uplift of £0.50 which equates to a 13% to 50% increase.
- Community Meals – Proposed fee uplift of £0.67 (13%) per meal to reflect full cost recovery.



### 5.1.12 Corporate Services

- Administration of Appointeeships – Proposed fee increase of 12% to move towards full cost recovery.

### 5.1.13 Environment

- Countryside Rights of Way Orders & Personal Searches – Proposed fee increase ranging from 4.5% to 280% to reflect full cost recovery.
- Stary Dogs Release Fee – Proposed fee increase of 25% to 35% to reflect the increased kennelling costs.
- MOT Charges – Proposed fee increase of 13% to £45 to reflect the local market.
- Trading Standards fees - 8% to 14% uplift. These fees are agreed by Cymru Group Partnership of Local Authorities.
- Trade Waste – There is a business case proposing a range of increases for trade waste from 5% to 20%, and the charges for 2024/2025 will be determined as part of the Business Case consideration.

### 5.1.14 Planning

- Planning Fees – A range of fee increases from 0% to 67%, the increase mainly affecting fees charged to large developers.

### 5.1.15 Fees & Charges where the uplift proposed is less than 4%:

### 5.1.16 Corporate Services

- Registrars Weddings / Civil Partnerships – Proposed fee uplift is 2% as the current charges are significantly higher than neighbouring councils, (e.g, Caerphilly £457 and Torfaen £280, Monmouth £304).

5.1.17 Aneurin Leisure Trust has submitted a list of proposed fees and charges for 2024/2025 (attached at Appendix 3) for Core Services, to be approved by Council in line with the Funding and Management agreement. The proposed increases range from 0% for Junior Lifestyle studio to 9% for Angling Club junior day ticket.

5.1.18 The inflationary increase is based on the rate as at October 2023 of 6.7% which is significantly lower than the increase in operational costs that the Trust are experiencing (207% increase in energy costs).

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

5.2.1 Fee increases may impact on demand from residents as they continue to be impacted by the cost of living crisis. This could result in a reduction in income that the Council receives, particularly in the short term.

Demand and the impact on the budget will be monitored and reported as part of the Financial Reporting Framework.

5.2.2 Not increasing discretionary fees & charges in line with the assumption in the MTFs of 4% will result in cost pressures emerging in 2024/2025 as income will not achieve the income target, income budgets will need to be restated to 2023/2024 levels, the impact of which will increase the budget gap by around £0.6m.

5.2.3 Not increasing discretionary fees & charges in line with the proposed Business Case for 5% increase, will not generate any additional income to contribute to the budget gap for 2024/2025.

### 5.3 ***Legal***

5.3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report. However, charging and trading for local authorities must comply with the Local Government Act 2003 and The Localism Act 2011.

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

N/A

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

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

6.1.1 The proposed register of Fees & Charges is attached at Appendix 1.

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

6.2.1 The setting of fees and charges on an annual basis is essential to maintaining economic resilience, however, these should be set at a cost that considers full cost recovery and what local people can afford, taking into account the protected characteristics.

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

6.3.1 The review of the Fees & Charges Register has been prepared in consultation with relevant officers.

6.3.2 Services look to involve partners and citizens in consultation where possible. The impact of these charges will be reviewed throughout the year by officers, along with any issues raised by users of the services affected.

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

6.4.1 Full cost recovery will support the long term financial resilience and the ability to maintain facilities and services for the people of Blaenau Gwent.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5.1 Income generation contributes funding towards delivering Council Services and investing into early intervention and prevention activities.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

6.6.1 The Council works in partnership with Aneurin Leisure Trust to deliver services to the public in support of the well-being objectives.

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

6.7.1 The services provided have a positive impact socially and on the health and wellbeing of those who use the facilities provided.

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

N/A

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IAA)***

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The regular review of the corporate fees and charges register is a vital component of the Council's budget setting proposal and should be monitored and refreshed to ensure it is in line with the Council's agreed income policy and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- *Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges 2024-25*
- *Appendix 2 – Planning Preliminary Advice*
- *Appendix 3 – ALT Core Fees*
- *Appendix 4 – Business Case*

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# **FEES & CHARGES REGISTER**

## **DRAFT 2024/2025**



Social Services									
Responsible Officer	Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Andrew Day	Social Services	Non Residential Services	Maximum Charge	Regulated	per week	£100.00			£100.00
Andrew Day	Social Services	Non Residential Services	Home Care / Community Oprions Outreach Support		per hour	£23.19	£24.10	£24.40	
Andrew Day	Social Services	Non Residential Services	Day Care		per session	£63.44	£66.00	£66.60	
Andrew Day	Social Services	Non Residential Services	Direct Payments		per hour	£16.02	£16.70	£16.80	
Andrew Day	Social Services	Residential	Part III Accommodation Charge (own provision)		per week	£949.52	£987.50	£997.00	
Andrew Day	Social Services	Respite Care	Augusta House (own provision)		per week	£3,170.36	£3,297.20	£3,328.90	
Andrew Day	Social Services	Residential Care Older People	Private Provider		per week	£814.00			
Andrew Day	Social Services	General Nursing Care	Private Provider		per week	£897.00			
Andrew Day	Social Services	EMI Residential Care	Private Provider		per week	£934.00			
Andrew Day	Social Services	EMI Nursing Care	Private Provider		per week	£952.00			
Andrew Day	Social services	Bert Denning Day Centre	Standard baseline fee		per session	£154.02	£160.20	£161.70	
Andrew Day	Social services	Bert Denning Hydro Therapy Pool	Fee for OLA and private customers weekdays		per session	£25.06			£36.90
Andrew Day	Social services	Bert Denning Hydro Therapy Pool	Fee for weekend use		per hour	£41.50			£54.00
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Flying Start Childcare	Non Flying Start children childcare fees		per session	£11.02	£11.50	£11.60	
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Early Years & Childcare	Mandatory training to our Early Years, Childcare & Play sector		per course	No Set Fee			
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Blaina ICC - Room Hire	Light & Sensory Room Hire		per hour	£3.00			£3.00

Responsible Officer	Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Blaina ICC - Room Hire	Large Meeting Room, Owl Room, Starfish Room, Frog Room		per hour	£4.00			£4.50
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Blaina ICC - Room Hire	Caterpillar Room, Health Suite		per hour	£1.50			£2.00
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Blaina ICC - Room Hire	Small Meeting Room, Ladybird Room		per hour	£1.00			£1.50
Ceri Bird	Social Services	Blaina ICC - Room Hire	Butterfly Room, Parent Room		per hour	£1.00			£1.50
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Monitoring fees- analogue lifeline with pendant- monthly			£6.20	£6.40	£6.50	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Monitoring fees- Digital lifeline with sim card and pendant-monthly			£11.45	£11.90	£12.00	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Monitoring fees- analogue lifeline with pendant with 5 additional sensors- monthly			£9.66	£10.00	£10.10	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Monitoring fees- digital lifeline with pendant with 5 additional sensors- monthly			£14.91	£15.50	£15.70	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Safety Package- (analogue) recommended by Social Worker-monthly			£6.20	£6.40	£6.50	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Safety Package- (digital) recommended by Social Worker-monthly			£11.45	£11.90	£12.00	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Initial Installation fees			£55.55	£57.80	£58.30	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Further installation of additional sensors			£31.61	£32.90	£33.20	

Responsible Officer	Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Installation of non monitored equipment			£26.46	£27.50	£27.80	
Alyson Hoskins / Michelle Church	Communications-C2BG	Community Alarm & Telecare Service Charges	Replacement pendant			£49.35	£51.30	£51.80	
Alyson Hoskins / Mary Welch	Community Meals	Meals on Wheels	Meal and dessert		Per Serving	£4.99			£5.66



**RESOURCES**

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee 2023/2024	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Accountancy	Statement of Accounts Document	Per Copy (printed)		£31.54	£32.80	£33.10	
Accountancy	Fee for the administration of the Corporate Appointeeship function	Balance < £1,000		No Charge			No Charge
		Balance £1,000 to £3,500 (Per week)		£3.35			£3.75
		Balance >£3,500 (per week)		£6.16			£6.90
Revenues	Council Tax / NNDR	Summons Fees	Regulated	£10.80			£10.80
Revenues	Council Tax / NNDR	Liability Order Fees	Regulated	£52.50			£52.50
Revenues	Council Tax / NNDR - Enforcement	Section 12 Tribunal Court & Enforcement Act 2017 - Compliance Fee	Regulated	£75.00			£75.00
Revenues	Council Tax / NNDR - Enforcement	Section 12 Tribunal Court & Enforcement Act 2017 - Enforcement Fee	Regulated	£235.00			£235.00
Revenues	Council Tax / NNDR - Enforcement	Section 12 Tribunal Court & Enforcement Act 2017 - Sale or disposal stage	Regulated	£110.00			£110.00
Revenues	Administration Charge	Administration charge for the administration of a Residential Care deferred payment agreement		£63.40	£66.00	£66.60	

**CORPORATE SERVICES**

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Legal	Section 278/38 Agreements	Small plan Large plan		Small plan Large plan	£31.75 £57.13	£33.00 £59.40	£33.30 £60.00	
Elections and Land Charges	Data copy of full electoral register	Purchase of information from Register	Regulated	Full electoral register which includes admin fees. (£20 plus £1.50 per 1,000 entries)	£98.00			£98.00
Elections and Land Charges	Paper copy of full electoral register	Purchase of information from Register	Regulated	Full electoral register which includes admin fees.	£270.00			£270.00
Registration	Legal Notice of Marriage / Civil Partnership	Legal Notice of Marriage / Civil Partnership for each person	Regulated	Per service	£35.00			£35.00
Registration	Wedding / Civil Partnership Certificates	Marriage / Civil Partnership Certificate on the Day	Regulated	Per service	£11.00			£11.00
Registration	Wedding/Civil Partnership Ceremonies	Wedding / Civil Partnership in Homfray Suite, per service		Mon to Thur Fri and Sat	£515.00 £515.00			£525.00 £525.00
Registration	Wedding/ Civil Partnership Ceremonies	Approved Premises - Assembly Room/Carriage House/Band Stand/Llanhilleth Institute/Tredegar Arms/West Mon Golf Club, per service		Mon to Thur Fri and Sat Sun and BH	£515.00 £515.00 £570.00			£525.00 £525.00 £580.00
Registrations	Wedding Ceremonies	Citizenship individual	Regulated	Per service	£80.00			£80.00
Registration	Non Statutory Ceremony	Statutory ceremony booking fee	Regulated	Per service	£46.00			£46.00
Registration	Non Statutory Ceremony	Non statutory ceremony Homfray Suite, per service		Mon to Thur Fri and Sat	£455.00 £455.00			£455.00 £455.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Registration	Non Statutory Ceremony	Non statutory ceremony in Assembly Room /Carriage House /Band Stand Llanhilleth Institute per service		Mon to Thur Fri and Sat Sun	£455.00 £455.00 £515.00			£455.00 £465.00 £525.00
Registration	Wedding Ceremonies	Solemnisation building for marriages	Regulated	Per service	£120.00			£120.00
Registration	Wedding Ceremonies	Register building for worship	Regulated	Per service	£28.00			£28.00
Registration	Approved Premises Licence	Approved premise application		Per service	£2,250.00			£2,295.00
Registration	Certificates & Searches	Priority Certificate	Regulated	Birth Death Marriage	£35.00 £35.00 £35.00			£35.00 £35.00 £35.00
Registration	Certificates & Searches	CP certificate - day after ceremony	Regulated		£11.00			£11.00
Registration	Certificates	Additional search fees of historic records.	Per search	5 year 10 year General	£6.00 £6.00 £20.00	£6.25 £6.25 £20.80	£6.30 £6.30 £21.00	
Registration	Registrar's Fees	Certificate - On day	Regulated	Birth Death Marriage	£11.00 £11.00 £11.00			£11.00 £11.00 £11.00
Registration	Registrar's Fees	Certificate - From day after registration	Regulated	Birth Death Marriage	£11.00 £11.00 £11.00			£11.00 £11.00 £11.00
Registration	Registrar's Fees	Church Attendance	Regulated	Per service	£86.00			£86.00
Elections and Land Charges	Full Local Authority Search	For a full search information is provided from all relevant departments of the council and all land charges entries relating to the land or property are provided.		Per Search	£126.00	£130.80	£132.30	

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Engineers	Ordinary Water Course Consents	Consenting to allow works on or near an existing watercourse	Regulated	Per application	£51.00			£51.00
Engineers	Inspection of sustainable drainage systems on new developments	Required by legislation introduced in January 2019	Regulated		£171.40			£171.40
Countryside	Countryside	Trees - Public advice and processing of TPO applications are currently free of charge	Regulated		No Fee			No Fee
Countryside	Countryside	Request for copies of TPOs			£38.23			£40.25
Countryside	Countryside	Rights of way - copies of Definitive Map			£23.44			£40.25
Countryside	Countryside	Rights of way - Stopping Up and Diversion Orders		Maximum Fee	£5,145.12			£5,377.45
Countryside	Countryside	Temporary Prohibition of Pedestrian Order			£1,699.81			£2,905.88
Countryside	Countryside	Community support work			Fee considered on a case by case basis, subject to a potential to secure funds if joint working on community projects			Fee considered on a case by case basis, subject to a potential to secure funds if joint working on community projects
Countryside	Personal Searches	Search enquiries correspondence to Solicitors/ Personal Search Companies			£44.50			£48.98
Countryside	Personal Searches	Supply copies of Public Rights of Way Records/ Plans			£10.58			£40.25

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Community Services	Outdoor Street Markets	Charges per pitch for Abertillery, Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale and Tredegar Town Centre Markets		0-10 ft	£19.00			£19.00
				11-20 ft	£37.80			£37.80
				21-30 ft	£56.80			£56.80
				31-40 ft	£78.00			£78.00
				41+ft	£101.20			£101.20
Community Services	Street Cleansing	Hire of mechanical sweeper		Per hour	£64.48	£67.10	£67.70	
Community Services	Street Cleansing	Removal of fly tipping		Per man per hour	£23.98	£24.90	£25.20	
Community Services	Waste - Bulky Waste Collection			1 Item	£6.34	£6.60	£6.70	
				2 Items	£12.68	£13.20	£13.30	
				3 Items	£19.02	£19.80	£20.00	
				4 Items	£25.36	£26.40	£26.60	
				5 Items	£31.70	£33.00	£33.30	
Community Services	Waste - Trade Waste - Quarterly Charge			120 ltr	£75.66	£78.70	£79.40	
				240 ltr	£132.60	£137.90	£139.20	
				360 ltr	£189.41	£197.00	£198.90	
				660 ltr	£339.43	£353.00	£356.40	
				1100 ltr	£543.66	£565.40	£570.80	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Community Services	Waste - Trade Recycling - Weekly charge	Glass		120 ltr	£3.04	£3.20	£3.20	
				240 ltr	£5.43	£5.60	£5.70	
				55 ltr	£1.19	£1.20	£1.20	
				80 ltr	£1.52	£1.60	£1.60	
				120ltr	£2.17	£2.30	£2.30	
		Paper & Cardboard		240 ltr	£3.53	£3.70	£3.70	
				360 ltr	£4.89	£5.10	£5.10	
				660 ltr	£8.91	£9.30	£9.40	
				1,100 ltr	£14.67	£15.30	£15.40	
				Plastic & Cans	55 ltr	£1.02	£1.10	
80 ltr	£1.29	£1.30	£1.40					
120 ltr	£1.85	£1.90	£1.90					
240 ltr	£3.00	£3.10	£3.20					
360 ltr	£4.16	£4.30	£4.40					
Community Services	Trade Waste - Trade Recycling Wheeled Bin (food) weekly charge	Food Recycling - Wheeled Bin		23 ltr	£0.76	£0.80	£0.80	
				140 ltr	£3.98	£4.10	£4.20	
Community Services	Trade Waste	Replacement Wheeled Bin		120 ltr	£30.09	£31.30	£31.60	
				240 ltr	£38.64	£40.20	£40.60	
				360 ltr	£58.06	£60.40	£61.00	
				660 ltr	£295.17	£307.00	£309.90	
				1100 ltr	£320.09	£332.90	£336.10	
Community Services	Trade Waste	Replacement Food Bin		140 ltr	£32.94	£34.30	£34.60	
Community Services	Waste - Trade Waste Duty of Care Notice	Annual Administration Fee			£25.50	£26.50	£26.80	
Community Services	Community Services - Stray Dogs - Release Fee	Community Services - Stray Dogs - Release Fee (including Kennelling & Administration Charges)		Minimum Fee	£80.00			£108.00
				Maximum Fee	£165.00			£206.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Community Services	Penalty for non compliance	Penalty for litter dropping	Regulated	Fine	£125.00			£125.00
				Early repayment option	£100.00			£100.00
Community Services	Penalty for non compliance	Public Space Protection order	Regulated	Fine	£100.00			£100.00
Community Services	Cemeteries	Interment - Still born baby		Resident	No Fee			No Fee
				Non Resident	No Fee			No Fee
Community Services	Cemeteries	Interment - Children (18 years and under) - Exclusive Rights of Burial (EROB) only		Resident	No Fee			No Fee
				Non Resident	No Fee			No Fee
Community Services	Cemeteries	Interment - New grave - Double Depth		Resident	£1,721.86	£1,790.70	£1,808.00	
				Non Resident	£3,443.72	£3,581.50	£3,615.90	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Interment - Re-open of grave		Resident	£1,047.64	£1,089.50	£1,100.00	
				Non Resident	£2,095.28	£2,179.10	£2,200.00	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Interment - Exclusive right of burial (EROB)		Resident	£521.22	£542.10	£547.30	
				Non Resident	£1,042.44	£1,084.10	£1,094.60	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Cremated remains - New Grave (minimum depth) Ashes		Resident	£879.14	£914.30	£923.10	
				Non Resident	£1,758.28	£1,828.60	£1,846.20	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Cremated remains - Re-open of grave Ashes		Resident	£276.73	£287.80	£290.60	
				Non Resident	£553.45	£575.60	£581.10	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Cremated remains - Scattering of Ashes		Resident	£123.83	£128.80	£130.00	
				Non Resident	£247.66	£257.60	£260.00	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Cremated remains - Exclusive right of burial (EROB)		Resident	£521.22	£542.10	£547.30	
				Non Resident	£1,042.44	£1,084.10	£1,094.60	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Community Services	Cemeteries	Garden of rest plots - Cremated remains (new grave) Ashes		Resident	£358.94	£373.30	£376.90	
				Non Resident	£717.88	£746.60	£753.80	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Garden of rest plots - Cremated remains (re-open) Ashes		Resident	£119.65	£124.40	£125.60	
				Non Resident	£241.33	£251.00	£253.40	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Garden of rest plots - Exclusive right of burial (EROB)		Resident	£239.29	£248.90	£251.30	
				Non Resident	£478.58	£497.70	£502.50	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Erect memorial		Resident	£242.45	£252.20	£254.60	
				Non Resident	£484.91	£504.30	£509.20	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Additional inscription, replacement memorial		Resident	£123.83	£128.80	£130.00	
				Non Resident	£247.66	£257.60	£260.00	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Memorial still born baby (exclusive right of burial (EROB))		Resident	£93.64	£97.40	£98.30	
				Non Resident	£187.27	£194.80	£196.60	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Renovation, clean and re-anchor memorial		Resident	£39.58	£41.20	£41.60	
				Non Resident	£79.15	£82.30	£83.10	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Small plaque		Resident	£123.83	£128.80	£130.00	
				Non Resident	£247.66	£257.60	£260.00	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Additional application for surround/memorial		Resident	£202.88	£211.00	£213.00	
				Non Resident	£405.76	£422.00	£426.00	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Historical search (Resident)			£72.68	£75.60	£76.30	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Planting of Tree		Resident	£66.10	£68.70	£69.40	
				Non Resident	£132.19	£137.50	£138.80	



Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Community Services	Cemeteries	Memorials - Penalty for non compliance ie erecting monument without prior authorisation	0	Resident	£664.31	£690.90	£697.50	
				Non Resident	£664.31	£690.90	£697.50	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Assignment of Rights Transfer			£66.10	£68.70	£69.40	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Exhumations			£1,266.84	£1,317.50	£1,330.20	
		Exhumations - Ashes			£293.00	£304.70	£307.70	
Community Services	Cemeteries	Interments outside normal cemetery hours		Interments after 2.00 p.m. Friday (additional cost)	£131.11	£136.40	£137.70	
				Interments on Saturday (additional cost)	£530.93	£552.20	£557.50	
				Scattering of ashes on Saturday	£113.51	£118.00	£119.20	
Transport	Transport - MOT Tests:	Transport - MOT Tests: Standard vehicle (under 9 seats)		Per MOT	£40.00			£45.00
Grounds	Grounds & Playing Fields - Matches	Rugby/Soccer		Senior	£99.53	£103.50	£104.50	
				Junior	£57.41	£59.70	£60.30	
Grounds	Grounds & Playing Fields - Matches	Grounds & playing fields training		Senior	£57.41	£59.70	£60.30	
				Junior	£34.63	£36.00	£36.40	
Grounds	Grounds & Playing Fields - Matches	Fairs			£449.07	£467.00	£471.50	
Grounds	Grounds & Playing Fields - Matches	Carnivals/ Fetes			£161.20	£167.60	£169.30	
Grounds	Grounds & Playing Fields - Matches	Unauthorised use			£88.71	£92.30	£93.10	
Highways	Highways	Kerb drop initial inspection			£141.54	£147.20	£148.60	
Highways	Highways	Skip Permits		Per week	£51.50	£53.60	£54.10	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Highways	Highways	Penalty for not obtaining appropriate skip licence			£146.99	£152.90	£154.30	
Highways	Highways	Scaffold Permits		Per week	£64.60	£67.20	£67.80	
Highways	Highways	Penalty for not obtaining appropriate scaffolding licence			£146.99	£152.90	£154.30	
Highways	Section 171 Notice	Application for temporary excavation		Per application	£220.54	£229.40	£231.60	
Highways	Highways	Application for deposit of materials on the highway		Per application	£58.64	£61.00	£61.60	
Highways	Highways	Highway inspection - Coring cost	Regulated	Per core (includes defect fee)	£125.50			£147.80
Highways	Highways	Defect inspection fees	Regulated	Per inspection	£47.50			£47.50
Highways	NRSWA Section 76 Road Closure	Temporary road closure		Per application	£1,837.62	£1,911.10	£1,929.50	
Highways	Section 50 Licence	Street works licence - New apparatus		Per application	£595.40	£619.20	£625.20	
Highways	Highways	Signing, lighting and guiding - Route signs	Regulated		£47.50			£47.50
Transport	Transport - Tower Crane Oversailing the Highway Licence	Transport - Tower Crane Oversailing the Highway Licence: 10 Working days Notice required.			£146.99	£152.90	£154.30	
Highways	NRSWA Section 71 Defect fees	Inspection fee per unit	Regulated	Per inspection	£47.50			£47.50
Highways	Fixed Penalty Notices (Utility Companies)	FPN's are issued under NRSWA 1991. Fee per FPN.	Regulated	Fee (on time)	£80.00			£80.00
				Fee (Late payment)	£120.00			£120.00
Highways	NRSWA Section 74 Notice	Utility Company overrun charges	Regulated	Per day Minimum	£100.00			£100.00
Highways	Temporary Road Closures	Temporary Road Closures for Events (non charitable)			£141.54	£147.20	£148.60	
Highways	Multi Phased Light Application	Multi Phased Light Application			£103.03	£107.20	£108.20	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	Confirmation of address to Solicitors etc			£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	General enquiries from property owner / resident (e.g. confirmation of postal address, address anomalies including post code)			£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	Change of House Name / add a House Name or number to a property.			£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	Naming and numbering property conversions (including flats)		First Address	£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
				Per additional address	£25.49	£26.50	£26.80	
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	Naming and numbering of developments		Single dwelling	£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
				Per additional plot (max 5 dwellings)	£25.49	£26.50	£26.80	
				6-10 plots	£317.09	£329.80	£332.90	
				11-50 plots	£507.28	£527.60	£532.60	
				51-100	£697.68	£725.60	£732.60	
				101+ plots	£1,078.16	£1,121.30	£1,132.10	
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	Renumbering / changes to a development (after notification)		Fee	£253.69	£263.80	£266.40	
				Plus additional charge per plot	£38.12	£39.60	£40.00	
Highways & Development	Street Naming and Numbering	Street renaming at residents request Legal and replacement nameplate costs to be covered (cost per property)		Fee	£697.68	£725.60	£732.60	
				Plus additional amount per property after	£38.12	£39.60	£40.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Written response to Q2(a) confirming highway maintained by Highway Authority			£5.29	£5.50	£5.60	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Supply of Plan indicating extent of highway maintained by Highway Authority			£10.58	£11.00	£11.10	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Information on s38, s228, Agreements etc (Highways Act 1980)			£3.24	£3.40	£3.40	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Land to be acquired for Road Works			£1.51	£1.60	£1.60	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Information on Road Schemes			£6.37	£6.60	£6.70	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Information on Railway Schemes			£3.89	£4.00	£4.10	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Information on Traffic Schemes			£5.51	£5.70	£5.80	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Outstanding Statutory Highway Notices			£1.51	£1.60	£1.60	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Full Search to include all highway enquiries and plan			£37.91	£39.40	£39.90	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Search enquiries correspondence to Solicitors/ Personal Search Companies			£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Supply copies of Drainage Records/ Plans			£10.58	£11.00	£11.10	
Highways & Development	Personal Searches	Search Enquiries to Solicitors			£44.50	£46.30	£46.70	
Highways & Development	Access protection markings	Access protection markings		Single gate Access	£63.40	£65.90	£66.60	
				Double gate/ driveway/ garage	£126.90	£132.00	£133.20	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
JPTU	Replacement concessionary travel passes	Fee for replacement travel pass	Regulated	Per pass	£10.00			£10.00
Technical Services	Education - School Meals - Adults.	Per Meal. Fee effective from September		Staff	£3.57	£3.70	£3.70	
				Student	£3.57	£3.70	£3.70	
Technical Services	Education - School Meals - Children.	Secondary Age Child (Years 7 to 11). Fee effective from September. Fee per meal. Primary Age Child (Nursery to Year 6). Fee effective from September. Fee per meal.		Secondary	£2.70	£2.80	£2.80	
				Primary	£2.50	N/A	N/A	N/A

**EDUCATION**

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Education	Charges for Out of County Placements within PenYCwm Special School - Charge dependent on Category of Need	Category 1		£30,992	£32,232	£32,542	
		Category 2		£31,677	£32,944	£33,260	
		Category 3		£32,363	£33,657	£33,981	
		Category 4		£33,048	£34,370	£34,701	
		Teaching Assistant Level 1 (Grade 2 term Time only)		£22,065	£22,948	£23,169	
		Teaching Assistant Level 2 (Grade 3 term Time only)		£22,953	£23,871	£24,100	
		Teaching Assistant Level 2 (Grade 4 term Time only)		£25,347	£26,361	£26,614	
		Teaching Assistant Level 3 (Grade 5 term Time only)		£29,697	£30,885	£31,182	
		Teaching Assistant Level 4 / HLTA (Grade 6 term Time only)		£34,084	£35,447	£35,788	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Education	Charges for Out of County Placements within The Rivercentre Special School - Charge dependent on Category of Need	Category 1		£42,714	£44,423	£44,850	
		Category 2		£43,374	£45,109	£45,542	
		Category 3		£44,045	£45,807	£46,247	
		Category 4		£44,715	£46,503	£46,950	
		Teaching Assistant Level 1 (Grade 2 term Time only plus 1 Month)		£25,120	£26,125	£26,376	
		Teaching Assistant Level 2 (Grade 3 term Time only plus 1 month)		£26,135	£27,181	£27,442	
		Teaching Assistant Level 2 (Grade 4 term Time only plus 1 month)		£28,856	£30,010	£30,299	
		Teaching Assistant Level 3 (Grade 5 term Time only plus 1 month)		£33,809	£35,161	£35,500	
		Teaching Assistant Level 4 / HLTA (Grade 6 term Time only plus 1 month)		£38,803	£40,355	£40,743	
		Education	Charges for Out of County Placements - Resource Bases	Primary ASD Resource Base		£23,639	£24,584
Primary Complex Needs Resource Base				£16,247	£16,897	£17,059	
Secondary ASD Resource Base				£24,190	£25,158	£25,400	
Secondary Complex Needs				£17,876	£18,592	£18,770	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Education- Schools	Penalty for child being taking out of school during term time for a non- authorised absence-holidays etc	This fixed penalty notice is at the discretion of the Head Teacher	Yes	£60.00 if paid within 28 days, £120.00 if paid between days 29 and 42. If not paid then the case proceeds to Court.			£60.00 if paid within 28 days, £120.00 if paid between days 29 and 42. If not paid then the case proceeds to Court.



LICENSING

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Hackney Carriage - Driver Fees	Renewable every 3 years		New Renewal 1 Year (discretionary)	£251.00 £251.00 £180.00		£264 £264.00 £189.00	
Licensing	Hackney Carriage - Vehicle Fees	Annual		New Renewal	£295.00 £239.00		£310.00	£243.00
Licensing	Hackney Carriage - Driver Miscellaneous Fees	Replacement licence Replacement Badge Replacement licence and badge			£16.50 £19.50 £13.75		£17.00 £20.00 £14.00	
Licensing	Hackney Carriage - Vehicle Miscellaneous Fees	Re-test Transfer of Licence Replacement vehicle Replacement Internal Plate Replacement Back Plate Replacement full set of plates and stickers Change licence type Change seating capacity Change registration number			£46.00 £41.00 £132.00 £13.00 £13.00 £21.50 £33.50 £29.50 £23.00		£48.30 £43.00 £139.00 £14.00 £14.00 £23.00 £35.00 £31.00 £24.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Private Hire - Operators Fees	5 year licence - new 5 year licence - renew New 1 year discretionary licence Replacement licence			£324.00 £297.00 £156.50 £13.75		£340.00 £312.00 £164.00 £14.00	
Licensing	Private Hire - Vehicles - Vehicle Licence	Annual		Standard Renewal	£295.00 £239.00		£307.00	£243.00
Licensing	Private Hire - Vehicle Miscellaneous Fees	Re-test Transfer of Licence Replacement vehicle Replacement Internal Plate Replacement Back Plate Replacement door sticker (2) Replacement full set of plates and stickers Change licence type Change seating capacity Change registration number			£46.00 £41.00 £132.00 £13.00 £13.00 £14.50 £21.50 £33.50 £29.50 £23.00		£48.30 £43.00 £139.00 £14.00 £14.00 £15.00 £23.00 £35.00 £31.00 £24.00	
Licensing	TAXI - All Licences	Change name and address			£13.75		£14.00	
Licensing	Scrap Metal Collectors Licence	New - 3 yearly Renewal - 3 yearly		New Renewal	£368.26 £349.39		£387.00 £367.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Scrap Metal Site Licence	New - 3 yearly		New	£482.56		£507.00	
		Variation		Variation	£334.06		£351.00	
Licensing	Miscellaneous	Change site manager			£35.60		£37.00	
		Variation Site Licence Replacement licence			£27.00		£28.00	£126.00
Licensing	Temporary Event Notice	Temporary Event Notice (up to 499 persons)	Regulated		£21.00			£21.00
		Replacement			£10.50			£10.50
		Application			£21.00			£21.00
Licensing	Street Trading Consent	Temporary Consent		Upto 28 Days	£69.00		£72.00	
		Permanent Consent and Mobile Trader		New application	£649.88		£682.00	
				Renewal application	£600.78		£631.00	
				Initial deposit - new and renewal, permanent and mobile applications	£100.00		£100.00	
		Transfer		Transfer	£60.90		£64.00	
		Variation of Permanent Consent		Minor Variation	£43.70		£46.00	
	Full Variation		£59.90		£63.00			

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Bingo Premises Licence	New licence			£446.00			£593.00
		Provisional statement			£446.00			£593.00
		New licence premises with provisional statement			£440.00			£585.00
		Annual Fee			£255.00			£339.00
		Variation			£440.00			£352.00
		Transfer			£379.00			£343.00
		Re-instatement			£379.00			£343.00
		Copy			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Circumstances			£50.00			£50.00
Licensing	Adult Gaming Centre	New licence			£446.00			£593.00
		Provisional Statement			£446.00			£593.00
		New licence premises with provisional statement			£440.00			£585.00
		Annual Fee			£255.00			£339.00
		Variation			£440.00			£352.00
		Transfer			£379.00			£343.00
		Re-instatement			£379.00			£343.00
		Copy			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Circumstances			£50.00			£50.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Betting Premises Licence	New licence			£446.00			£593.00
		Provisional Statement			£446.00			£593.00
		New licence premises with provisional statement			£440.00			£585.00
		Annual Fee			£255.00			£339.00
		Variation			£440.00			£352.00
		Transfer			£379.00			£343.00
		Re-instatement			£379.00			£343.00
		Copy			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Circumstances			£50.00			£50.00
Licensing	Family Entertainment Centre Licence	New licence			£446.00			£593.00
		Provisional Statement			£446.00			£593.00
		New licence premises with provisional statement			£440.00			£585.00
		Annual Fee			£255.00			£339.00
		Variation			£440.00			£352.00
		Transfer			£379.00			£343.00
		Re-instatement			£379.00			£343.00
		Copy			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Circumstances			£50.00			£50.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Track Betting Licence	New licence			£446.00			£593.00
		Provisional Statement			£446.00			£593.00
		New licence premises with provisional statement			£440.00			£585.00
		Annual Fee			£255.00			£339.00
		Variation			£440.00			£352.00
		Transfer			£379.00			£343.00
		Re-instatement			£379.00			£343.00
		Copy			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Circumstances			£50.00			£50.00
Licensing	Small Casino Licence	New licence			£7,200.00			£7,200.00
		Provisional statement			£7,200.00			£7,200.00
		New licence premises with provisional statement			£2,700.00			£2,700.00
		Annual Fee			£4,500.00			£4,500.00
		Variation			£2,600.00			£2,600.00
		Transfer			£1,620.00			£1,620.00
		Re-instatement			£1,620.00			£1,620.00
		Copy			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Circumstances			£50.00			£50.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre Permit	Application Fee	Regulated		£300.00			£300.00
		Renewal Fee			£300.00			£300.00
		Change of name			£25.00			£25.00
		Copy of Permit			£15.00			£15.00
Licensing	Prize Gaming Permit	Application Fee	Regulated		£300.00			£300.00
		Renewal Fee			£300.00			£300.00
		Change of name			£25.00			£25.00
		Copy of Permit			£15.00			£15.00
Licensing	Gaming Machines for Alcohol Licensed Premises	Notification of Gaming Machines in alcohol licensed premises (up to 2 machines) (no annual fee)	Regulated		£50.00			£50.00
		Licensed Premises Gaming Permit (More than 2 machines) application fee where there is an existing permit in place			£100.00			£100.00
		Licensed Premises Gaming Permit (More than 2 machines) application			£150.00			£150.00
		Application to vary a permit			£100.00			£100.00
		Application to transfer a permit			£25.00			£25.00
		Change of Name			£25.00			£25.00
		Annual Fee (due 30 days after the issue of the permit)			£50.00			£50.00
		Copy of Permit			£15.00			£15.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	New Club Gaming / Machine Permit (CMP)	Application for a New Club Gaming / Machine Permit (as & when)	Regulated	With a club premises certificate	£100.00			£100.00
				Without a club premises certificate	£200.00			£200.00
Licensing	Club Gaming / Machine Permit (CMP) Renewal	Renewal for a New Club Gaming / Machine Permit (as & when)	Regulated	With a club premises certificate	£100.00			£100.00
				Without a club premises certificate	£200.00			£200.00
Licensing	Annual fee Club Gaming / Machine Permit	Annual fee for a Club Gaming / Machine Permit	Regulated		£50.00			£50.00
Licensing	Club Gaming / Machine Permit Miscellaneous	Application to vary a permit	Regulated		£100.00			£100.00
		Copy of Permit			£15.00			£15.00
Licensing	Alcohol Licence Notification / Permit	Applications, renewals, misc payments relating to Alcohol Licence Notification / Permit	Regulated		£50.00			£50.00
Licensing	New Lottery Registration	Application for Lottery Registration (as and when)	Regulated		£40.00			£40.00
Licensing	Lottery Annual Fee	Annual fee for a small society lottery registration	Regulated		£20.00			£20.00
Licensing	Application for a New Premises Licence (as & when)	Depends on the rateable value of the premises. For premises in Band D or E, where the premises is used primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises, the fee is doubled. Where the number of persons allowed on the premises exceeds 5,000 an additional fee is payable on a sliding scale from £1,000 for 5,000 to 9,999 persons to £64,000 for 90,000 persons and over	Regulated	Band A	£100.00			£100.00
				Band B	£190.00			£190.00
				Band C	£315.00			£315.00
				Band D	£450.00			£450.00
				Band E	£635.00			£635.00



Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Application for the Variation of a Premises Licence (as & when)	Depends on the rateable value of the premises. For premises in Band D or E, where the premises is used primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises, the fee is doubled. Where the number of persons allowed on the premises exceeds 5,000 an additional fee is payable on a sliding scale from £1,000 for 5,000 to 9,999 persons to £64,000 for 90.000 persons and over	Regulated	Band A Band B Band C Band D Band E	£100.00 £190.00 £315.00 £450.00 £635.00			£100.00 £190.00 £315.00 £450.00 £635.00
Licensing	Annual fee for a Premises Licence	Depends on the rateable value of the premises. Where the number of persons allowed on the premises exceeds 5,000 an additional annual fee is payable on a sliding scale from £500 for 5,000 to 9,999 persons to £32,000 for 90.000 persons and over.	Regulated	Band A Band B Band C Band D Band E	£70.00 £180.00 £295.00 £320.00 £350.00			£70.00 £180.00 £295.00 £320.00 £350.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Premises Licence Miscellaneous	Replacement licence	Regulated		£10.50			£10.50
		Vary the Designated Premises Supervisor in a Premises			£23.00			£23.00
		Transfer licence			£23.00			£23.00
		Change name or address on licence			£10.50			£10.50
		Minor variation			£89.00			£89.00
		Temporary event notice			£21.00			£21.00
		Provisional Statement			£315.00			£315.00
		Interim authority notice			£23.00			£23.00
Licensing	Application for a New Club Premises certificate (as & when)	Depends on the rateable value of the premises. For premises in Band D or E, where the premises is used primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises, the fee is doubled. Where the number of persons allowed on the premises exceeds 5,000 an additional fee is payable on a sliding scale from £1,000 for 5,000 to 9,999 persons to £64,000 for 90,000 persons and over.	Regulated	Band A	£100.00			£100.00
				Band B	£190.00			£190.00
				Band C	£315.00			£315.00
				Band D	£450.00			£450.00
				Band E	£635.00			£635.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Application to vary a club premises certificate (as & when)	Depends on the rateable value of the premises. For premises in Band D or E, where the premises is used primarily for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises, the fee is doubled. Where the number of persons allowed on the premises exceeds 5,000 an additional fee is payable on a sliding scale from £1000 for 5,000 to 9,999 persons to £64,000 for 90.000 persons and over	Regulated	Band A Band B Band C Band D Band E	£100.00 £190.00 £315.00 £450.00 £635.00			£100.00 £190.00 £315.00 £450.00 £635.00
Licensing	Annual Fee for a Club Premises Certificate (Annually)	Depends on the rateable value of the premises. Where the number of persons allowed on the premises exceeds 5,000 an additional annual fee is payable on a sliding scale from £500 for 5,000 to 9,999 persons to £32,000 for 90.000 persons and over	Regulated	Band A Band B Band C Band D Band E	£70.00 £180.00 £295.00 £320.00 £350.00			£70.00 £180.00 £295.00 £320.00 £350.00
Licensing	Club Premises Certificate Miscellaneous	Replacement licence Minor variation Change of registered address of club	Regulated		£10.50 £89.00 £10.50			£10.50 £89.00 £10.50
Licensing	Personal Licence	Replacement Application Change of name or address	Regulated		£10.50 £37.00 £10.50			£10.50 £37.00 £10.50

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Licensing - Sex Establishments	No fee set		Grant SEV Renewal SEV Transfer SEV Variation SEV New Sex Establishment Renewal Sex Establishment	£612.42 £410.82 £601.62   £733.00		£643.00 £431.00  £568.00	£516.00   £863.00
Licensing	Film Classification	New & Reclassification of a film New unclassified film Copy of licence			£372.23 £276.53 £18.90			£168.13 plus £1.97 per minute of film watched N/A N/A
Licensing	Licensing - Riding Establishments	Riding Establishments - Service provided by Powys Council.		Cat 1 (1-29 Horses) Cat 2 (> 30 Horses)	£407.00 £458.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Pet Shops	Pet Shops - Service provided by Powys Council.			£429.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Dog Breeder	Dog Breeder - Service provided by Powys Council.		Cat 1 (1-10 dogs) Cat 2 (11-30 dogs) Cat C (>31 dogs)	£471.00 £529.00 £572.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Boarding Establishment	Boarding Establishment - Service provided by Powys Council.		Cat A Cat B Cat C	£318.00 N/A N/A			

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Licensing	Licensing - Home Boarder / Day Care	Provided by Powys CBC			£290.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Zoo	Zoo - Service Provided by Powys Council.		Initial 4 year licence - Per annum	£1,973.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Zoo	Zoo - Service Provided by Powys Council.		Subsequent renewal 6 year licence - per annum	£2,597.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Dangerous Wild Animals	2 year licence - Service provided by Powys Council.		2 year licence - per annum	£708.00			
Licensing	Renewal Licensing - Riding Establishments	Riding Establishments - Service provided by Powys Council.		Cat 1 (1-29 Horses) Cat 2 (> 30 Horses)	£375.00 £419.00			
Licensing	Renewal Licensing - Pet Shops	Pet Shops - Service provided by Powys Council.			£322.00			
Licensing	Renewal Licensing - Dog Breeder	Dog Breeder - Service provided by Powys Council.		Cat 1 (1-10 dogs) Cat 2 (11-30 dogs) Cat C (>31 dogs)	£374.00 £429.00 £483.00			
Licensing	Renewal Licensing - Boarding Establishment	Boarding Establishment - Service provided by Powys Council.		Cat A Cat B Cat C	£288.00 N/A N/A			
Licensing	Renewal Licensing - Home Boarder / Day Care	Provided by Powys CBC			£213.00			
Licensing	Licensing - Zoo	Zoo - Service Provided by Powys Council.		Initial 4 year licence - Per annum	N/A			
Licensing	Licensing - Zoo	Zoo - Service Provided by Powys Council.		Subsequent renewal 6 year licence - per annum	£2,597.00			
Licensing	Renewal Licensing - Dangerous Wild Animals	2 year licence - Service provided by Powys Council.		2 year licence - per annum	£656.00			

ECONOMY

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	Commercial Bookings in Town Centres	Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Blaina, Abertillery & Brynmawr Town Centres		Per day (excl VAT)	£67.21	£69.90	£70.60	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Large Conference Room Jack Williams VC Hall		Full Day (excl. VAT) Half Day (excl. VAT) Hourly (Excl VAT)	£294.00 £196.00 £98.00	£305.80 £203.80 £101.90	£308.70 £205.80 £102.90	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Abraham Darby Room		Full Day (excl. VAT) Half Day (excl. VAT) Hourly (Excl VAT)	£228.00 £150.00 £75.00	£237.10 £156.00 £78.00	£239.40 £157.50 £78.80	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Sir William Firth Room		Full Day (excl. VAT) Half Day (excl. VAT) Hourly (Excl VAT)	£117.00 £78.00 £39.00	£121.70 £81.10 £40.60	£122.90 £81.90 £41.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Frederick Mills Room		Full Day (excl. VAT)	£79.00	£82.20	£83.00	
				Half Day (excl. VAT)	£52.00	£54.10	£54.60	
				Hourly (Excl VAT)	£26.00	£27.00	£27.30	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Hot Mill Room		Full Day (excl. VAT)	£72.00	£74.90	£75.60	
				Half Day (excl. VAT)	£46.00	£47.80	£48.30	
				Hourly (Excl VAT)	£23.00	£23.90	£24.20	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Open Hearth Room		Full Day (excl. VAT)	£65.00	£67.60	£68.30	
				Half Day (excl. VAT)	£46.00	£47.80	£48.30	
				Hourly (Excl VAT)	£23.00	£23.90	£24.20	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Cinema		Full Day (excl. VAT)	£180.00	£187.20	£189.00	
				Half Day (excl. VAT)	£120.00	£124.80	£126.00	
				Hourly (Excl VAT)	£60.00	£62.40	£63.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	PA System		Excl. VAT	£64.00	£66.60	£67.20	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Projector Hire		External - Excl. VAT Internal	£38.50 £20.00	£40.00 £20.80	£40.40 £21.00	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Laptop Hire		Excl. VAT	£20.00	£20.80	£21.00 £0.00	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Laptop/Projector Combo Hire		Internal	£44.00	£45.80	£46.20	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Flip Chart and Stand		Excl. VAT	£6.00	£6.20	£6.30	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Sand Pit Technology Hire		Excl. VAT	£96.29	£100.10	£101.10	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Lectern Hire		Excl. VAT	£25.73	£26.80	£27.00	
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Buffet Service Charge			5% Service Charge applied to Buffets			5% Service Charge applied to Buffets



Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/2024 £	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	General Offices Room Hire	Refreshments		Teas / Coffees, per Cup Fruit Juice, per Jug Squash, per Jug Biscuits, per Plate	£1.60 £5.50 £1.50 £2.60	£1.70 £5.70 £1.60 £2.70	£1.70 £5.80 £1.60 £2.70	
Economic Development	Construction Skills Certification Scheme Test	CSCS is a compulsory construction accreditation that site workers are required to have prior to going out to work on construction sites. The Authority has an approved Pearson Vue Test Centre at the General Offices providing and invigilating online assessments for all CSCS related examinations.	Fixed		£31.50			£31.50

PLANNING SERVICES

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Planning	Planning	Adopted BG local development plan, written statement and proposal maps			£50.00	£52.00	£52.50	
Planning	Level 1 Enquiry - Compliance and Information	Confirmation that planning conditions or s106 obligations have been discharged or that development has been completed in accordance with the planning permission (per enquiry)		Householder  Single House  All other Compliance Checks  Site History	£60.00  £120.00  25% of the Original Planning Application fee (with Officer discretion to negotiate a price on larger schemes)  £40.00			£70.00  £140.00  30% of the Original Planning Application fee (with Officer discretion to negotiate a price on larger schemes)  Remove
Planning	Level 2 Enquiry - Householder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alterations, extensions, conservatories and loft conversions</li> <li>• Walls and fences</li> <li>• Garages, sheds and other curtilage buildings</li> <li>• Operate a business from home</li> <li>• Micro generation for heat or electricity</li> <li>• Extend garden / curtilage</li> </ul>		Written Advice  Meeting with follow up written advice	£30.00  £60.00			£30.00  £70.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee	
Planning	Level 3 Enquiry - Minor Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permitted Development enquiry (non-householder)</li> <li>Alterations to exterior of commercial or retail or industrial premises (inc. solar panels)</li> <li>Advertisements</li> </ul>		Written Advice	£60.00			£70.00	
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£120.00			£140.00	
- New Build or Change of Use - Single Dwelling				Written Advice	£120.00			£140.00	
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£244.80			£280.00	
Planning		- Residential Development (new build or Change of Use) - 2 -5 units or Site area less than a hectare			Written Advice	£240.00			£280.00
					Meeting with follow up written advice	£480.00			£560.00
Planning	- Residential Development (new build or Change of Use) - 6 -9 units or Site area less than a hectare			Written Advice	£240.00			£420.00	
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£480.00			£700.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Planning	Level 4 Enquiry - Business Commercial Development	• Non residential 999sqm or less floorspace or site area less than 0.99ha		Written Advice	£240.00			£280.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£480.00			£560.00
Planning	Level 5 - Major Development	• Residential 10 - 23 Units • Non residential site area of 1ha+ or floor space 1,000sqm+ • Waste and Minerals development		Written Advice	£600.00			£1,000.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£900.00			£1,500.00
Planning	Level 6 Enquiry - Energy	Energy generation Under 10MW		Written Advice	£720.00			£1,000.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£1,200.00			£1,500.00
		Energy generation Over 10MW		Written Advice	£720.00			£1,500.00 (Additional £100 per meeting)
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£1,200.00			£2,000.00 (Additional £100 per meeting)

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Planning	Level 7 Enquiry - Large Major	Residential Development 24+		Written Advice	£1,200.00			£1,500.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice	£1,800.00			£2,000.00
Planning	Confirmation whether LBC Required			Written Advice				£30.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice				£70.00
Planning	Repairs to listed buildings			Written Advice				£70.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice				£100.00
Planning	Listed Building Advice			Written Advice				£250.00
				Meeting with follow up written advice				£350.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Planning	New Welsh Government Prelim Fees	New Welsh Government Prelim Fees - there are only a few instances where applicants will elect to use the WG scheme.	Fixed	Householder	£25.00			£25.00
				Minor Development (1-9 dwellings, floor space including change of use less than 999sqm)	£250.00			£250.00
				Major Development (1-24 dwellings, floor space including change of use 1,000 to 1,999sqm)	£600.00			£600.00
				Large Major Development (more than 24 dwellings, floor space including change more than 1,999sqm)	£1,000.00			£1,000.00
Development Management	Outline Applications	Outline Applications	Fixed		£460 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof). More than 2.5ha £11,500 plus £120 per additional 0.1ha. Maximum £150,000			£460 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof). More than 2.5ha £11,500 plus £120 per additional 0.1ha. Maximum £150,000

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Development Management	Reserved Matters Applications	Reserved Matters Applications	Fixed		Fee calculated on floor space / number of dwellings			Fee calculated on floor space / number of dwellings
Development Management	Full Applications	House Extension, Garage/Shed, Fences/walls	Fixed		£230.00			£230.00
Development Management	Full Applications	Erection of new dwelling	Fixed		£460 per dwelling up to 50 dwellings. (Then £23,000 +£100 per each dwelling over 50) Subject to max of £300,000			£460 per dwelling up to 50 dwellings. (Then £23,000 +£100 per each dwelling over 50) Subject to max of £300,000
Development Management	Non Residential	Non Residential - Less than 40m2 new floor space	Fixed		£230.00			£230.00
		Non Residential - Between 40 - 75m2		£460.00	£460.00			
		Non Residential - Thereafter £380.00 per 75m2 (or part thereof)		Maximum £300,000	Maximum £300,000			
Development Management	Agricultural	Agricultural less than 465m2	Fixed		£85.00			£85.00
		Agricultural between 465 - 540m2	Fixed		£460.00			£460.00
		Agricultural 540m2 or more	Fixed		£460 + £460 per 75m2 thereafter. Max £300,000			£460 + £460 per 75m2 thereafter. Max £300,000

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Development Management	Change of Use	Change of use - subdivision of dwellings	Fixed		£460 per additional dwelling created up to 50 dwellings. £23,000 + £120 for each in excess of 50 to a maximum of £300,000.			£460 per additional dwelling created up to 50 dwellings. £23,000 + £120 for each in excess of 50 to a maximum of £300,000.
Development Management	Change of Use	Change of use - other changes of use	Fixed		£460.00			£460.00
Development Management	Mineral Applications	Mineral Applications - use of land for the winning	Fixed		£230 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof). Sites exceeding 15ha			£230 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof). Sites exceeding 15ha
Development Management	Mineral Applications	Mineral Applications - Storage or working of minerals	Fixed		£34,500 + £120 per 0.1ha. Max £74,500			£34,500 + £120 per 0.1ha. Max £74,500
Development Management	Miscellaneous	Erection of plant and machinery	Fixed		£460 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof). Thereafter £120 for each additional 0.1ha over 5 ha. Max £300,000			£460 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof). Thereafter £120 for each additional 0.1ha over 5 ha. Max £300,000
Development Management	Miscellaneous	Car Parks/services roads/access	Fixed		£230.00			£230.00
Development Management	Miscellaneous	All other operations	Fixed		£230 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof) up to a maximum of £300,000			£230 per 0.1 ha (or part thereof) up to a maximum of £300,000
Development Management	Other Applications	Variation/removal condition	Fixed		£230.00			£230.00
Development Management	Other Applications	Renewal of planning permission	Fixed		£190.00			£190.00



Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Development Management	Other Applications	Listed Building Applications	Fixed		No fee			No fee
Development Management	Other Applications	TPO Applications	Fixed		No fee			No fee
Development Management	Other Applications	Advertisements on business premises or forecourt	Fixed		£120.00			£120.00
Development Management	Other Applications	All other advertisements	Fixed		£460.00			£460.00
Building Control	New Dwellings Plan / Inspection / Building Notice Charge	Up to 2 Storeys - 1 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£594.00			£594.00
		Up to 2 Storeys - 2 dwelling(s)		£726.00			£726.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 3 dwelling(s)		£990.00			£990.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 4 dwelling(s)		£1,122.00			£1,122.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 5 dwelling(s)		£1,320.00			£1,320.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 6 dwelling(s)		£1,452.00			£1,452.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 7 dwelling(s)		£1,716.00			£1,716.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 8 dwelling(s)		£1,914.00			£1,914.00	
		Up to 2 Storeys - 9 dwelling(s)		£2,046.00			£2,046.00	
	Up to 2 Storeys - 10 dwelling(s)			£2,178.00			£2,178.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	New Dwellings Plan / Inspection / Building Notice Charge	Up to 2 Storeys - 11 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£2,442.00			£2,442.00
		Up to 2 Storeys - 12 dwelling(s)		£2,574.00		£2,574.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 13 dwelling(s)		£2,772.00		£2,772.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 14 dwelling(s)		£2,970.00		£2,970.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 15 dwelling(s)		£3,168.00		£3,168.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 16 dwelling(s)		£3,366.00		£3,366.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 17 dwelling(s)		£3,498.00		£3,498.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 18 dwelling(s)		£3,696.00		£3,696.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 19 dwelling(s)		£3,894.00		£3,894.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 20 dwelling(s)		£4,026.00		£4,026.00		
Building Control	New Dwellings Plan / Inspection / Building Notice Charge	3 Storey - 1 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£660.00			£660.00
		3 Storey - 2 dwelling(s)		£792.00		£792.00		
		3 Storey - 3 dwelling(s)		£1,056.00		£1,056.00		
		3 Storey - 4 dwelling(s)		£1,188.00		£1,188.00		
		3 Storey - 5 dwelling(s)		£1,386.00		£1,386.00		
		3 Storey - 6 dwelling(s)		£1,518.00		£1,518.00		
		3 Storey - 7 dwelling(s)		£1,782.00		£1,782.00		
		3 Storey - 8 dwelling(s)		£1,980.00		£1,980.00		
		3 Storey - 9 dwelling(s)		£2,112.00		£2,112.00		
		3 Storey - 10 dwelling(s)		£2,244.00		£2,244.00		

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	New Dwellings Plan / Inspection / Building Notice Charge	3 Storey - 11 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£2,508.00			£2,508.00
		3 Storey - 12 dwelling(s)		£2,640.00		£2,640.00		
		3 Storey - 13 dwelling(s)		£2,838.00		£2,838.00		
		3 Storey - 14 dwelling(s)		£3,036.00		£3,036.00		
		3 Storey - 15 dwelling(s)		£3,234.00		£3,234.00		
		3 Storey - 16 dwelling(s)		£3,432.00		£3,432.00		
		3 Storey - 17 dwelling(s)		£3,564.00		£3,564.00		
		3 Storey - 18 dwelling(s)		£3,762.00		£3,762.00		
		3 Storey - 19 dwelling(s)		£3,960.00		£3,960.00		
		3 Storey - 20 dwelling(s)		£4,092.00		£4,092.00		
Building Control	New Dwellings Regularisation Charge	Up to 2 Storeys - 1 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£742.50			£742.50
		Up to 2 Storeys - 2 dwelling(s)		£907.50		£907.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 3 dwelling(s)		£1,237.50		£1,237.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 4 dwelling(s)		£1,402.50		£1,402.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 5 dwelling(s)		£1,650.00		£1,650.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 6 dwelling(s)		£1,815.00		£1,815.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 7 dwelling(s)		£2,145.00		£2,145.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 8 dwelling(s)		£2,392.50		£2,392.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 9 dwelling(s)		£2,557.50		£2,557.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 10 dwelling(s)		£2,722.50		£2,722.50		

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	New Dwellings Regularisation Charge	Up to 2 Storeys - 11 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£3,052.00			£3,052.00
		Up to 2 Storeys - 12 dwelling(s)		£3,217.50		£3,217.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 13 dwelling(s)		£3,465.00		£3,465.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 14 dwelling(s)		£3,712.50		£3,712.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 15 dwelling(s)		£3,960.00		£3,960.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 16 dwelling(s)		£4,207.50		£4,207.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 17 dwelling(s)		£4,372.50		£4,372.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 18 dwelling(s)		£4,620.00		£4,620.00		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 19 dwelling(s)		£4,867.50		£4,867.50		
		Up to 2 Storeys - 20 dwelling(s)		£5,032.50		£5,032.50		
Building Control	New Dwellings Regularisation Charge	3 Storeys - 1 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£825.00			£825.00
		3 Storeys - 2 dwelling(s)		£990.00		£990.00		
		3 Storeys - 3 dwelling(s)		£1,320.00		£1,320.00		
		3 Storeys - 4 dwelling(s)		£1,485.00		£1,485.00		
		3 Storeys - 5 dwelling(s)		£1,732.50		£1,732.50		
		3 Storeys - 6 dwelling(s)		£1,897.50		£1,897.50		
		3 Storeys - 7 dwelling(s)		£2,227.50		£2,227.50		
		3 Storeys - 8 dwelling(s)		£2,475.00		£2,475.00		
		3 Storeys - 9 dwelling(s)		£2,640.00		£2,640.00		
		3 Storeys - 10 dwelling(s)		£2,805.00		£2,805.00		

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	New Dwellings Regularisation Charge	3 Storeys - 11 dwelling(s)	Regulated		£3,135.00			£3,135.00
		3 Storeys - 12 dwelling(s)			£3,300.00			£3,300.00
		3 Storeys - 13 dwelling(s)			£3,547.50			£3,547.50
		3 Storeys - 14 dwelling(s)			£3,795.00			£3,795.00
		3 Storeys - 15 dwelling(s)			£4,042.50			£4,042.50
		3 Storeys - 16 dwelling(s)			£4,290.00			£4,290.00
		3 Storeys - 17 dwelling(s)			£4,455.00			£4,455.00
		3 Storeys - 18 dwelling(s)			£4,702.00			£4,702.00
		3 Storeys - 19 dwelling(s)			£4,950.00			£4,950.00
		3 Storeys - 20 dwelling(s)			£5,115.00			£5,115.00
Building Control	Domestic Extensions and Alterations	Extension to dwelling floor area not exceeding 10m2 - up to 2 storeys	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£330.00			£330.00
				Regularisation Charge	£412.50			£412.50
				Additional charge	£198.00			£198.00
Building Control	Domestic Extensions and Alterations	Extension to dwelling floor area exceeding 10m2 but not exceeding 40m2 - up to 2 storeys	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£462.00			£462.00
				Regularisation Charge	£577.50			£577.50
				Additional charge	£198.00			£198.00
Building Control	Domestic Extensions and Alterations	Extension to dwelling floor area exceeding 40m2 but not exceeding 60m2 - up to 2 storeys	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£528.00			£528.00
				Regularisation Charge	£660.00			£660.00
				Additional Charge	£198.00			£198.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	Garages and Car Ports	Erection or extension of a non exempt <b>detached</b> single domestic garage or carport up to 60m2	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£198.00			£198.00
				Regularisation Charge	£247.50			£247.50
				Additional Charge	£198.00			£198.00
Building Control	Garages and Car Ports	Erection of a non exempt <b>attached</b> single storey extension of a domestic garage or carport up to 60m2	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice charge	£264.00			£264.00
				Regularisation charge	£330.00			£330.00
				Additional charge	£198.00			£198.00
Building Control	Garages and Car Ports	Erection of two storey <b>detached</b> garage or carport up to 60m2	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£330.00			£330.00
				Regularisation Charge	£412.50			£412.50
				Additional charge	£198.00			£198.00
Building Control	Other	Conversion of a garage to form part of a dwelling	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice charge	£198.00			£198.00
				Regularisation charge	£247.50			£247.50
				Additional charge	£198.00			£198.00
Building Control	Other	Conversion of existing attic space (up to 50m2) to form 1 room as part of a dwelling	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£198.00			£198.00
				Regularisation Charge	£247.50			£247.50
				Additional Charge	£198.00			£198.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations, installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £0 - £5000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£132.00 £165.00			£132.00 £165.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations, installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £5001 - £10,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice charge Regularisation charge	£198.00 £247.50			£198.00 £247.50
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations, installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £10,001 - £15,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£264.00 £330.00			£264.00 £330.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations, installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £15,001 - £25,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£396.00 £495.00			£396.00 £495.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations, installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £25,001 - £35,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£462.00 £577.50			£462.00 £577.50
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations, installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £35,001 - £50,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£528.00 £660.00			£528.00 £660.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations , installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost £50,001 - £60,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£594.00 £742.50			£594.00 £742.50

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations , installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost 60,001 - 70,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£660.00 £825.00			£660.00 £825.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations , installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost 70,001 - 80,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£726.00 £907.50			£726.00 £907.50
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations , installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost 80,001 - 90,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£792.00 £990.00			£792.00 £990.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Alterations , installation of fittings (not electrical and/or structural alterations (Internal or external) Estimated Cost 90,001 - 100,000	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£858.00 £1,072.50			£858.00 £1,072.50
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Re-Roofing	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£84.00 £105.00			£84.00 £105.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	External Rendering	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£84.00 £105.00			£84.00 £105.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Solar or photovoltaic panels	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge Regularisation Charge	£84.00 £105.00			£84.00 £105.00



Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Solid Fuel Appliances	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£132.00			£132.00
				Regularisation Charge	£165.00			£165.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Internal Floors & Insulation	Regulated	Plan / Building Notice Charge	£84.00			£84.00
				Regularisation Charge	£105.00			£105.00
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Window replacement (non competent persons scheme)	Regulated	0 - 2 Windows Fee	£66.00			£66.00
				0 - 2 Windows Regularisation Charge	£82.50			£82.50
				2 - 8 Windows	£132.00			£132.00
				2 - 8 Windows Regularisation Charge	£165.00			£165.00
				8+ Windows	£198.00			£198.00
				8+ Windows Regularisation Charge	£247.50			£247.50
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Electrical work (not competent persons scheme)	Regulated		Any electrical work other than the re-wiring of a dwelling £396.00 Regularisation Charge £495.00  The re-wiring or new installation in a dwelling £528.00 Regularisation Charge £660.00			Any electrical work other than the re-wiring of a dwelling £396.00 Regularisation Charge £495.00  The re-wiring or new installation in a dwelling £528.00 Regularisation Charge £660.00

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Building Control	Domestic alterations to a single building	Internal Rendering		Plan/Building Notice Charge	£84.00			£84.00
				Regularisation Charge	£105.00			£105.00
Building Control	All Other Work	All Other Work Total Cost of Works £0 - £2,000	Regulated	Plan / Inspection Fee	£132.00			£132.00
				Regularisation Charge	£165.00			£165.00
Building Control	All Other Work	All Other Work Total Cost of Works £2,001 - £100,000	Regulated		£110.00 + £10.00 for every £1,000, or part thereof, above £2,000 plus 20% VAT			£110.00 + £10.00 for every £1,000, or part thereof, above £2,000 plus 20% VAT
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Providing copies of land ownership documents held by the Council. Fee per copy.		Minimum Fee		£0.00	£0.00	
				Maximum Fee		£0.00	£0.00	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Queries regarding previous sales			Depends on circumstances			Depends on circumstances
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Transfer of tenancy		Per application	£81.00	£84.20	£85.10	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Transfer of licence		Per application	£81.00	£84.20	£85.10	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Lease for garage		Per application	£81.00	£84.20	£85.10	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Land applications		Per application	£108.00	£112.30	£113.40	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Fees on sales, per application.		£0 - £50,000	£540.00	£561.60	£567.00	
				£50,000 - £100,000	£756.00	£786.20	£793.80	
				£100,000 - £200,000	£918.00	£954.70	£963.90	
				£210,000 - £500,000	£1,188.00	£1,235.50	£1,247.40	
				Above £500,000	£1,836.00	£1,909.40	£1,927.80	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Garden Land - Rental Per plot and whatever size.		Minimum Fee	£75.60	£78.60	£79.40	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Grazing Land - Rental Per plot and whatever size.		Minimum Fee	£129.60			£129.80
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Eastern Valley Slops - Rental Per plot and whatever size.		Minimum Fee	£129.60			£129.60
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Other Low Level Income Per plot and whatever size.		Minimum Fee	£129.60			£129.60
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Garage Agreements, per plot. Minimum Fee.		Single Garage	£129.60	£134.80	£136.10	
				Large Garage	£172.80	£179.70	£181.40	
				Double Garage	£226.80	£235.90	£238.10	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	S38 Agreements		Minimum Fee	£1,750.00			£1,750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	S278 Agreements		Minimum Fee	£1,750.00			£1,750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	S106 Agreements		Minimum Fee	£2,250.00			£2,250.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Photocopying - Document			£36.72	£38.20	£38.60	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Letters of Postponement			£75.60	£78.60	£79.40	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Mortgage Redemption			£150.00			£175.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Licence to Assign		Minimum Fee	£750.00			£750 to £1,250

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Deed of Variation			£750.00			£750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Freehold Reversions			£750.00			£1,000.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Easements			£750.00	£780.00	£787.50	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Consent to dispose (Overage)			£150.00	£156.00	£157.50	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Leases		Minimum Fee	£350.00			£350 to £750
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Licence for Alterations, Large Scale Developments		Small Scale	£350.00	£364.00	£367.50	
				Large Scale				£750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Auction sales subject to Valuer's discretion based on markability and value			£500.00	£520.00	£525.00	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Tenancy at Will			£350.00	£364.00	£367.50	
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Disposals (drawing up conveyance)		Minimum Fee	£500.00			£500.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Legal charges - Minimum Fee			£750.00			£750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Deed of release of overage			£750.00			£750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Deed of release of Covenant			£0.00			£750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Rent Deposit Deed			£0.00			£750.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Renewal Lease by Reference			£0.00			£1,250.00
Economic Development	Estates & Strategic Asset Management	Authorised Guarantee Agreement			£0.00			

**PUBLIC PROTECTION**

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public Protection - Environmental Protection	Private Water Supply Charges	Inspection of Private Water Supplies to ensure compliance with Private Water Supply regulations	Regulated		Risk assessment (each assessment): Reg 9 supply £700 Reg 10 and 11 supply £300 Sampling (each visit) (i): £100 (annual) Investigation (each investigation): £250 (on failure of sample) Granting an authorisation (each authorisation): £100 Analysing sample - up to £600.			Risk assessment (each assessment): Reg 9 supply £700 Reg 10 and 11 supply £300 Sampling (each visit) (i): £100 (annual) Investigation (each investigation): £250 (on failure of sample) Granting an authorisation (each authorisation): £100 Analysing sample - up to £600.
Public Protection - Environmental Protection	Environmental Permit - annual fee	Environmental Permit issued for LA-IPPC and LAPPC - annual fee	Regulated		Fee dependant on nature of activity and determined on case-by-case basis in line with WG charging regime.			Fee dependant on nature of activity and determined on case-by-case basis in line with WG charging regime.
Public health	Pest Control - Domestic - <i>paid directly to contractor</i>	Pest Control - Domestic - Rats Pest Control - Domestic - Cockroaches & Bedbugs Pest Control - Domestic - Mice Pest Control - Domestic - Wasps and infestations		Rats Cockroaches, Bedbugs & Fleas Mice Wasps and infestations	No Charge £57.60 £57.60 £57.60			No Charge £57.60 £57.60 £57.60
Public health	Public Health - Food safety, condemnation and other sampling	Food safety, condemnation and other sampling			Fee determined per enquiry - charge is based on officers hourly rate and length of time taken to deal with enquiry.			Fee determined per enquiry - charge is based on officers hourly rate and length of time taken to deal with enquiry.
Public health	Public Health - Food Surrender Certificate	Food Surrender Certificate			Fee determined per enquiry - charge is based on officers hourly rate and length of time taken to deal with enquiry.			Fee determined per enquiry - charge is based on officers hourly rate and length of time taken to deal with enquiry.

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public health	Public Health - Standard Health Safety Certificate	Standard Health Safety Certificate			Fee determined per enquiry - charge is based on officers hourly rate and length of time taken to deal with enquiry.			Fee determined per enquiry - charge is based on officers hourly rate and length of time taken to deal with enquiry.
Licensing	Petroleum Certification	Annual certification	Regulated	Storage below 2500 litres	£44.00			£44.00
				Storage between 2500 and 50,000 litres	£60.00			£60.00
				Storage above 50,000 litres	£125.00			£125.00
Licensing	Petroleum Licence File Search	On request	Regulated		£60.00			£60.00
Licensing	Food Hygiene Registration Scheme (rescore visit)	On request	Regulated		£180.00			£180.00
Licensing	Licensing - Skin Piercing - Practitioner Registration	Currently skin piercing registrations are a one off fee covering person(s) and premise			£159.12	£165.50	£167.10	
Public Protection - Housing	Immigration Inspection	On request service provided to applicants who wish to bring a non EU national to live in the UK as required by the UK Border Agencies,			£124.48	£129.50	£130.70	
Public Protection - Housing	HMO License	5 Yearly License Fee			£305.00	£317.20	£320.30	
Public Protection - Housing	Traveller Site Rent	Rent to occupy Cwmcrachen Caravan Site, Nantyglo		Per pitch, per week	£125.55	£130.60	£131.80	



Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public Protection - Housing	Notices under s49 Housing Act 2004	The Authority can recover the costs incurred in the service of specific Notices under the Housing Act 2004.		Per notice	£248.96	£258.90	£261.40	
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Measuring Instrument Directive	Per hour plus liquid fuel and lubricants 10% surcharge, capacity serving measures 25% surcharge		Per Hour	£103.25			£111.51
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Special Weighing and Measuring Equipment	Special Weighing and Measuring Equipment		Per Hour	£103.25			£111.51
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Weights	Weights		Per Hour	£103.25 Full hourly rate for first hour thereafter £59.71 ph			£111.51 Full hourly rate for first hour thereafter £61.95 ph

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Measures	Measures		Linear not exceeding 3m	£12.86			£13.89
				Capacity not exceeding 1 litre	£10.16			10..97
				Cubic Ballast	£227.35			£245.54
				Liquid Capacity	£35.94			£38.82
				Templates per scale first item	£62.48			£67.48
				Templates: second and subsequent items	£23.64			£25.53
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Weighing Instruments	Non NAWI		Not exceeding 1 tonne	£81.61			£88.14
				1 - 10 tonne	£132.20			£142.78
				Exceeding 10 tonnes	£276.10			£298.18
				Certification of weighbridge operators - Per Hour	£103.25			£111.51
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Weighing Instruments	NAWI. 50% surcharge applicable for some tests.		Not exceeding 1 tonne	£135.85			£146.74
				1 - 10 tonne	£210.23			£227.05
				Exceeding 10 tonnes	£460.22			£497.04

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Measuring Instruments for Intoxicating Liquor	Measuring Instruments for Intoxicating Liquor		Not exceeding 150ml	£22.40			£24.19
				Other	£25.88			£27.95
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel and Lubricants	Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel and Lubricants		Container	£93.83			£101.34
				Nozzles - 1st nozzle	£153.05			£165.29
				Nozzles, Each additional nozzle tested	£103.43			£117.70
				Testing of peripheral electronic equipment on a separate visit per site, per hour	£103.25			£111.51
				Testing of credit card acceptor, per hour	£103.25			£111.51
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Road Tanker Fuel Measuring Equipment (Above 100 Litres)	Meter Measuring Systems		Wet hose and 2 testing liquids	£328.52			£354.80
				Wet hose and 3 testing liquids	£383.27			£413.93
				Dry hose and 2 testing liquids	£364.97			£394.17
				Dry hose and 3 testing liquids	£419.94			£453.54
				Wet/dry hose and 2 testing liquids	£511.01			£551.89
				Wet/dry hose and 3 testing liquids	£546.27			£589.97
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Certificate of errors	Certificate of errors (when no other fee applies)			£66.30	£68.95	£69.60	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Explosives Regulations	New Explosives Licence where separation distance is greater than 0m (as and when)	Regulated	1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 years	£193.00 £253.00 £317.00 £390.00 £441.00			£193.00 £253.00 £317.00 £390.00 £441.00
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Explosives Regulations (Storage)	Renewal of Explosives Licence where separation distance is greater than 0m (annual)	Regulated	1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 years	£90.00 £153.00 £215.00 £277.00 £340.00			£90.00 £153.00 £215.00 £277.00 £340.00
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Explosives Regulations (Storage)	New Explosives Licence where separation distance is less than 0m (as and when)	Regulated	1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 years	£113.00 £147.00 £181.00 £215.00 £248.00			£113.00 £147.00 £181.00 £215.00 £248.00
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Explosives Regulations (Storage)	Renewal of Explosives Licence where separation distance is less than 0m (annual)	Regulated	1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 years	£56.00 £90.00 £125.00 £158.00 £193.00			£56.00 £90.00 £125.00 £158.00 £193.00
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Explosives Regulations (Storage)	Varying / Transferring / Replacing Licence	Regulated		£38			£38
Public Protection - Trading Standards	Fireworks Regulations 2004	Licence to supply fireworks	Regulated		£500			£500
Public Protection - Environmental Health	Penalty for non compliance	Penalty for dumping litter in front garden (Community Protection Notice)	Regulated	Fee	£100.00			£100.00
Public Protection	Primary Authority Partnerships	Officer time per hour plus travel		Fee	£66	£68.90	£69.60	
Public Health	Public Health - Food Safety Export Certificate	On request, per enquiry		Minimum charge with additional costs calculated per enquiry based on officer time	£104.00	£108.20	£109.20	

Service Area	Generic description	Detailed description	Regulated /Fixed Charge	Fee Categories (if applicable)	Fee 2023/24	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 4% Uplift	Proposed Fee 2024/2025 5% Uplift	Other Proposed Fee
Public Health	Public Health - Food Safety Fixed Penalty Notice Fine	Issued in respect of offences in relation to food hygiene rating scheme display offences	Fixed	Fine	£200.00			£200.00
				Early repayment option	£150.00			£150.00
Public Health	Public Health - Smoking Ban Fixed Penalty Notice Fine	Issued in respect of offences in relation to smoking ban contraventions	Fixed	Section 6 Offence	£200 or £150 early repayment			£200 or £150 early repayment
				Section 7 Offence	£50 or £30 early repayment			£50 or £30 early repayment

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## Planning Preliminary Advice - New Fee Schedule from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024

### Appendix 2

Type of Development	Written Advice	Meeting with follow up written advice	Statutory Fee	Indicative Fee Levied by Other Councils 1. Categories May Differ from Ours 2. Some under review
<p><b><u>Level 1 Enquiry – Compliance and Information</u></b> Confirmation that planning conditions or s106 obligations have been discharged and/or that development has been completed in accordance with the planning permission (per enquiry)</p> <p>Site History</p>	<p>Householder £60-£70 (+17%)</p> <p>Single house £120-£140 (+17%)</p> <p>All other compliance checks charged at 25 30% (+5%) of the original planning app fee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">£40</p>			<p>Pembrokeshire compliance with notices and conditions £85-315</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mon - £450/£550</p>
<p><b><u>Level 2 Enquiry - Householder</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alterations, extension, conservatory or loft conversion</li> <li>• Walls and fences, Garages, sheds and other curtilage buildings, driveways</li> <li>• Operate a business from home</li> <li>• Micro generation for heat or electricity</li> <li>• Extend garden / curtilage</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: An enquiry under the BGCBC local advice scheme will receive more detailed response than one submitted under the Wales statutory scheme</i></p>	£30 (no change)	<p>£60</p> <p>£70 (+17%)</p>	£25	<p>Cardiff = £60</p> <p>Pembrokeshire £85, £50 additional advice</p> <p>Newport £60 with vat includes meeting</p> <p>Merthyr – £25 (£50 with meeting, £25 per additional meeting)</p> <p>Monmouth £120 add £60 for visit</p> <p>Torfaen £25</p> <p>Caerphilly £26.25 +vat</p>

## Planning Preliminary Advice - New Fee Schedule from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024

### Appendix 2

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Level 3 Enquiry – Minor Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permitted development enquiry (non householder)</li> <li>• Change of Use (any)</li> <li>• Alterations to exterior of commercial or retail or industrial premises (inc solar panels)</li> <li>• Advertisements</li>   <li>• Single dwelling - New build</li>   <li>• Residential dev (change of use or new build) creating 2 - 9-5 units or site area less than a hectare</li>   <li>Residential dev (change of use or new build) creating 6-9 units or site area less than a hectare (new category)</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><del>£60-£70</del> (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£60-£70</del> (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">£60 (no change)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£60-£70</del> (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£120</del> £140 (17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£240</del> £280 (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£240</del> £420 (+ 75%)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><del>£120</del></p> <p style="text-align: center;">£140 (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">per 1hr meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">£280 (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£480</del> £560 (+17%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><del>£480</del> £700 (+46%)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">£250</p>	<p>Cardiff – only state minor £300</p> <p>Pembrokeshire £300/£355 with meeting. Adverts £55</p> <p>Newport £540. Adverts £60</p> <p>Merthyr Single dwelling £75 (£150 with meeting, £100 each additional meeting)</p> <p>Other minor £250</p> <p>Adverts £50/£75 meeting</p> <p>Monmouth £250 extra £60 for SV</p> <p>Torfaen 1 dwelling \$50</p> <p>Caerphilly single dwelling Cof U £262.50 +vat</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Level 4 Enquiry – Residential Development</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">deleted</p>			<p>Cardiff £300 (classed as minor)</p> <p>Pembrokeshire 1-2 houses £250-£345 with meeting</p> <p>5-9 dwellings £550 with meeting</p> <p>Caerphilly £525+vat</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Level 5-4 Enquiry – Business Commercial Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non residential 999sqm or less floorspace or site area less than 0.99ha.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><del>£240</del> £280 (+17%)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><del>£480</del> £560 (+17%)</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Pembrokeshire £550</p>



## Planning Preliminary Advice - New Fee Schedule from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024

### Appendix 2

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Level 6 5 Enquiry – Major Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential 10-23 units</li> <li>Non resi site area of 1ha+ or floorspace 1000sqm+</li> <li>Waste and Minerals development</li> </ul>	<p><del>£600</del> £1000 (+ 67%)</p>	<p><del>£900</del> £1500 (+67%) Extra £100 per additional meeting</p>	<p>£600</p>	<p>Cardiff - £1500 Pembrokeshire £1125 ,25 units. Minerals £2775 - £5500 Merthyr £600 (additional meeting £600) Newport £1060 with vat Mon = £1200 SV £95 Caerphilly £630+vat</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Level 7 6 Enquiry - Energy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>Wind turbine(s) / Solar Park</del> Energy generation under 10MW</li> <li>Energy generation over 10MW</li> </ul>	<p><del>£720</del> £1000 (+39%) (plus consultancy fees incurred by LPA)</p> <p>£1500 (plus consultancy fees incurred by LPA)</p>	<p><del>£1200</del> £1500 (+25%) Extra £100 per additional meeting</p> <p>£2000 (+25%) Extra £100 per additional meeting</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Level 8-7 Enquiry – Large Major</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential development 24+</li> </ul>	<p><del>£1200</del> £1500 (+25%)</p>	<p><del>£1800</del> £2000 (+11%) Extra £100 per additional meeting</p>	<p>£1000</p>	<p>Cardiff £3000 (incl CoU more than 1999sqm) Pembrokeshire £2600-£5250 &gt;24 units Newport £2160 Merthyr £1000 / £1000 for meeting and each additional Mon £1600 Caerphilly £1050 +vat</p>

## Planning Preliminary Advice - New Fee Schedule from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024

### Appendix 2

<u><b>New Category Level 8 Enquiry – Listed Buildings</b></u>				
Confirmation whether LBC required	£30	£70		
Repairs to Listed buildings advice	£70	£100		
Listed building advice where works require LBC	£250	£350		
<p><b>All fees include VAT. Payment must be made in full before an enquiry is registered. Other development not specified in this schedule – fee at discretion of Service Manager. A free scoping meeting may be available for major and large major development.</b></p> <p><u>Exemptions from Fee</u></p> <p><i>Works to existing house to provide access or improve the quality of life for a disabled occupant.</i></p> <p><i>Works to a listed building</i></p> <p><i>Works for and being carried out by the County Borough, Town or Community Council</i></p> <p><i>Minor non-profit works for small community organisations for the benefit of the local population (case officer discretion)</i></p> <p><i>Works within the Enterprise Zone (business use only).</i></p> <p><i>Note: Wherever practicable, meetings will be held via Microsoft teams</i></p>				

- Pembrokeshire offer pre-submission validation check £90-£250
- Mon charge £350 for LB advice +£95 for a meeting
- Torfaen same as Stat but add additional fee for meetings
- Caerphilly charge 30+VAT to consult with consultees and charge 30% of fee plus VAT for a meeting

**Appendix 3**

**Aneurin Leisure Trust Core Fees and Charges 2024/25**

Activity	2023/24	2024/25	increase	Comments
<b>SHOWERS</b>				
Shower adult	£3.00	£3.20	6.67%	
Shower child	£1.50	£1.60	6.67%	
<b>SWIMMING POOL</b>				
Adult Swim	£4.50	£4.80	6.67%	
Junior Swim	£2.25	£2.40	6.67%	
Concessionary Adult Swim	£2.25	£2.40	6.67%	
Concessionary Junior Swim	£1.10	£1.20	9.09%	
Adult Hydroslide	£5.95	£6.40	7.56%	
Junior Hydroslide	£4.50	£4.80	6.67%	
Concessionary Adult Hydro Slide	£3.75	£4.00	6.67%	
Concessionary Junior Hydro Slide	£2.25	£2.40	6.67%	
<b>HEALTH SUITES</b>				
Adult (Ebbw Vale)	£7.75	£8.20	5.81%	
OAP (Ebbw Vale)	£3.90	£4.10	5.13%	
<b>HIRE OF ROOMS</b>				
Community use per hour	£21.25	£22.50	5.88%	
Commercial use per hour	£31.75	£33.50	5.51%	
<b>SQUASH</b>				
Adult	£7.60	£8.20	7.89%	Above CPI rise due to additional lighting required for specific area
Junior	£3.80	£4.10	7.89%	
Concession Adult	£3.80	£4.10	7.89%	
Concession Junior	£1.90	£2.05	7.89%	
<b>BADMINTON / TABLE TENNIS</b>				
Adult (2 persons)	£8.40	£8.90	5.95%	small amount so increase effects %
Junior (2 persons)	£4.20	£4.50	7.14%	
Concession Adult	£4.20	£4.50	7.14%	
Concession Junior	£2.10	£2.25	7.14%	
<b>LIFESTYLE STUDIO</b>				
Adult	£7.45	£7.50	0.67%	
Junior	£3.75	£3.75	0.00%	
Concession Adult	£3.25	£3.50	7.69%	
Concession Junior	£1.65	£1.75	6.06%	
<b>MODEL BOATS</b>				
Club Annual Fees	£135.35	£142.50	5.28%	
Members Fees per annum per member (Adult)	£7.25	£7.65	5.52%	
Members Fees per annum per member (Junior)	£3.65	£3.85	5.48%	
<b>MODEL AERO PLANES</b>				
Clubs Annual Fees (21 year license)	£111.25	£117.00	5.17%	

## Aneurin Leisure Trust Core Fees and Charges 2024/25

Members Fees (Adult)	£7.25	<b>£7.65</b>	<b>5.52%</b>	
<b>NEWFOUNDLAND DOG SOCIETY</b>				
Boat Launch	£7.55	<b>£7.95</b>	<b>5.30%</b>	
Members Fee	£7.25	<b>£7.65</b>	<b>5.52%</b>	
<b>ANGLING CLUB</b>				
Day Ticket – Adult	£20.35	<b>£21.50</b>	<b>5.65%</b>	
Day Ticket - Junior	£5.50	<b>£6.00</b>	<b>9.09%</b>	
Season Ticket Adult	£71.55	<b>£75.00</b>	<b>4.82%</b>	
Season Ticket Junior	£35.80	<b>£37.50</b>	<b>4.75%</b>	
Membership Night Syndicate	£120.00	<b>£126.00</b>	<b>5.00%</b>	set by the Angling club
<b>SCOUT CAMPING / FOREST SCHOOL FACILITIES</b>				
Charge per head per night (Blaenau Gwent Scout Organisations)	£2.05	<b>£2.15</b>	<b>4.88%</b>	
Charge per head per night (All Other Organisations)	£4.05	<b>£4.25</b>	<b>4.94%</b>	

<b>ADULT EDUCATION</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Non-Commercial Groups room per hour	£6.80	£7.20	<b>5.88%</b>	
Non-Commercial Groups - general purpose room per hour	£10.20	£10.75	<b>5.39%</b>	
Non-Commercial Groups - hall per hour	£13.00	£13.75	<b>5.77%</b>	
All local authority departments - teaching room per hour	£4.95	£5.25	<b>6.06%</b>	
All local authority departments - general purpose room per hour	£10.00	£10.60	<b>6.00%</b>	
All local authority departments - hall per hour	£11.75	£12.50	<b>6.38%</b>	

**ALT have adopted price increases based on inflation in October 2023 (6.7%). The Trust has seen operational costs increase at a far higher rate than CPI due to a 207% increase in energy costs. Increases have been kept at a competitive level however some prices will have risen by more than 6.7% which is due pay as you go transactions being small sums of money and therefore a small increase will have a large % increase.**

**Benchmarking as at November 2023- – subject to change as other Trusts will increase their rates from April 2024.**

Type of Activity - PAYG Prices	2023/24				
	Aneurin Leisure	Halo	Torfaen	Newport Live	Merthyr Tydfil
Swimming (Core Prices)					

## Aneurin Leisure Trust Core Fees and Charges 2024/25

Swim Adult (Standard)	£4.80	£4.90	£3.75	£5.15	£4.00
Swim Junior (Standard)	£2.40	£2.60	£3.05	£2.60	Free
Swim Adult (Concession)	£2.40	£2.60	£3.05	N/a	N/a
Swim Junior (Concession)	£1.20	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
<b>Lifestyle Studio (Core Prices)</b>					
Lifestyle Studio Adult (Standard)	£7.50	£8.45	£6.20	£5.15	£8
Lifestyle Studio Junior (Standard)	£3.75	£5.60	£4.75	£2.60	£4
Lifestyle Studio (concession)	£3.50	£5.60	£4.75	N/a	N/a
Lifestyle Studio Junior (Concession)	£1.75	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

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## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### All Portfolios – Increase in Fees & Charges by 5%

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Rhian Hayden</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Gina Taylor</b>
Organisation:	<b>Resources Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gina Taylor		
Reviewed by:	Rhian Hayden		
Approved by:	Rhian Hayden		

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for increasing income for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council’s Bridging the gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.</p> <p>This business case will propose increasing discretionary Fees &amp; Charges by a minimum of 5%.</p>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Across the Council service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council’s budget gap.</p> <p>The Council has previously agreed a policy of full cost recovery therefore all fees &amp; charges must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure where appropriate the costs of providing the services are reflected in the fees &amp; charges agreed and implemented.</p> <p>For 2024/25 employee costs are expected to increase by at least 5% with other costs anticipated to increase by an average 4% (CPI assumption MTFs). Given these estimated higher costs of delivering services to the public, where charged income levels should be considered / revised.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p>The budget assessment of income generated from all Fees &amp; Charges for 2023/2024 is £14.5m and this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £10m from Discretionary Fees &amp; Charges</li> <li>• £4.2m from fees &amp; charges set nationally (e.g., Planning &amp; Building Control Fees, Fixed Penalty Notices, Fairer Charging etc)</li> <li>• £0.2m from Consortia arrangements</li> </ul>



	<p><b>Option 1 – Do not increase discretionary Fees &amp; Charges for 2024/2025.</b></p> <p>The assumption in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is to increase all income budgets by 4% in line with the assumption for inflation. This will increase income budgets by £0.6m.</p> <p>If individual discretionary fees &amp; charges are not increased by a minimum of 4% there is a risk that this will result in a cost pressure in 2024/2025 as fees &amp; charges will not increase in line with budget targets.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – Increase discretionary Fees &amp; Charges by 4% in line with the assumption within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy</b></p> <p>Increasing all discretionary fees &amp; charges by 4% should generate the income required to meet the proposed income budgets for 2024/2025, however will not generate additional income to contribute to the current identified budget gap within the MTFS.</p> <p><b>Option 3 – Increase discretionary Fees &amp; Charges by 5% (as a minimum)</b></p> <p>This proposal is to increase discretionary charges by an additional 1% over and above the assumption within the MTFS. This option would deliver an increase in income of approximately £100,000 and would include increasing internal SLAs (with Schools, Corporate Landlord etc) by 5%.</p> <p><b>Risks identified for Options 2 and 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand may drop off when prices are increased resulting in lower income levels being generated and budget cost pressures emerging as a consequence.</li> <li>• Increasing the costs to both external and internal customers resulting in increased pressures facing schools and other budgets.</li> <li>• Schools may consider withdrawing from the SLAs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mitigating Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular monitoring of fees and charges should identify cost pressures as they emerge and allow actions to be put in place to address the cost pressure.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>

	An analysis of income budgets and forecast income (at quarter 2) have formed the basis of the calculations within this proposal.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 Will increase the budget gap identified in the MTFS by £0.6m</li> <li>- Option 2 No financial impact on the budget gap identified in the MTFS.</li> <li>- Option 3 Increased income and a reduction in the budget gap of £0.1m</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Income Generation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£0.1m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£0.1m</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Income Generation	2024/2025	£0.1m	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£0.1m
Year	Potential Income Generation														
2024/2025	£0.1m														
2025/2026	£0														
2026/2027	£0														
2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£0.1m														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	Council will consider Fees & Charges as part of the budget setting process and the review of the Fees & Charges Register for 2024/2025.														

# Agenda Item 12

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Cabinet**  
Date of meeting: **21st February 2024**  
Report Subject: **Revenue Budget 2024/2025**  
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor S Thomas, Leader / Cabinet Member  
Corporate Overview and Performance**  
Report Submitted by: **R Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	25/1/24				19/2/24	21/2/24	27/2/24	16/2/24 – Trade Unions

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report is presented to Members to:-

- i) provide an update on the provisional local government settlement for 2024/25 and its impact upon the Council's budget.
- ii) consider and agree the detailed revenue budget for 2024/25 including cost and service pressures, proposed efficiencies and budget cuts and the use of reserves.
- iii) agree the level of Council Tax increase for the 2024/2025 financial year.
- iv) agree the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/2025 to 2028/2029.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 The report covers the following:

Section	Contents
<b>2.6 – 2.18</b>	National Aggregate External Finance (AEF) Position
<b>2.19 – 2.26</b>	Blaenau Gwent AEF position
<b>5.1.1 - 5.1.10</b>	Aggregated External Finance (AEF) funding and the MTFS
<b>5.1.11 – 5.1.18</b>	Cost Pressures and Growth
<b>5.1.19 - 5.1.29</b>	Individual Schools Budget
<b>5.1.30 – 5.1.37</b>	Bridging The Gap Programme
<b>5.1.38 – 5.1.51</b>	Proposed use of Reserves

2.2 The Provisional Settlement contains details of the revenue funding that Welsh Authorities can expect to receive in 2024/25 to allow them to set their budgets and determine levels of Council Tax for that year. It also provides details of the Capital funding that Authorities can expect to receive to fund their Capital Programmes. Indicative settlements for 2025/2026 financial year onwards have not been provide. The written statements from the Minister for Finance and Local Government is attached as Appendix 1.

- 2.3 Revenue funding from Welsh Government (WG) is provided in the form of Aggregate External Finance (AEF) which is made up of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). This AEF funding is un-hypothecated i.e. it is not earmarked for specific services, and it is up to individual Councils to decide how to allocate to services to fit with their priorities (while considering statutory responsibilities).
- 2.4 Revenue funding also comes in the form of specific grants, in which case the funding is earmarked for a particular purpose. It is the long-term intention of the WG that the number of specific grants is reduced, with funding being transferred into the AEF, giving Local Authorities more flexibility on distributing funding to services. Hence, this form of funding should diminish over time.
- 2.5 Capital funding is provided in the form of General Capital funding, made up of an Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) approval and General Capital Grant approval. The USB approval is a borrowing approval for which revenue support is provided within the AEF to cover debt financing costs i.e. principal and interest. It is un-hypothecated, meaning that borrowing can be carried out for any capital purpose. The General Capital Grant is, as its name suggests, a grant that can be used for any capital purpose.
- 2.6 **National Position (All Wales)**
- 2.7 On the 20 December 2023, the Minister for Finance and Local Government published the provisional local government settlement. The overall headline increase in AEF quoted by WG is 3.1% (£169.8m) which was in line with the indicative level provided in the previous year. Compared to the Welsh average, the 2.6% increase for Blaenau Gwent places us 15<sup>th</sup> in the all-Wales table, with the lowest increase being 2% for Gwynedd and Conwy. By providing additional funding of £1.3m, the Minister has implemented a floor mechanism at 2% which benefits two authorities.
- 2.8 No grants have transferred into the provisional settlement. However, WG are aiming to reduce the number of separate grants paid to local authorities from 2024/2025 and to move grants into the revenue settlement. Further details of these changes are expected as part of the final settlement.
- 2.9 It is anticipated that the Flood & Sustainable Drainage grant will be one of the grants transferring into the final settlement. It is proposed that this funding be passported directly to the Environment Portfolio. It is also proposed that any further grants transferring into the final settlement be passported to the relevant service.
- 2.10 Certain Specific Revenue Grants data has only been published on an all-Wales basis, totalling £1.3b for 2024/2025. Funding for some grants has increased e.g. Universal Free School meals (£30.5m), a number of grants have decreased e.g. Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief (£50.8m), Homelessness grants (£11.5m), Social Care Workforce grant (£10m). It is difficult to assess the financial impact for the Council at this stage. However, the assumption is that services will need to manage within the funding allocations awarded.

- 2.11 In terms of capital grants, the non-hypothecated general capital funding for 2024-25 remains at 2023/2024 level of £180m. Capital grants also include £20m to allow local authorities to respond to the decarbonisation agenda, it is understood that decarbonisation grant will continue to be allocated via an application process.
- 2.12 Further details of the specific grants for local government will be published alongside the final RSG settlement in March 2024.
- 2.13 The funding provided through this settlement:
- Protect core, frontline public services as far as possible.
  - Deliver the greatest benefit to households.
  - Prioritise jobs, wherever possible.
  - Work in partnership with other public sector bodies to face this financial storm together.
  - Re-focus funding away from non-devolved areas, which the UK Government should be funding.
- 2.14 There is specific reference in the Minister's letter regarding teachers' pay and this confirms that all available funding has been provided within the settlement: -
- "I have again taken the decision to provide all the available funding up front and not hold back funding for in year recognition of the 2024/2025 teachers' pay deal. Authorities budget planning must therefore accommodate these costs."*
- 2.15 The current policy and funding arrangements for Council Tax Reduction Schemes (CTRS) continues into 2024/25. Consequently, £244 million continues to be included in the Settlement for funding the Council Tax Support Scheme. This reflects the costs of the Scheme when it was first established in 2013/14, but again means that any additional costs resulting from increases in council tax levels or caseload for 2024/25 will fall to Local Authorities (of the £244m, the Council receives £8m towards costs of £9.7m in 2023/2024).
- 2.16 The provisional settlement announcement marked the start of a six-week consultation period which ended on 31 January 2024. The Minister will consider whether further amendments are to be made before the final settlement is announced.
- 2.17 The Minister recognises the increased costs of delivering services from high inflation, pay and increasing demand and acknowledges that Authorities will need to make difficult decisions on services, efficiencies, and council tax in setting their budget.
- 2.18 On 7 February 2024, Welsh Government announced a further £25m for 2024/2025 as a result of consequential funding from UK Government (see Appendix 1). £10.6m will be used to increase the Social Care Grant back to £45m (2023/2024 level) and the remaining £14.4m will be allocated to the revenue support grant to support pressures in both social care and education, including teachers pay, as local needs dictates.

## 2.19 **Blaenau Gwent Position**

- 2.20 The headline increase included within the provisional settlement for BGCBC after adjustments to the tax base was 2.6% (£3.6m), compared to the all Wales increase of 3.1%. However, it is anticipated that this will increase to 2.8% (£3.95m) following the recent announcement of the additional £25m. Whilst this increase is welcomed, given the current economic climate and cost of living crisis, the Council is faced with significant financial challenges. The details included within this report identifies budget cuts of between £6.27m and £10m for 2024/2025. At the minimum level these cuts do not address the full identified shortfall and some use of reserves will be required to set a balanced budget.
- 2.21 The Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) increase, quoted as 3.4%, is the fourth lowest in Wales (compared to an all Wales increase of 4.1%).
- 2.22 The SSA is the detailed funding formula that is intended to reflect variations in the need to spend which might be expected if all Welsh Authorities responded in a similar way to the demand for services in their area. Indicators of need include population, pupil numbers, deprivation factors, population dispersion etc. The SSA is the mechanism for distributing RSG which enables Authorities to **theoretically** charge the same council tax for the provision of a similar standard of service. However, if Authorities don't spend at SSA level, then council tax levels will not be the same, which in practice, is what happens.
- 2.23 The Council's settlement reflects a range of less favourable re-distributional movements in population indicators and free school meal numbers, with favourable movements in pupil numbers and benefits:

**Population** – Blaenau Gwent's population has decreased by 1.7% compared to the all Wales decrease of 0.4% and this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a population decrease.

Population indicators make up a large proportion of the cost driver indicators within the SSA formula and has resulted in a decrease of £0.5m in SSA.

### **Education** Demographics –

- Nursery & Primary pupil numbers have increased by 0.5% compared to the all Wales decrease of 0.9%.
- Secondary school pupil numbers have increased by 0.1%, compared to the all Wales increase of 2.1%.
- Free School meals pupils have increased by 21% in the Primary Sector and 25.9% in the Secondary Sector, compared to the all Wales increase of 28.6%% and 37.8% respectively.

The impact on the SSA of these data changes is a reduction of £0.35m. For information, BGCBC has consistently spent above the Education SSA on the Education services it provides and Blaenau Gwent's funding per pupil across all sectors is ranked highest in Wales at £6,606 per pupil compared to the all Wales average of £5,998.

**Deprivation Indicators** - IS (Income Support)/ JSA (Job seekers Allowance) /PC (Pension Credit)/ UC (Universal Credit)/ not in employment claimants have increased by 13.9% comparable to the all Wales increase.

- 2.24 The net impact of these movements is a decrease in the Council's proportion of the all Wales funding.
- 2.25 The Authority remains the highest receiver of Aggregate External Finance (RSG plus NNDR) on a per capita basis at £2,140.
- 2.26 General Capital Funding has remained at £3.84m, of which General Capital Grant is £1.95m and Supported Borrowing is £1.9m.

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

#### **3.1 Option 1 (preferred option)**

- 3.1.1 Subject to the decisions on the following recommendations, Members consider and recommend to Council the 2024/25 revenue budget as shown in table in paragraph 5.1.15.
- 3.1.2 Members to provide comment on the outcomes within the overall provisional RSG Settlement and note the potential for further change in the Final RSG Settlement (paragraphs 2.6 – 2.17).
- 3.1.3 Members to provide comment on the outcomes within the BGCBC provisional RSG Settlement and its impact upon the Medium Term Financial Strategy (paragraphs 2.18 – 2.26).
- 3.1.4 Members to consider and recommend to Council the updated cost pressures and growth items (£2.8m in total) identified in Appendix 2 (paragraphs 5.1.10 – 5.1.16) for inclusion in the Council's budget.
- 3.1.5 Members consider and recommend to Council the Bridging the Gap proposals (a summary of which is attached at Appendix 3 and detailed Business Cases are attached at Appendix 4) delivering a minimum of £6.27m of financial efficiencies and budget cuts towards the budget gap (paragraphs 5.1.32 to 5.1.37).
- 3.1.6 Members consider and recommend to Council the level of funding provided to schools (paragraph 5.1.19-5.1.27)
- 3.1.7 Members recommend that any grant/s transferring into the Final Settlement for 2024/2025 be passported to the relevant service/s.
- 3.1.8 Members consider and recommend to Council the use of reserves up to £2.1m to balance the budget for 2024/2025 (paragraphs 5.1.38 to 5.1.42). The level will be subject to the recommendations in paragraph 3.1.5 and 3.1.6 above.
- 3.1.9 Members consider and recommend to Council, a Council tax increase of a minimum of 5% for 2024/25 (paragraph 5.1.10) as per the Business Case CS12 (included in Appendix 3 and 4)
- 3.1.10 Approve the updated MTFs for 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 attached at Appendix 5.

### 3.2 **Option 2**

3.2.1 Members consider and do not agree the recommendations in the report.

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

4.1 The budget setting process and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) supports the Corporate Plan outcome “an ambitious and innovative Council delivering the quality services at the right time and in the right place” and ensures effective forward planning arrangements are in place to support the Council’s financial resilience.

4.2 The revenue & capital budgets support the delivery of all the Council priorities.

4.3 To comply with statutory responsibilities, the Council must set a balanced budget and set its Council Tax for the forthcoming year by 11 March 2024.

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

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

#### 5.1.1 **The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

5.1.2 The MTFS brings together all known factors affecting the Council’s financial position and forms the basis for decision making. The MTFS includes a forward look over the next five years to assess the spending requirements the Council is likely to face to deliver the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and highlights the level of cuts (reducing or stopping services) that will need to be made to ensure the Council can set a balanced budget each year. It is the financial framework which support the Council’s financial resilience and ensure it operates sustainably.

5.1.3 The current MTFS is attached at Appendix 5.

5.1.4 The latest assessment of the Council’s financial position over the next 5 years following the WG provisional settlement announcement for 2024/2025, (prior to the identification of budget reductions or increased income) identifies budget gaps of:-

#### 5.1.5 **Table 1 – MTFS Budget Gap (1)**

2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Total
£5.7m	£4m	£4.7m	£4m	£4.2m	£22.6m

5.1.6 A number of assumptions have been made in compiling the Draft Estimates and funding projections.



### 5.1.7 **Funding**

5.1.8 The AEF funding for 2024/2025, based on the provisional settlement and the recent (February 2024) further announcement, is £143.76m, an increase of £3.95m (2.8%) after adjustments to the tax base, when compared to 2023/2024.

5.1.9 The provisional settlement did not include any information on indicative funding for 2025/2026 onwards. The assumption included in the MTFs is that the AEF will remain cash flat.

5.1.10 The MTFs assumes an annual increase of 4% for Council Tax, however a Business Case is presented (included within Appendix 3 and 4) to increase Council Tax by a minimum of 5% for 2024/25. This would increase Band B properties by £1.37 per week.

### 5.1.11 **Costs**

5.1.12 The main assumptions applied in calculating the Draft Estimates include:

**Table 2 – Main Assumptions applied to Costs**

	<b>2024/2025</b>	<b>2025/2026 Onwards</b>
Pay Award	5%	5%
Employers Contribution to Local Government Pension Scheme	1%	1%
Price Inflation	4%	2%
Individual Schools Budget	2%	0% (cash flat)
Fees & Charges (in line with inflation)	4%	2%
Contribution to General Reserves per annum	£200,000	£200,000

### 5.1.13 **Service Cost Pressures and Growth**

5.1.14 Cost pressures are continually reviewed and updated in light of new information, budget forecasts etc. Existing, new service cost pressures and growth items (excluding school cost pressures) totalling £2.8m for 2024/25 have been identified and are included at Appendix 2. For 2025/2026 onwards, £2m per annum have been included in the MTFs.

5.1.15 It is proposed that the cost pressures totalling £2.8m are agreed and built into the Council's budget from 2024/2025.

5.1.16 Table 3 below details the impact the Provisional Settlement and the cost pressures have on the budget gap.

5.1.17 **Table 3 - Budget Gap based on 2024/25 Provisional RSG & Cost Pressures**

	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Funding					
AEF	(143,758)	(143,758)	(143,758)	(143,758)	(143,758)
Council Tax @ 4%	(39,585)	(41,169)	(42,816)	(44,528)	(46,309)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(183,343)</b>	<b>(184,927)</b>	<b>(186,574)</b>	<b>(188,286)</b>	<b>(190,067)</b>
Draft Estimates - Prior to savings	188,859	197,282	205,599	213,383	221,410
<b>Budget Gap</b>	<b>5,516</b>	<b>12,355</b>	<b>19,025</b>	<b>25,097</b>	<b>31,343</b>
Cost Pressures/growth	2,820	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Contribution to Reserves	200	200	200	200	200
<b>Budget Gap (2)</b>	<b>8,536</b>	<b>14,555</b>	<b>21,225</b>	<b>27,297</b>	<b>33,543</b>

5.1.18 There is a funding gap of £34m over the next five financial years, with a budget reduction / cut of £8.5m required for 2024/2025 in order to set a balanced budget.

5.1.19 **Individual Schools Budget (ISB)**

5.1.20 The funding gap of £8.5m assumes an increase of 2% (£1.08m) for the ISB and cost pressures of £0.86m as a result of increasing demographics (increase of 112 pupils across all schools), an increase in Resource Bases and the new Welsh School. Over the last few years, the ISB have increased in line with the increase in AEF:

- 2023/2024 4.2% (£2.1m)
- 2022/2023 8.4% (£3.91m)
- 2021/2022 3.3% (1.472m)

5.1.21 Schools are also facing significant cost pressures as a result of pay awards, utility costs and high inflation and these are currently estimated at:

5.1.22 **Table 4 – School Cost Pressures**

	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Pay	5% - Non-Teaching Staff 5% - Teaching Staff	1,156
Utilities	Gas & Electricity	1,335
Inflation (non-pay)	4%	215
<b>Total Cost Pressures</b>		<b>2,706</b>
Proposed Funding Increase	2%	(1,080)
Funding increase due to an increase in Demographics	112 pupils	(537)
<b>Potential Cost Pressures</b>		<b>1,089</b>

- 5.1.23 It is anticipated that an additional pressure will arise as a consequence of the employer's pension contribution to the teachers' pension scheme increasing from April 2024, however it is expected that funding will be provided by UK Government.
- 5.1.25 Overall school balances as of 31 March 2023 were £4.8m, a decrease of £1.4m on the previous financial year, and it is estimated that school balances will decrease by £3.6m by March 2024 to around £1.1m, with a significant number of schools forecasting deficit positions for 2024/2025.
- 5.1.26 The forecast reduction in reserve balances is due to:
- The significant increase in utility costs during 2023/2024
  - Teachers and non-teachers' pay award exceeding the ISB up lift for 2023/2024
  - General cost increases due to high inflation.
- 5.1.27 Members are asked to consider the level of funding to the ISB. Proposals are included in Business Case ED05 (included within Appendix 3 & 4). Any increase above 2% would increase the Council's funding gap, with an increase of 1% equating to £0.52m. A cash flat budget would result in the Council's funding gap reducing by £1m, further savings to the Council would be generated if the funding to Schools is cut.
- 5.1.28 Schools will therefore be asked to manage potential cost pressures in excess of £1m (depending on the outcome of 5.1.27 above) through energy reductions initiatives and wider cost efficiencies. It is anticipated that energy costs will decrease from April 2024 leading to a subsequent reduction in the identified cost pressures.
- 5.1.29 In the statement accompanying the provisional statement, WG stated that all available funding has been provided in the settlement and therefore, no further funding / specific grant can be expected to fund teachers' pay awards.

5.1.30 **BRIDGING THE GAP**

5.1.31 The Bridging the Gap programme remains the Council’s strategy for delivering financial efficiencies to ensure that the Council continues the journey of improving it’s financial stability and setting a balanced budget year on year.

5.1.32 Given the financial challenge facing the Council and the requirement to identify budget cuts of £34m over the next 5 years, the current programme of strategic business reviews have been updated and new proposals have been identified.

5.1.33 The table below provides a summary of the estimated achievement of the Strategic Business Reviews, a summary of the proposals are attached at Appendix 3 with the full Business Cases attached at Appendix 4.

5.1.34	<b>Estimated Achievement:</b>	<b>2024/2025 Low Estimate £’000</b>	<b>2024/2025 High Estimate £’000</b>
	<b>Total Estimated Financial Achievement</b>	6,270	10,032

5.1.35 Factoring in these amounts (at the lower estimated achievement) the impact for 2024/25 and future years on the budget gap/(surplus) is as follows: -

5.1.36 **Table 6 – Budget Gap After Applying the Bridging The Gap Estimated Achievement**

	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Revised Funding Gap (2)</b>	<b>8,536</b>	<b>14,555</b>	<b>21,225</b>	<b>27,297</b>	<b>33,543</b>
BTG Estimated Achievement	6,270	0	0	0	0
BTG prev. year		6,270	6,270	6,270	6,270
<b>Final Budget Gap (3)</b>	<b>2,266</b>	<b>8,285</b>	<b>14,955</b>	<b>21,027</b>	<b>27,273</b>

5.1.37 At the lower level, the proposed budget cuts / financial efficiencies are not sufficient to allow the Council to set a balanced budget for 2024/2025, as when factoring in the forecast achievement of Bridging the Gap, a budget gap of £2.3m remains (assuming a contribution to General Reserves of £0.2m), with a gap of £27m over the next 5 years.

#### 5.1.38 **Proposed Use of Reserves**

- 5.1.39 To achieve a balanced budget for 2024/2025, it will be necessary to utilise reserves as an interim (one-off) measure. This will be the second year that the use of reserves has been required to fund the revenue budget, with £4m agreed for 2023/2024. Fortunately for 2023/2024 the full £4m is not expected to be required giving the Council improved flexibility to use reserves in 2024/2025.
- 5.1.40 The continued use of reserves to balance the budget is not sustainable in the long term, only providing one-off in year funding and increasing the funding gap in the following financial years.
- 5.1.41 Depleting reserves and balances will have a detrimental impact on the Council's financial resilience and sustainability, and its ability to fund unforeseen / emerging cost pressures, budget overspends, invest to save projects etc.
- 5.1.42 It is proposed to utilise £2.07m from the Financial Sustainability Reserve. There will be no contribution to the General Fund for 2024/2025.
- 5.1.43 The budget gap for 2025/2026 based on current assumptions is £8.3m.

#### 5.1.44 **General Revenue Reserves – Current Position**

- 5.1.45 The provisional reserves (subject to external Audit) of the Council as at 31 March 2023 were:
- General Fund Reserve - £13m
  - Earmarked Revenue Reserves - £30.5m
- 5.1.46 General Reserves have increased over the medium term, addressing the improvement needed in reserves which was highlighted by Audit Wales in 2018, strengthening the financial resilience of the Council. However, the General Reserve did not increase during 2022/2023, and Council agreed to utilise £300,000 from this reserve during 2023 to fund the provision of free school meals during the summer holiday period thereby reducing the balance to £12.7m.
- 5.1.47 Reserves and balances are monitored and reviewed during the financial year and it is currently estimated that based on the December 2023 Revenue Budget forecast, usable revenue earmarked reserves will reduce by in excess of £6.5m (including £3.6m for Schools) to fund the budget, planned expenditure and unplanned cost pressures which have emerged during the financial year.
- 5.1.48 The impact on utilising usable revenue reserves to balance the budget and based on 2023/2024 forecast (at quarter 3) is shown in the table below.

5.1.49 **Table 8 – Impact on Usable Revenue Reserves**

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Provisional Balance 31/3/2023 £'000</b>	<b>Forecast Draw 2023/2024 £'000</b>	<b>Estimated Balance 31/3/2024 £'000</b>	<b>Estimated Balance 31/3/2025 £'000</b>
General Reserve	13,067	(300)	12,767	12,767
Usable Earmarked Reserves	19,733	(2,517)	17,216	15,150
School Balances	4,790	(3,600)	1,190	0
Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves	2,292	(132)	2,160	2,160
Revenue Grants & Contributions Unapplied	3,751	(152)	3,599	3,599
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,663</b>	<b>(6,701)</b>	<b>36,932</b>	<b>33,676</b>

5.1.50 The estimated balance as at March 2025 takes into account the use of reserves to balance the budget in 2024/2025 and assumes:

- 2024/2025 outturn breaks even – no unplanned draw from General Reserves
- School balances are fully utilised by March 2025
- No further draw from specific reserves during 2024/2025
- Bridging the Gap proposals, totalling a minimum of £6.27m are approved and implemented to deliver the full savings during 2024/2025.

5.1.51 If the budget gap increases as a result of Council not agreeing all the Bridging the Gap proposals, this additional budget pressure will need to be funded from the General Reserve in the short term.

**5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions**

**5.2.1 MTFS Assumptions**

5.2.2 MTFS Outcomes are not delivered as expected. High inflation, increasing interest rates, increasing utility costs and pay awards are having a major impact on Council costs and whilst it is expected that these will reduce over the short to medium term, there is increased uncertainty when budget planning.

5.2.3 This risk will be mitigated by regular monitoring of proposals, which will also be reported through the all member quarterly budget monitoring briefings to Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee and reports to Cabinet.

**5.2.4 Use of Reserves**

5.2.5 The Council is faced with significant financial challenges in meeting the funding gap of £34m over the next 5 years and will need to continue to develop proposals to deliver budget cuts to address this funding gap. Whilst this report proposes utilising £2m reserves in 2024/2025, this is the second year that reserves have been relied upon to balance the budget. This is a temporary solution only, and there is a risk that savings proposals in future years will not address the funding

gap. Further reliance on reserves to balance the budget in future years will impact on the financial sustainability of the Council and may lead to the S.151 Officer issuing a Section 114 Notice.

5.2.6 Bridging the Gap proposals of £8.3m (over and above £6.27m already proposed) will need to be developed, approved, and implemented by 31 March 2025 if the Council is to set a balanced budget for 2025/2026.

#### 5.2.7 Bridging the Gap Proposals

5.2.8 There is a risk that the Bridging the Gap proposals will not deliver the level of budget cuts identified, particularly the Business Case proposing that every portfolio finds between 1% and 2% efficiency savings/budget cuts resulting in year cost pressures, budget overspends or having an impact on service delivery.

5.2.9 This risk will be mitigated by regular monitoring of proposals, which will also be reported through the all member quarterly budget monitoring briefings to Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee and reports to Cabinet. Action Plans will be developed and implemented where appropriate during the year to mitigate these risks.

5.2.10 Council may fail to set a balanced budget within the legal timeframe. This will be mitigated by ensuring that Members consider the final budget report (including statutory resolutions) on 6 March 2024.

5.2.11 If grant funding does not continue at the current level, there is a risk that cost pressures will emerge particularly where grants are used to support core services, e.g. sustainable social services grant. This can be mitigated by close monitoring of the budget and consultation with Welsh Government/WLGA on service pressures.

5.2.12 If Welsh Government does not provide indicative figures for Revenue Support Grant into the medium / longer term, there is a risk that budget planning will be adversely affected. This risk can be mitigated somewhat by robust medium term financial planning.

### 5.3 **Legal**

5.3.1 The Council has a legal duty to set a balanced budget and agree the rate of Council Tax.

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

5.4.1 There will be service change /service reduction arising from the Strategic Business Reviews included within the Bridging the Gap programme which may impact upon staff.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 *Performance Information and Data*  
N/A

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

6.2.1 The proposed budget will enable the Council to protect front line services in delivering its priority areas and to continue its work to become a more commercial and resilient organisation. All these proposals will have some impact on the public, some people will be impacted more than others depending on what services they are in receipt of. To ensure we remain in budget, the potential impacts may include a reduction in the Council's ability to respond or react to requests from the public or elected members.

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

6.3.1 To support the Council to set a budget for 2024/25, there has been an engagement process carried out to inform people of the situation and get them involved. The information presented aimed to raise awareness of what may have to be done to set a balanced budget from April 2024, and to provide the opportunity for people to feedback on key issues to help decision-making, e.g. prioritising services, setting council tax, and potential saving proposals for now and the future.

6.3.2 Headteachers raised a number of concerns during consultation with the School Budget Forum regarding the budget proposals relating to school budgets:

- Schools are facing significant financial challenges with increased costs for utilities, pay and general inflation, with an increasing number of schools forecasting significant deficits for 2024/2025 and beyond.
- Learners with complex needs are increasing and reducing staff capacity to balance the budget will have a detrimental impact on staff, learners and the school environment, affecting the most vulnerable learners.
- Could lead to increasing class sizes and non-compliance with Welsh Government guidance.

6.3.3 A series of engagement events were held around the borough for people to attend in person, and an online session via Microsoft Teams was conducted. People were able to discuss the situation with elected members and senior managers from the Council. All those attending were encouraged to participate in a survey (available until Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024), which was also shared on social media, with the intention to get as many people as possible participating and sharing their views.

6.3.4 As of Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024, a total of 680 questionnaires were returned to the Council which equates to around 1% of the area's population. This response rate is a drop from last year when over 3,700 responses were received. This does however fall more in-line with expected response rates for budget



engagement processes from previous years and is the second highest response rate carried out by the Council.

6.3.5 The final results from the public engagement will be available following survey close and will be shared with Members by Friday 16<sup>h</sup> February 2024. They will be included at Appendix 6 to this report.

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

6.4.1 The Council continues its move to medium to long term financial planning. This is evidenced by:-

- Budget proposals being considered on a five year rolling programme basis.
- The MTFS covers the period 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 and will roll forward one year, every year. The MTFS will be reviewed and updated during 2024/2025.
- The Bridging the Gap programme will continue to identify opportunities for development in the medium to long term.
- The current approved capital programme covers the period 2019/2020 to 2025/2026 in line with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme. This will be reviewed and updated during 2024/2025.

#### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 The Council invests in services to deliver the best outcomes for the most vulnerable individuals including establishing a Children's Residential Home and increasing the number of Resources Bases for learners with additional learning needs, with the aim of reducing reliance on out of county placements. This will reduce costs in the medium to long term.

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

6.6.1 The report and accompanying information has been developed in partnership with budget holders across all service areas.

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

N/A

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

6.8.1 Integrated Impact Assessments have been completed where required and are attached to the detailed Business Cases at Appendix 4.

### 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Wider Corporate Leadership Team, political groups, Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council.

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

- *Appendix 1 – Written Statement*
- *Appendix 2 – Cost Pressures*
- *Appendix 3 – Summary of Bridging the Gap Proposals*
- *Appendix 4 – Business Cases*
- *Appendix 5 – Medium Term Financial Strategy*
- *Appendix 6 – Public Engagement Results (To follow)*
- *Appendix 7 – Capital Programme*



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE**            **Provisional Local Government Settlement 2024-25**

**DATE**            **20 December 2023**

**BY**                **Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government**

In 2024-25, local authorities will receive £5.7bn from the Welsh Government Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and non-domestic rates (NDR) to spend on delivering key services. This means the core revenue funding for local government in 2024-25 will increase by 3.1% on a like-for-like basis compared to the current year.

Additional funding of £1.3m is being provided to ensure no authority will receive less than a 2.0% increase.

The Welsh Government's budget is worth up to £1.3bn less in real terms than when it was set in 2021. Our settlement, which comes largely from the UK Government in the form of a block grant, is not sufficient to meet all pressures public services face as a result of persistently-high inflation and rising demand. As we have developed the draft Budget 2024-25, which was published yesterday, we have prioritised protecting core frontline public services as far as possible; supporting the hardest hit households and prioritising jobs, where we can.

We have therefore protected the indicative rise of 3.1% in the local government settlement, and in line with our focus on supporting households, this also continues to protect vulnerable and low-income households from any reduction in support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). We will continue to maintain full entitlements in 2024-25 by providing £244m in the settlement.

In addition to the core settlement, I am publishing indicative information on specific revenue and capital grants planned for 2024-25, which amount to more than £1.3bn for revenue and more than £960m for capital at this provisional stage.

We have worked closely with local government throughout the year, and understand the pressures local government is facing. I am proud of the working relationship Welsh Government and local government share in Wales and we will continue to engage closely through the WLGA.

Demand for services, alongside cost pressures, caused by persistently-high inflation, means local authorities will need to make difficult decisions about services, efficiencies, and council tax as they set their budgets. It is important they engage meaningfully with their local communities as they consider priorities for the forthcoming year.

It is not appropriate for the Welsh Government to set an arbitrary level of council tax increase. Local authorities will need to take account of the full range of funding sources available to them, as well as the pressures they face. I encourage them to continue to carefully balance the impact of increases on household finances with the loss of support and services. I know that across Wales, leaders, elected members and officers alike will be striving to find ways to make the best use of their resources to make the most difference for their communities.

I am providing a package of non-domestic rates support which will benefit every ratepayer in Wales. I set this package out as part of the draft Budget yesterday. We will cap the increase to the non-domestic rates multiplier for 2024-25 to 5%, at a recurring annual cost of £18m. This is lower than the 6.7% increase that would otherwise apply. We will also be investing an additional £78m to provide a fifth successive year of support for retail, leisure and hospitality businesses with their non-domestic rates bills. We also continue to support ratepayers with increased liabilities following the 2023 non-domestic rates revaluation. Our transitional relief scheme continues to phase in changes for eligible ratepayers at a cost of £38m in 2024-25.

I set out the position on capital funding as part of the draft Budget. I have maintained the general capital funding for local authorities at £180m, the indicative level that was set last year. With soaring inflationary costs in the construction sector, I know this will mean local authorities will have to look carefully at and prioritise their capital programmes to continue to invest to best effect in the provision of public services. I have also continued to provide £20m in each year to enable authorities to respond to our joint priority of decarbonisation, to continue the focus on contributing to the Net Zero Wales plan.

Attached to this statement is a summary table setting out the settlement allocations (Aggregate External Finance (AEF)) by authority. They are derived using the formula agreed with local government.

As part of our Programme of Government we are committed to ensuring that local authorities are not hampered by unnecessary bureaucracy. In our discussions, local authorities overwhelmingly highlighted grants management and administration as the most burdensome administrative overhead, and the area with the greatest opportunity for change to achieve mutual benefit.

A programme of work is underway to reduce the number of separate grants paid to local authorities from 2024-25 and to consider moving grants into the de-hypothecated settlement if the wider context makes this appropriate. Some areas have already been identified for change and the draft budget sets out how we are rationalising and refocusing education specific grants. Where changes have already been worked through, these are set out in the grant tables published as part of the settlement. This work continues and I expect more changes to be presented at part of the final settlement. I am committed to complete transparency about the movements so local authorities and others can clearly see any changes in funding.

Further details will be sent to all local authorities and published on the [Welsh Government's website](#)

## Summary Table

### 2024-25 Provisional Settlement compared to 2023-24 adjusted final AEF

	2023-24 AEF (£000) <sup>1</sup>	2024-25 AEF including floor (£000)	Change (£000)	% change	Rank
Isle of Anglesey	123,866	126,973	3,107	2.5%	17
Gwynedd	227,541	232,092	4,551	2.0%	21
Conwy	198,736	202,710	3,975	2.0%	21
Denbighshire	187,785	194,743	6,958	3.7%	4
Flintshire	251,959	257,555	5,596	2.2%	20
Wrexham	224,722	231,963	7,241	3.2%	8
Powys	228,558	234,940	6,381	2.8%	11
Ceredigion	129,341	132,715	3,373	2.6%	14
Pembrokeshire	212,626	217,999	5,372	2.5%	16
Carmarthenshire	338,439	349,441	11,002	3.3%	7
Swansea	417,588	433,590	16,002	3.8%	3
Neath Port Talbot	276,915	284,624	7,708	2.8%	12
Bridgend	250,557	257,978	7,422	3.0%	10
The Vale of Glamorgan	202,631	208,901	6,270	3.1%	9
Rhondda Cynon Taf	471,049	484,111	13,062	2.8%	13
Merthyr Tydfil	118,886	122,923	4,037	3.4%	5
Caerphilly	340,037	347,726	7,689	2.3%	19
Blaenau Gwent	139,809	143,433	3,624	2.6%	15
Torfaen	172,265	177,988	5,723	3.3%	6
Monmouthshire	122,561	125,355	2,794	2.3%	18
Newport	289,306	302,972	13,667	4.7%	1
Cardiff	594,712	618,958	24,246	4.1%	2
<b>Total unitary authorities</b>	<b>5,519,889</b>	<b>5,689,689</b>	<b>169,800</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	

Note: Total may not sum correctly due to rounding

1. 2023-24 AEF adjusted for the latest 2024-25 tax base.



Ein cyf/Our ref

To:  
Leaders of County and County Borough Councils in Wales

Copied to:  
Chief Executives and Directors of Finance, County and County Borough Councils in Wales  
Chief Executive and Director of Finance, Welsh Local Government Association

7 February 2024

Dear Colleagues,

On 24 January, the UK Government announced it would increase funding to local authorities in England by £600m. I am expecting a consequential allocation for Wales of around £25m for 2024-25 will be confirmed at the UK Spring Budget on 6 March.

Given the difficult choices I know you are all facing as part of your budget processes, I wanted to write to you following Cabinet discussions about the allocation of this funding.

As part of addressing the challenges we faced in the Draft Budget, the Minister for Health and Social Services reduced the social care workforce grant by £10.6m – from £45m to £35m. This was not an easy decision, particularly given the challenges facing social care. Leaders have expressed concern at this and it has also been a theme in the Senedd scrutiny sessions on the Draft Budget. I am pleased that I can reverse this and return the grant to £45m for 2024-25.

The remaining £14.4m will be allocated to the revenue support grant in 2024-25 to support pressures in both social care and education, including teachers' pay, as local need dictates. This supports one of our key principles in developing the 2024-25 Draft Budget: to protect core public services as far as possible. The original funding floor remains and the increased funding in the settlement now means no individual authority has an increase lower than 2.3%.

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

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[Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru)

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

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

This funding will be formally allocated at our Final Budget on 27 February and will form part of the Final Local Government Settlement.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca". The script is cursive and fluid.

**Rebecca Evans AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Cyllid a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Finance and Local Government





Portfolio	Service Area	Description	2024/2025 £'000	2025/2026 £'000	2026/2027 £'000	2027/2028 £'000
<b>Education</b>	ISB - Pupil Demographics	Increase in pupil population at September 2023 of 112.5. Estimated to decrease from September 2024	537	(539)	(497)	(328)
	ALN / Resource Bases/Wellbeing Provision	New Resource Bases within Schools - Business Case agreed 4 September 2023	180	110	0	0
	Home to School Transport	Increase in demand and contract prices	406			
	New Welsh School	Phased implementation to capacity - school opening Spring 25	147	75	50	
	<b>Sub Total - Education</b>		<b>1,270</b>	<b>(354)</b>	<b>(447)</b>	<b>(328)</b>
<b>Social Services</b>	Children's Residential Placements	Cost pressure to meet current demand and complexity	250			
	Community Care	To meet anticipated cost increases (over and above assumed inflation of 4%) in commissioned services due to the Living Wage and wider inflationary increases	1,100			
	Social Care	Reinstatement of Budget re: Temporary Staffing Savings 2024/2025 & 2025/2026			56	
	<b>Sub Total - Social Services</b>		<b>1,350</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Environment</b>	Coroners Court	Regional Service - Cost Increases as a result of service review	34			
	Fire Levy - 4.03% Uplift	Levy increase above inflation assumption	23	0	0	0
	<b>Sub Total - Environment</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Corporate Services</b>	SRS - Management Fee	Increase in Management Fee over and above 4% inflation assumption	56			
	Transformation Fund	Reinstatement of Budget - Temporary savings for 2024/2025		250		
	<b>Sub Total - Corporate Services</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Leisure</b>	Management Fees	Management Fee Increase based on September 2023 CPI (6.7%)	87	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL - COST PRESSURES</b>			<b>2,820</b>	<b>(104)</b>	<b>(391)</b>	<b>(328)</b>

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<b>BRIDGING THE GAP PROPOSALS 2024/2025</b>				
<b>Business Case Ref:</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Summary of Proposal</b>	<b>2024/2025 Financial Impact</b>	
			<b>High £</b>	<b>Low £</b>
CS01	Corporate Services	Members Allowances - To reduce the Budget for Employers Superannuation Contributions	12,000	12,000
CS03	Corporate Services	Resources Department - Review of Staffing Structures	157,000	157,000
CS04	Cross Cutting	Budget reductions to Inflationary Increases & Transformation Budgets, reduction to inflationary uplifts to supplies & services across all portfolio budgets and increase to grant income for Universal free school meals	1,946,000	1,946,000
CS05	Corporate Services	CCTV - Budget Review and reduction to staffing budget & supplies and services to reflect expenditure	50,000	9,090
CS07	Corporate Services	Corporate Services / Commercial and Customer - Departmental Review of staffing Structures	347,100	347,100
CS09	Corporate Services	Corporate & Performance - Review and reduction of staffing budgets to reflect reduced contractual hours.	22,100	22,100
CS10	Cross Cutting	Every Service will be required to achieve budget reductions of between 1% and 2% in addition to the other budget proposals	2,000,000	1,000,000
CS11	Cross Cutting	Increase Discretionary Fees & Charges by a minimum of 5%	100,000	0
CS12	Council Tax	Increase council tax by a minimum of 5%	380,000	0

Business Case Ref:	Portfolio	Summary of Proposal	2024/2025 Financial Impact	
			High £	Low £
CS14	Corporate Services	Copted Members Allowances - Reduce budget to reflect expenditure	12,000	12,000
ECON01	Development & Estates	Estates - Review of Staffing Structures	60,170	60,170
ECON02	Business & Regeneration	Economy / Business & Regeneration – maximisation of grant funding	17,000	17,000
ECON03	Business & Regeneration	Review of Service Delivery / Alternative Service Delivery / Income Generation	50,000	50,000
ED02	Education	10% reduction in the contribution to the EAS	34,000	34,000
ED04	Education	Cash flat Management Fee to Anuerin Leisure Trust	135,670	135,670
ED05	Education	Schools Budget - Cash flat / Budget cut to Individual Schools Budget (ISB)	3,000,000	1,051,000
ED06	Education	Review of Staffing Budgets & maximisation of grant funding	107,460	107,460
ENV01	Environment	Public Protection - Review of Staffing Structures	100,000	100,000
ENV09	Environment	Trade Waste - Increasing Trade Waste prices to Businesses between 5% and 20%	54,856	2,220
ENV11	Environment	Waste Services - Charging an Admin Fee related to delivering replacement Residual Bins and Recycling Bags	27,410	3,662

Business Case Ref:	Portfolio	Summary of Proposal	2024/2025 Financial Impact	
			High £	Low £
ENV12	Environment	Household Waste Recycling Centres - Review of operating days / hours	110,000	34,000
ENV15	Environment/Economy/Planning	Review of Staffing Budget - Budget reduction relating to a deleted post	45,000	45,000
SS01	Social Services	Adult Services - Newly created Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service	57,000	57,000
SS02	Social Services	Adult Services - Rationalisation/Reduction of Staffing Levels	113,000	113,000
SS04	Social Services	Adult Services - Reduction in domicillary care Packages through improved quality assurance measures	250,000	250,000
SS05	Social Services	Provider Services - Reduction in Community Options and Day Centre Transport	153,560	7,000
SS06	Social Services	Provider Services - Rationalisation/Reduction of Staffing Levels	110,000	110,000
SS07	Social Services	Children's Services - Temporary Reduction of Staffing Levels in Placement Team	56,000	56,000
SS08	Social Services	Children's Services - Rationalisation/Reduction of Staffing Levels in Early Years Team	73,000	73,000
SS10	Social Services	Children's Services - Rationalisation/Reduction of Staffing Levels in Supporting Change Team	114,000	114,000

Business Case Ref:	Portfolio	Summary of Proposal	2024/2025 Financial Impact	
			High £	Low £
SS11	Social Services	Children's Services - Rationalisation/Reduction of Staffing Levels in Safeguarding Team	113,900	113,900
<b>TOTAL - BUSINESS CASES PRESENTED</b>			<b>9,808,226</b>	<b>6,039,372</b>
Other Efficiencies Identified and Implemented during 2023/2024			224,000	224,000
<b>TOTAL CUTS IDENTIFIED</b>			<b>10,032,226</b>	<b>6,263,372</b>

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Members Allowances - Additional Superannuation Budget

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Sarah King</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Sarah King</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC – Governance and Partnerships</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gemma Wasley	Gemma Wasley	29/08/23
Reviewed by:	Sarah King		
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to provide options for realigning/reducing the budget for Member Allowances to deliver cost reductions (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5 year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the Independent Remuneration Panel Wales, the Council allocates budget to all Elected Members as part of the Member Remuneration. Payments made in respect of Members' salaries and superannuation are paid from this allocated budget. A review of historical trends identifies that there has been limited take up of the identified budget for Members joining the superannuation scheme, therefore there is a projected underspend against the budget in 23/24, continuing the trend from previous years. A budget reduction in this area could contribute to identifying savings to mitigate the estimated Council funding gap.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget would be available for additional Members to join the superannuation scheme.</li> <li>• Reduced likelihood of a cost pressure arising against the identified budget in future periods.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No budget reduction to contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 2 – Budget reduction of £12,000</b></p> <p>£12,000 would be the maximum budget that could be removed without it impacting the overall annual spend and creating a cost pressure based on historical trends within the budget.</p>



	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget reduction would contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> <li>• Budget would be aligned to historical spend data.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There would be less contingency within the budget to allow Members to join the superannuation scheme without resulting in an overspend against the budget.</li> </ul> <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of budget could be perceived to be discouraging Members from joining the superannuation scheme.</li> <li>• Members joining the superannuation scheme could result in an overspend against the budget.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will not discourage any Members from joining the superannuation scheme and all Members will continue to be provided with this opportunity.</li> <li>• Historical spend evidence supports the level of budget reduction without resulting in a cost pressure.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 3 – Budget reduction of a value below £12,000</b></p> <p>A budget reduction of less than £12,000 could be implemented without it impacting the overall spend and creating a cost pressure based on historical trends within the budget.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget reduction would contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> <li>• Budget would be more aligned to historical spend data.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is less contingency within the budget to allow Members to join the superannuation scheme without resulting in an overspend against the budget. Although more contingency would remain than if the maximum £12,000 were to be removed.</li> </ul> <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of budget could be perceived to be discouraging Members from joining the superannuation scheme.</li> <li>• Members joining the superannuation scheme could result in an overspend against the budget.</li> </ul>
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	<p>Mitigating Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will not discourage any Members from joining the superannuation scheme and all Members will continue to be provided with this opportunity.</li> <li>• Historical spend evidence supports the level of budget reduction without resulting in a cost pressure.</li> </ul>														
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>														
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.														
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	The above proposals outline the savings and potential risks to the Council and specifically the Members Allowances budget, however the proposal has been based upon historical spend data and forecast expenditure.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £12,000</li> <li>- Option 3 Budget reduction of a value below £12,000</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£12,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£12,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£12,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£12,000
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2028/2029	£0														
Total	£12,000														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a proposal to reduce an existing budget which is traditionally underspent year on year as a number of Members have chosen to not opt into the Superannuation Fund.</li> <li>• If approved, a budget reduction could be implemented from 2024/25.</li> <li>• Principal councils must maintain an annual schedule of member remuneration detailing the payments it will make to members in the coming municipal year.</li> </ul>														

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Resources Department – Proposed Cost Reductions

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Rhian Hayden</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Gina Taylor</b>
Organisation:	<b>Resources Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gina Taylor		
Reviewed by:	Rhian Hayden		
Approved by:	Rhian Hayden		

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for delivering cost reductions for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.</p> <p>This business case will detail the options identified to deliver a reduction in staff costs of £157,000 (3.5 fte) following a review of the Resources Division which includes a review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacant posts</li> <li>• Potential downsizing and reducing or ceasing aspects of service delivery whilst maintaining a core service.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Across the Council service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.</p> <p>The Resources Budget is predominantly staffing and therefore proposals to reduce costs will impact on the staff numbers and impact on the level of service provided.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>This option would not deliver financial efficiencies but would ensure that capacity is maintained to continue existing service delivery levels.</p>

**Option 2 – Review and downsize Resources to reduce Staffing costs by 5% - £157,000.**

The Resources Division, headed by the Chief Officer Resources, comprises 3 services:

- **Accountancy**  
Providing expert financial advice and support in relation to all aspects of financial management across the Council including:
  - Quarterly Budget Monitoring reports to Members
  - Developing, reviewing & updating the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy
  - Preparation of the Council's Budget
  - Statutory Statement of Accounts
  
- **Revenues**  
Responsible for the administration and collection of the Council's Income streams, namely Council Tax, Sundry Accounts, Miscellaneous Income, Social Service Charges Income and the collection of Non-Domestic Rates on an agency basis for Welsh Government.

The service is responsible for collecting in the region of £71M per annum.

- **Internal Audit & Risk Management**  
Responsible for providing an internal audit service and providing an opinion on the level of assurance provided by the Council's systems of internal control, supporting the Council with risk management responsibilities and ensuring the appropriate insurance coverage as well as undertaking claims handling in-house.

Table 1 below details the Employee information for the

Table 1 – Resources Employee Data

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>No of Employees</b>	<b>Employee Budget £'000</b>	<b>5% Efficiency Savings £'000</b>	<b>Current No. of Vacant Posts</b>
Accountancy	34	1,566	78	1
Revenues	28	1,098	55	2
Internal Audit & Risk Management	9	480	24	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>3</b>

This option proposes reviewing the structures and services delivered to identify those services which will cease to enable staff downsizing to deliver financial efficiencies.

**Accountancy**

Downsizing the workforce by 2 fte will achieve annual cost reductions of approximately £78,000 (depending on the job roles identified).

The reduced capacity will impact upon the level of financial advice and support available to the Council and whilst the core financial responsibilities will continue to be provided, the performance of the team will be reduced as follows: -

- Financial information will only be provided on a quarterly basis and will be less timely as it will take longer to produce. To mitigate some of the impact, self-service options through Civica Financials will be developed / implemented for budget holders.
- Reduced capacity to attend meetings, support the development of projects/business cases/ reports etc.
- Delay in payments to Suppliers
- The administration of Members Grants – there will no longer be capacity to support this function. Alternative administrative arrangements will need to be identified elsewhere within the Council or Members Grants to cease (non-statutory activity)
- System administration responsibilities are transferring from the SRS to the Council. Undertaking these activities within Accountancy will further reduce available capacity to undertake core functions. The Council will either accept this impact or identify alternative arrangements for undertaking the System Administration role.

**Revenues**

Downsizing the workforce by approximately 1.5 fte will achieve annual cost reductions of approximately £60,000 (depending on the job roles identified).

The review of the service will require a reallocation of duties within the remaining staff however the reduced capacity will impact upon the performance of the team. Specific impacts include: -

- Reduction in hours available to deal with public enquiries.
- Increases in response times to mail/change of circumstances (currently this is averaging at 14 days)
- Potential to further reduce collection rates of income.
- System administration responsibilities transferring from the SRS will further reduce available capacity and there will be a reduced ability to undertake system upgrades and enhancements in a timely manner to ensure that the systems are in place to undertake revenue recovery for the Council.

Digital transactions between the public and the Council will be encouraged where possible to mitigate some of the impact from the downsizing.

In the longer-term collaboration opportunities will be explored.

	<p><b>Internal Audit &amp; Risk Management</b></p> <p>The Internal Audit Service has previously undergone service reviews and rationalisation reducing the workforce to current levels. A budget of £19,000 has previously been identified within the Resources Budget to enable an Apprentice role to be introduced to the service as part of succession planning arrangements for Risk and Insurance, however given the financial challenge, it is proposed to release this budget to contribute towards the budget cut.</p>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.
3.2.1	<p><b>Accountancy</b></p> <p>To downsize by 2 FTE across the Section. This will impact on:</p> <p><u>Core Accountancy Functions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial information will only be provided on a quarterly basis and will be less timely as it will take longer to produce.</li> <li>• Reduced capacity to support projects/business cases.</li> </ul> <p><u>Supplier Payments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delay in payments to Suppliers</li> </ul> <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The administration of Members Grants – there will no longer be capacity to support this function.</li> <li>• System administration responsibilities are transferring from the SRS to the Council. Undertaking these activities within Accountancy will further reduce available capacity to undertake core functions. The Council will either accept this impact or identify alternative arrangements for undertaking the System Administration role.</li> <li>• Increased response times to FOIs</li> </ul> <p>Downsizing will be achieved by deleting the vacant Business Partner post and a review of the apprenticeship scheme and/or through (seeking voluntary) redundancy. This will lead to current employees changing job roles / responsibilities through restructuring, with roles and responsibilities aligning to the priority areas of core accountancy functions and payments to suppliers.</p> <p><u>Risks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of expertise through retirement / redundancy</li> <li>• Reduced service resilience and succession planning arrangements will be impeded.</li> <li>• Downsizing could impact on future collaboration model.</li> <li>• Unable to meet statutory deadlines leading to reputational damage with regulators and potential delays in claiming grant income.</li> </ul>

	Members may not agree to cease members grants and therefore unable to deliver full financial efficiency.
3.2.2	<p><b>Revenues</b> To downsize by 1.5 FTE across the service. The impact will include: -</p> <p><u>Customer Contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in hours available to deal with public enquiries.</li> <li>• Increases in response times to mail/change of circumstances (currently this is averaging at 14 days)</li> </ul> <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System administration responsibilities are transferring from the SRS to the Council. Undertaking these activities within Revenues will further reduce available capacity to undertake core functions. The Council will either accept this impact or identify alternative arrangements for undertaking the System Administration role.</li> </ul> <p>Downsizing will be achieved by deleting 1.5 posts across the service either by deleting current vacant and/or through (seeking voluntary) redundancy. This will lead to current employees changing job roles / responsibilities through restructuring, with roles and responsibilities aligning to the priority areas.</p> <p><u>Risks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of expertise through retirement / redundancy</li> <li>• Reduced service resilience</li> <li>• Downsizing could impact on future collaboration model.</li> <li>• <u>Negative impact on collection &amp; recovery rates</u></li> <li>• Unable to meet statutory deadlines leading to reputational damage with regulators.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to termination costs (in instances of redundancy) there will be system development costs required to enhance the digital transaction ability for the public to interact with the service.</p>
3.2.3	<p><b>Internal Audit &amp; Risk Management</b> To cut the budget by £19,000 and lose the opportunity to consider appointing an apprentice to support the Service.</p> <p><u>Risks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of service resilience and succession planning impeded</li> <li>• Limited capacity to meet increased demands e.g., insurance claims, investigations and ad hoc audits.</li> </ul>
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	Pay assumptions within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been utilised to assess the financial impact of the proposals.



4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>Where downsizing cannot be achieved through vacant posts and where redeployment opportunities cannot be identified, there will be termination costs incurred e.g., redundancy and pension strain costs. These costs will be one off, funding for these is currently being considered.</p> <p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £157,000</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£157,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£157,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£157,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£157,000
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Total	£157,000														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>This proposal will be delivered through a structure review and downsizing of the current staffing structure and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with staff, the Trade Union and Organisation Development.</li> </ul>														

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Rhain Hayden	Gina Taylor Dave Elias Louise Rosser	Accountancy Revenues Internal Audit, Risk Management & Insurance	08/02/2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

The proposal identifies options to deliver a reduction in staff costs of £157,000 (3.5 fte) following a review of the Resources Division which includes a review of:

- Vacant posts
- Potential downsizing and reducing or ceasing aspects of service delivery whilst maintaining a core service.
- 

If agreed the proposal will result in changes to service delivery levels, the Revenues proposal may impact directly on individuals transacting with the Council for Council Tax & NNDR, specifically the time to resolve / respond to queries may lengthen.

<b>Section 1</b> <b>Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> and the EHRC guidance <a href="#">The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC</a></b> <b>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.</b>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<i>Age (people of all ages)</i>	No	Yes	<p>The proposal will reduce capacity within Revenues to respond to individuals / businesses. This may result in people having to wait longer for their queries to be resolved and change in circumstances etc to be actioned.</p> <p>The service will be developing / enhancing digital means of transacting with the Council for Council Tax and NNDR e.g. Self Service functionality.</p>

			For those who are unable to transact digitally, the Community Hubs will continue to provide the service.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and</i>	No	Yes	As above

<i>different racial backgrounds)</i>			
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	No	Yes	As above
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i>	No	Yes	As above
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	No	Yes	As above

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

**Section 2**

**Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)**

The Welsh Governments [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.

**.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:**

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

Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>			
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>			
<b>Material Deprivation</b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life</i>			


<p><i>insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>			
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i></p>			
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>			
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>			







**Section 3-Corporate Plan**  
 Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal - [BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)

<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
 Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</i></p>

<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</i></p>
<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</i></p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</i></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</i></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES ...** an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

n/a

2. **A RESILIENT WALES ...** a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

n/a

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES ...** a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

n/a

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

n/a

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

n/a

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

n/a

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

n/a



**Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

*(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. [Welsh Language Standards](#))*

Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<p><b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i></p>	No		
<p><b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i></p>	No		
<p><b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i></p>	No		
<p><b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b></p>	No		

**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	No	No	
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	No	No	

<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b>        (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>	No	No	
<p><b>Re-offending</b>        (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	No	No	
<p><b>Serious Violence</b>        (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	No	No	
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b>        (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)</p>	No	No	
<p><b>Community Cohesion</b>        (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)</p>	No	No	



**Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty** [AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf](#)

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> </ul>	No	No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is,</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	

<p>primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	

**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<p>The Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy has identified budget gaps of in excess of £30m over the next 5 years.</p> <p>Services have identified cuts to support the Council achieve a balanced budget for 24/25.</p>	<p>The current financial climate has seen higher than expected pay awards (est 5%), continuing high inflation (4%) and increasing demand for some Council services has resulted in significantly higher costs.</p> <p>70% of the income to fund service provision comes from WG in the Local Government Settlement, this funding is increasing by 2.8% for 2024/25, when compared to pay &amp; price increases this represent a real term cut to income.</p> <p>Resources identified a number of vacant posts that could be deleted necessitating a review of structures and tasks that could be stopped or delayed whilst continuing to deliver statutory services at a reasonable level.</p> <p>Benchmarking undertaken with other Council’s suggested that public response times within Revenues compared favourable with other local authorities.</p>	<p>Data / evidence suggests that staff downsizing could be accommodated and although service levels will reduce, statutory responsibilities will continue to be delivered.</p>

**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

**Specific impact of proposals have been assessed, monitoring of impact will need to be undertaken.**

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Consultation on the business case for this proposal has been undertaken with elected Members, Trade Unions, Town and Community Councils and the public of Blaenau Gwent.**

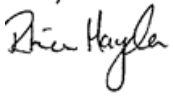
Section 11-Monitoring and Review	
How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?	Financial impact will be monitored and reported as part of the Financial Management Framework. The impact on services & the public will be monitored via the Council's Business Planning arrangements.
What monitoring tools will be used?	Financial Reports / presentations to Members / Business Plans
How will the results be used for future development?	Outcomes will inform future service delivery arrangements.
How and when will it be reviewed?	During 2024/2025 financial year in consultation with CLT, wider CLT, Budget Holders and Members
Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?	Rhian Hayden / Gina Taylor / Dave Elias / Louise Rosser

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	Rhian Hayden
<b>Job Title:</b>	Chief Officer Resources
<b>Date:</b>	8 February 2024

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>	Rhian Hayden		
<b>Job Title:</b>	Chief Officer Resources		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	8/2/2024

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).



## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Budget Management & Third Party Spend

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Rhian Hayden</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Gina Taylor</b>
Organisation:	<b>Resources Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gina Taylor		
Reviewed by:	Rhian Hayden		
Approved by:	Rhian Hayden		

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for managing, reviewing and realigning the Council's budget for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.</p> <p>This business case will detail the options identified following a review of budget management across all Portfolios budgets including a review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underspending budgets</li> <li>• The inflationary Uplift of 4% applied in the MTFS.</li> <li>• Impact of a blanket uplift of 4% on Fees &amp; Charges budgets</li> <li>• Universal Free Schools Meals Welsh Government Grant</li> </ul>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2027/2028 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>This option would not deliver budget reductions towards Bridging the Gap and would result in the Council having to use Reserves to balance the budget for 2024/2025, having a significant impact on the financial resilience of the Council.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – Budget Management Review across all Portfolios</b></p> <p><u>Underspending Budgets</u> The financial forecast for 2023/2024 (based on quarter 1) is reporting a favourable variance of £0.97m assuming a draw from specific reserves of £3.8m.</p>

Within the forecast there are a number of underspending budgets across all portfolios, the most significant being within Corporate Services which is reporting a favourable variance of £1.1m.

The main areas of underspend are:

- **Council Tax Reduction Scheme - £0.66m (2022/23 Underspend £0.53m)**  
The assumption in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2024/2025 is a cash flat budget, reducing the funding gap by £0.4m. Should claims remain at the current level, a cash flat budget should be sufficient for 2024/2025. This has already been built into the MTFS assumptions.

- **Non-Distributed Costs - £0.18m (2022/2023 Underspend £0.16m)**  
This budget funds contributions to the pension strain costs resulting from early termination. It is proposed to reduce this budget by £50,000.

Reducing this budget will reduce the flexibility to mitigate in year cost pressures.

- **Contingency Inflation - £0.58m**  
A budget £1.2m was established in 2023/2024 by not allocating the full inflationary uplift to general supplies & services budgets thereby encouraging a culture of strong budget and contract management. The budget is available to fund in year cost pressures arising from inflationary increases and is currently funding the utility cost pressure within street lighting of £0.62m.

The inflationary uplift for 2024/2025 applied to third party budgets within the MTFS is 4% (£2.8m) and there is a Bridging the Gap proposal relating to Third Party Spend of £0.1m.

It is proposed to reduce the contingency budget by £0.6m. The remaining budget of £0.6m to remain as a contingency to mitigate in year cost pressure such as street lighting energy pressure during 2024/2025.

- **Transformation Budget - £0 (2022/2023 £0.5m)**  
This budget was established to provide funding to implement transformation projects. The budget was cut by 50% in 2023/2024 to £0.27m.

For the current financial year, the budget is fully committed to the development of Station Square proposal at the General Offices. Given the financial challenge for 2024/2025, it is proposed to temporarily remove this budget for 2024/2025 and contribute a one-off £0.27m towards the funding the gap. This budget would be reinstated in 2025/2026 to provide funding for transformational projects.

Should funding be required to support transformational projects/investment during 2024/2025, a request can be made to the Invest to Save Specific Reserve (this currently stands at £1m).

- **Catering - £0.06m**

During the budget setting process for 2023/2024, the budget for catering services to schools was increased by £0.5m to roll out universal free school meals (UFSM) to all primary aged learners from September 2023. This service is funded through a specific grant from Welsh Government and this proposal is to increase the grant funding already built into the budget by £600,000 (based on the full roll out and take up of meals at September 2023).

#### Review of Inflationary Uplift

The MTFS includes the assumption of 4% uplift to all non-employee budgets (excluding energy and the CTRS) of £2.83m, and this has been based on the current high inflation rate, which whilst reducing, it is not decreasing as quickly as economists had predicted. The Bank of England's latest forecast (August 23) is that inflation will fall to around 5% by the end of the 2023 and reach 2% by early 2025.

Included within the Bridging the Gap programme there is a proposal to deliver financial efficiencies of £100,000 for 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 and this is included within this proposal.

This proposal is to remove inflation from general supplies and services budgets and only increase those budgets where either:

- The Council has a contractual obligation to increase contract costs / SLAs.
- Existing or emerging cost pressure
- The Council has no direct control e.g., Fire levy.

This proposal would generate financial efficiencies of £0.5m and Appendix 1 attached shows the financial impact per portfolio and those services where inflation at 4% will be applied.

This would be the 5<sup>th</sup> year where a number of budgets have not received an inflationary uplift and with inflation remaining high, there is a risk of cost pressures emerging. However, given the financial challenge and the need to make significant budget cuts, strong budget management and controlling non-essential spend is critical in the current environment.

Good financial management controls are in place across the Council. Quarterly financial monitoring and reporting identifies emerging cost pressures and Action Plans are developed to mitigate the cost pressure in year.

#### Review of Fees & Charges Budgets

The MTFS assumes an increase to all income budgets of 4% (£0.63m). However increasing number of income budgets could create a cost pressure for 2024/2025

The following budgets have been increased, but income is not currently achieving the target and/or Charges cannot be increased for 2024/2025 (subject to statutory levels):

	<b>Service</b>	<b>Budget Increase £</b>																	
	Cemeteries	19,800	Income not achieving target																
	Meals on Wheels	7,790	Income not achieving target																
	Markets	1 210	Income not achieving target																
	Civil Parking Enforcement	4,200	Income not achieving target																
	Social Services – In House Care Provision	28,620	Income not achieving target																
	Planning & Building Control Fees	12,360	Fixed Fees																
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73,980</b>																	
	<p>To avoid creating a cost pressure, it is proposed that the above income budgets are restated to the 2023/2024 level and the financial impact would be to reduce the budget cuts identified in this business case by £73,980.</p>																		
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>																		
	<p>The recommended option is option 2 which will deliver £1.9m budget cuts summarised below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Budget</b></th> <th><b>£'000</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NDC Budget Cut</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contingency Inflation Budget Cut</td> <td>600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transformation Budget Cut</td> <td>270</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UFSM WG grant</td> <td>600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Removal of Inflation uplift 2024/25</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fees &amp; Charges budget restatement</td> <td>(74)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Budget Cut</b></td> <td><b>1,946</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This Business Case delivers the BtG proposal for Third Party Spend of £100,000.</p>			<b>Budget</b>	<b>£'000</b>	NDC Budget Cut	50	Contingency Inflation Budget Cut	600	Transformation Budget Cut	270	UFSM WG grant	600	Removal of Inflation uplift 2024/25	500	Fees & Charges budget restatement	(74)	<b>Total Budget Cut</b>	<b>1,946</b>
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3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>																		
	<p>The assumptions within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy have been utilised to assess the financial impact of the proposals along with historical budget trends.</p> <p>It has been assumed that there will be no additional call on the Contingency Inflation budget.</p>																		
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>																		
	Not relevant at this point.																		

5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>																														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £1.84m (as detailed below)</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Budget</b></th> <th><b>£'000</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NDC Budget Cut</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contingency Inflation Budget Cut</td> <td>600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transformation Budget Cut</td> <td>270</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UFSM WG grant</td> <td>600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Removal of Inflation uplift 2024/25</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fees &amp; Charges budget restatement</td> <td>(74)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Budget Cut</b></td> <td><b>1,946</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Year</b></th> <th><b>Potential Saving £'000</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>1,946</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>1,946</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>£'000</b>	NDC Budget Cut	50	Contingency Inflation Budget Cut	600	Transformation Budget Cut	270	UFSM WG grant	600	Removal of Inflation uplift 2024/25	500	Fees & Charges budget restatement	(74)	<b>Total Budget Cut</b>	<b>1,946</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Potential Saving £'000</b>	2024/2025	1,946	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,946</b>
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6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>																														
	<p>The proposal will be delivered by a reduction in the identified budgets when set for 2024/2025, and achievement will be monitored and reported through the Council's standard budgetary control procedures reviewing income and expenditure against budgets.</p>																														

**ANALYSIS OF INFLATION IN THE MTFS 2024/2025**

CS04

Appendix 1

Portfolio	Current Position	Deductions As per below:- Specific Inflation	
		£	£
Financial Management & Strategy	49,568	32,783	16,785
Corporate Services	180,960	134,220	46,740
Social Services	1,376,373	1,192,331	184,042
Education	338,781	249,730	89,051
Economy	7,833	0	7,833
Infrastructure	99,126	2,612	96,514
Leisure	135,670	135,670	0
Environment	637,577	571,187	66,390
Planning	9,744	0	9,744
Licensing	885	0	885
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,836,517</b>	<b>2,318,533</b>	<b>517,984</b>

**MTFS - Inflation Analysis**

		£	
Provided in the MTFS		2,836,517	
Less Inflation for:			
Fire Levy	ENV	157,304	Uncontrollable cost
Pensions (Education)	EDUC	79,740	Uncontrollable cost
Festival Park	CORP	4,590	Uncontrollable cost
Archives	CORP	6,270	Uncontrollable cost
Coroners Court	ENV	5,405	Cost pressure
<u>Contracts</u>			
Home to School / College	EDUC	125,170	
Waste	ENV	235,500	
Corporate Landlord	ENV	88,280	Maint. Contracts / NNDR / Cleaning SLA / Refuse SLAs
Community Care	SS	956,639	Cost Pressure for 24/25
Children's Placements	SS	223,422	Cost Pressure for 24/25
Out County Placements/Recoupment	EDUC	44,820	
<u>SLAs / Joint Service</u>			
SRS	CORP	123,360	
Leisure Trust	LEIS	135,670	
Legal services - SLA Caerphilly	SS	12,270	
Parking Enforcement SLA	INF	2,612	
Catering/Cleaning	ENV	39,882	
<u>Other</u>			
Transport - Fuel	ENV	44,816	
Apprenticeship Levy	FM&S	14,337	
Audit & Treasury Management Fees	FM&S	18,446	
<b>Sub Total - Deductions</b>		<b>2,318,533</b>	

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### CCTV – Budget Review

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Sarah King</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Andrew Parker</b>
Organisation:	<b>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Andrew Parker		12/09/23
Reviewed by:	Sarah King		20/09/23
Approved by:			



1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the business case is to provide options for realigning/reducing the budget for CCTV to deliver cost reductions (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.</p>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>The Council operates an overt Public Space CCTV system which is a non-statutory service provision that supports the organisation in meeting our wider statutory duties in relation to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, whereby the Council is a responsible authority and key partner organisation.</p> <p>The Council has already carried out two financial efficiency projects within the last 10 years on CCTV associated to delivering a different operating model for CCTV. In 2013/14 the Council moved from an in-house 24 /7 provision (costing approximately £420,000 annually) to a Service Level Agreement with Newport for a 24/7 provision outsourced and delivered operationally via the control room in Newport (costing approximately £149,000 annually with a £28,000 annual overspend by the last financial year). Furthermore, during this five-year period there was little investment or upkeep in the technology and camera infrastructure and as a consequence, significant proportions of the system was not fit for purpose.</p> <p>In 2017/18, with the end of the agreement with Newport due in 2019 it was agreed that a further financial efficiency project be explored, with a focus on investing capital in improving the technology and the infrastructure but moving away from 24/7 monitoring to a low revenue/staffing option (£86,000). The focus of the proposal was moving away from more expensive broadband options and delivering a service on a reactive basis. Theoretically, this seemed viable but in practice from the Autumn of 2019 there were several associated issues and problems with the system/infrastructure in terms of reliability, and furthermore the organisation's ability to be appropriately compliant due to the indirect issues with resources (staffing) and unforeseen requirements associated with the Council's policy expectation from the Codes of Practice issues by the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner.</p> <p>Due to the on-going issues associated the new system, CLT and Executive in Autumn 2021, on technical and policy advice, agreed a further alternative model, which focused on improving existing communication infrastructure e.g., broadband to PSBA, and investing in a new Service Level Agreement for operational (day-to-day oversight) of the CCTV system with Caerphilly</p>

	<p>County Borough Council. This investment would see an uplift of investment in revenue for the CCTV budget from 2022/23 to £208,000. This would cover a new operational agreement with Caerphilly, which includes: numerous day-to-day improvements including testing, monitoring, review and extraction; improved maintenance arrangements with the CCTV contractor; investment in sustainability of the system tied to the annual DPIA process; power and other technical provision; and revenue capacity to facilitate the overall process and ensure the policy framework and compliance expectations of the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner are met on a journey towards compliance (e.g. Policies, Plans, Annual Reporting, Assessments and Data Privacy Impact Assessment, overseeing SLA and maintenance contract management)</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b> Continue with the current level of service and operate for 24/25.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current level of CCTV would be delivered within Blaenau Gwent.</li> <li>• Opportunity to consider any future opportunities for improvements, efficiencies and external investments beyond the 24/25 financial year.</li> <li>• Allows Council to support its wider Community Safety expectations.</li> <li>• Recently incepted current contracts (SLA and maintenance) can be reviewed in order to determine their value for money over a relevant period of time.</li> <li>• Allow the opportunity to identify external sources of finance to support the service area (i.e., partners or grant sources).</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No budget reduction to contribute towards the Council’s Bridging the Gap programme for 24/25.</li> </ul> <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As current contract arrangements have not been in place for a full year, therefore no historical evidence is available to support whether financial efficiencies could be realised within the budget in future years.</li> <li>• Unforeseen cost pressures could arise in relation to the budget during the 24/25 financial year.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular and ongoing review of the current system and the ongoing contracts in place.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider metered power usage, and associated inter-dependencies/supported infrastructure (e.g., Town Wi-Fi)</li> <li>• Review the two associated contracts after a year of operation to understand value for money (CCBC for operations and IDS for maintenance)</li> <li>• Consider long term staffing revenue consideration and wider CCTV operations overseen by the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 2 – Provide a CCTV Service but with the following options:</b></p> <p><b>2a – Revised delivery cost only (no contingency or sustainability funding) £19,930 (saving to be realised in 2024/25)</b>  Unutilised CCTV budget has no liabilities committed against it (currently) and could be offered as a saving against CCTV with no direct consequence as this underspend is typically committed to reserve and not utilised in year.</p> <p><b>2b - Maintenance Saving on Supplies and Services £9,090 (saving to be realised in 2024/25)</b></p> <p><b>2c – Reduced delivery on staffing £21,118 (potentially realised in 2024/25)</b>  By reducing the Policy Officer hours to 22.20 (3 Days a week) could achieve an estimated saving of (Full Time Cost of £52,795 – Part Time Cost of £31,677).</p> <p>Options 2a, 2b and 2c could be considered individually or together.</p> <p><b><u>Considerations</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saving achieved against reduction in hours is subject to change pending outcome of pay award.</li> <li>• Unknown impact of inflationary/ beyond inflation increases against IDS Maintenance Contract and SLA with Caerphilly. Worth considering budget realignment from unspent areas within Supplies &amp; Services to Premises Expenses to futureproof against contract uplifts before putting forward S&amp;S savings.</li> <li>• As yet unknown outturn of full FY in SLA and IDS Maintenance Contract. Reactive spend reduced by £1,322 compared to same point last FY. Mindful of costs we might incur with IDS not covered by contract that could add pressure on reactive spend.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>

	The Policy Team have developed this Business Case and have been involved in the delivery of the CCTV service since Autumn 2019 and have direct experience in the creation and operation of the current arrangements in place for the service.																												
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>																												
	No further procurement recommendations at this stage.																												
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>																												
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2a Budget reduction of £19,930</li> <li>- Option 2b Budget reduction of £9,090</li> <li>- Option 2c Budget reduction of £21,118</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Option 2a</th> <th>Option 2b</th> <th>Option 2c</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£19,930</td> <td>£9,090</td> <td>£21,118</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£19,930</td> <td>£9,090</td> <td>£21,118</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	2024/2025	£19,930	£9,090	£21,118	2025/2026	£0	£0	£0	2026/2027	£0	£0	£0	2027/2028	£0	£0	£0	2028/2029	£0	£0	£0	Total	£19,930	£9,090	£21,118
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6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>																												
	If approved the proposal will be delivered through a budget reduction within the identified areas, monitoring of this will be completed through the quarterly budget monitoring processes of the Council. Engagement with staff, internal support services, and Trade Unions may be required.																												

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Andrew Parker	Sarah King	Corporate Services	Dec/Jan 2023/24

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

It is proposed for the CCTV Service for revised delivery cost with limited contingency or sustainability funding (reduction £19,930 saving to be realised in 2024/25).

Estimates from Finance on monitoring previous budgets suggest that there is unutilised CCTV budget which has no liabilities committed against it (currently) and could be offered as a saving against CCTV with no direct consequence on the service provision.

Furthermore, proposal is considering reducing BGCBC staffing capacity (**£21,118 to be realised in 2024/25**) by reducing the Policy Officer hours to 22.20 (3 Days a week).

<b>Section 1</b> <b>Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> and the EHRC guidance <a href="#">The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC</a></b> <b>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.</b>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	Anticipated to no negative impacts.	<p>As the reduction in service will not directly effect the provision of the existing CCTV service there should be limited impact on the outcomes for crime prevention and community safety on the public.</p> <p>Even so, there is often research to suggest a negative age relationship with fear of crime and increasing age, therefore it will be important to communicate effectively the preceived level of impact by the service change.</p> <p>As the Officer is not directly overseeing the provision of footage there should only be a policy and sustainability consideration for changed BGCBC staffing.</p>
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	Anticipated to no negative impacts.	As above.

			<p>Even so, there is a negative relationship with fear of crime and those people with disability, therefore it will be important to communicate effectively the perceived level of impact by the service change.</p> <p><a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-90-crime-and-disabled-people.pdf">www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-90-crime-and-disabled-people.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b>  <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i></p>	No	No	No perceived impacts.
<p><b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b>  <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i></p>	No	No	No perceived impacts.
<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>  <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i></p>	No	No	No perceived impacts.
<p><b>Race</b>  <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic)</i></p>	No	Anticipated to no negative impacts.	As above due to no direct changes in provision.



<i>communities and different racial backgrounds)</i>			
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	No	No	No perceived impacts.
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i>	No	Anticipated to no negative impacts.	As above. As above due to no direct changes in provision.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	No	No	No perceived impacts.

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

<b>Section 2</b> <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b> <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i>			
<b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	No	No	There is a no direct changes to the camera infrastructure, therefore there should be no impacts on the general public.
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs)</i>	No	No	As above




<i>and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>			
<b>Material Deprivation</b> ( <i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i> )	No	No	As above
<b>Area Deprivation</b> ( <i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i> )	No	No	As above
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> ( <i>social class i.e. parents education, employment and income</i> )	No	No	As above
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> ( <i>What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged</i> )	No	No	As above



**Section 3-Corporate Plan**

*Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -[BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)*

<p><b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent</p>	
<p><b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities</p>	
<p><b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place</p>	
<p><b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient</p>	<p>The CCTV infrastructure supports the Council to meet its responsible authority duties associated with the Crime and Disorder duties.</p>

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</i></p> <p>There are considerations associated with removing budgets associated with contingency and sustainability, and consideration moving forward will need to be given to external funding opportunities to support CCTV improvements.</p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</i></p> <p>Initially there should be no direct impacts on prevention, but sustainability issue could arise if no alternative funding models are viable for upgrading the system.</p>
<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</i></p> <p>The Council is operating the existing system with the opportunity to support council services who are deemed responsible authorities, as well as policing organisation, mainly Gwent Police.</p>

<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</i></p> <p>In previous years, to deliver a CCTV service has been developed and moved to a provision in collaboration with Caerphilly County Borough Council. There is a Memorandum of Understanding also in place with Gwent Police, and furthermore contracts in place with Maintenance Contractor, IDS.</p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</i></p> <p>Outlined partners have been made aware of the financial saving proposals for 24/25, and consequences discussed.</p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

N/A due to no change in provision.

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

N/A due to no change in provision.

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

N/A due to no change in provision.

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES** ... A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

N/A due to no change in provision.

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES** ... attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

N/A due to no change in provision.

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

N/A due to no change in provision.

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

N/A due to no change in provision.





**Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

*(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. [Welsh Language Standards](#))*

Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<p><b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i></p>	No	No	
<p><b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i></p>	No	No	
<p><b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i></p>	No	No	
<p><b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b></p>	Yes, considered service meets the Standards		

**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive		Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive		Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.

<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>	<p>Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive</p>		<p>Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.</p>
<p><b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive</p>		<p>Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.</p>
<p><b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive</p>		<p>Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.</p>
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)</p>	<p>Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive</p>		<p>Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.</p>
<p><b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)</p>	<p>Yes, the unchanged on-going provision of the service will be positive</p>		<p>Feedback from police and elected members in 23/24 has suggested further communication to the general public relating to the CCTV provision within the town centre zones.</p>

Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a>			
Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services</li> </ul>	No	No	

<p>and public health screening services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>No</p>	

<p>Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>No</p>	

**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<p>Financial data has been assessed by Resources colleagues to recommend potential savings.</p> <p>On-going consideration of the data provided against use of the CCTV service.</p>	<p>That there was scope within the budget , with the following assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saving achieved against reduction in hours is subject to change pending outcome of pay award.</li> <li>• Unknown impact of inflationary/ beyond inflation increases against IDS</li> <li>• Maintenance Contract and SLA with Caerphilly. Worth considering budget realignment from unspent areas within Supplies &amp; Services to Premises</li> <li>• Expenses to futureproof against contract uplifts before putting forward S&amp;S savings.</li> <li>• As yet unknown outturn of full FY in SLA and IDS Maintenance Contract. Reactive spend reduced by £1,322 compared to same point last FY. Mindful of costs we might incur with IDS not covered by contract that could add pressure on reactive spend.</li> </ul>	<p>It outlined the potential options for consideration</p>



**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

Current plans to carry out survey with general public on CCTV provision in 2024/45 on perception of the CCTV service.

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

Consultation carried out using existing established partnership arrangements for CCTV.

Furthermore, the proposal is being considered as part of the wider budget engagement programme being carried out in Jan/Feb 24.

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	Via the existing arrangements for CCTV e.g. IDS contract management, SLA management, CCTV SIRO quarterly meeting and also regular pathways into the Council’s democratic processes.
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	Data (impact/outcome and financial) and reporting monitoring
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	On-going monitoring
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	Quarterly via the SIRO meeting.
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	Policy Team, BGCBC


Page 275

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	<b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	Andrew Parker
<b>Job Title:</b>	Service Manager: Policy and Partnerships
<b>Date:</b>	06/02/24

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>	Sarah King		
<b>Job Title:</b>	Head of Governance and Partnerships		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	06/02/24

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Commercial and Customer Services - Staff Reductions

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Bernadette Elias</b>
Project Manager:	
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Bernadette Elias	B Elias	24/01/2024
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
1.1	The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for delivering cost reductions for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
2.1	<p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Across the Council service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.</p> <p>The Customer and Commercial division budget is predominantly staffing and therefore proposals to reduce costs will impact on the staff numbers and impact on the level of service provided both internally within the organisation and for more front facing services.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
3.1.1	Collectively the Commercial and Customer services support whole organisational design and business change programmes that support our staff, infrastructure and operations to deliver high quality outcomes for our communities.
3.1.2	<p>The Commercial and Customer Division is headed by the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer and comprises of the following service areas:</p> <p><b>Organisational Development which includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Payroll</li> <li>• Business support</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Social Care Workforce Development Service Blaenau Gwent/Caerphilly</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Experience and Digital Transformation which includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits Section</li> <li>• Community Hubs</li> <li>• Contact centre</li> <li>• Digital Transformation</li> <li>• ICT infrastructure</li> </ul> <p><b>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic oversight of the Council's 3<sup>rd</sup> party commissioning and procurement activities</li> <li>• Contract and client management support to service areas</li> <li>• Commercial strategy and supporting commercial and business development opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication and Marketing</b> Corporate communications function including media relations, crisis management and internal and external communication.</p>
3.1.3	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity is maintained to continue existing service delivery levels.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No budget reduction to contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul>
3.1.4	<p><b>Option 2 – Review and downsize all service areas under Chief Officer Commercial and Customer Service to meet the target of 5% reduction of staff costs - £347,000.</b></p>
3.1.5	<p>This option would deliver the required financial efficiencies against the 5% reduction target and would impact across all service areas of the Council including a number of front-line services.</p>
3.1.6	<p>The aim would be to deliver the savings by other methods to avoid compulsory redundancies as much as possible. The proposal equates to a reduction of 7 FTE.</p>
3.1.7	<p><b>Business Support</b></p> <p>Restructure and rationalisation will achieve annual cost reductions of <b>£162,179.</b></p>

	<p>The function supports services across the organisation including as part of legal frameworks and has realised an approximate 35% or £780,000 reduction over recent years (mainly as part of the former Financial Efficiency Projects programme).</p> <p>A live review approach is adopted so that the function flexes to meet organisational need, including taking on additional responsibilities as identified e.g., recent establishment of a facilities management function. There is a self-service model in place for some functions which impacts on wider staff capacity across the organisation.</p> <p>As part of the digital transformation strategy solutions are being explored and tested which include opportunities to reduce effort needed for tasks currently supported by the function. This will need to be implemented as part of the live review process as the solutions come on stream.</p> <p>The Specific impact/risks include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.50 FTE post - £13,800. This reduction will result in the support currently provided by the post holder ceasing. However, the Business Support service will endeavour to provide some support at peak times, from the wider service.</li> <li>• 0.60 FTE - £22,682. This reduction will result in some of the support currently provided by the post holder ceasing and other elements being transferred to the wider team. The result would be that where support for functions is ceasing, Council Officers would be required to carry out them out themselves (with instructions) and where the functions are being redistributed to the wider Business Support team, there will be a delay in the timescales.</li> <li>• 1 FTE - £35,363. This reduction can only be achieved through reviewing and implementing more automated processes that can be picked up in the wider Business Support team.</li> <li>• 0.50 FTE post - £13,865. This reduction can be achieved through streamlining current processes and integrating them with other functions delivered within the team.</li> <li>• 0.50 FTE - £19,679. This reduction would result in all bulk and large scale scanning ceasing, resulting in paper records remaining in situ within buildings that could hinder future accommodation consolidation.</li> <li>• 1 FTE Vacant post - £37,680. New system developments will support the reduction of this vacant post.</li> <li>• 0.60 FTE post - £19,110. This reduction can be achieved through natural wastage, possible due to a change in systems and processes.</li> </ul>
3.1.8	<p><b>Customer Experience and Digital Transformation</b></p> <p>Restructure and downsizing the workforce across the contact centre, digital and benefits team will achieve annual cost reductions of £104,608.</p>



	<p>The review of the service will require a reallocation of duties within the remaining staff and changes to process to mitigate impact have and will continue to be developed. However, it is anticipated the reduced capacity will impact on the performance of the team and service delivery levels. Mitigating impact on the front facing service elements has been a key focus, securing delivery capacity and reducing management capacity.</p> <p>Specific impact/risks include:</p> <p><b>Benefits Team</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced capacity overall within the Benefits team</li> <li>• Impact on the customer will be mitigated through redesign of Benefit Service provision</li> </ul> <p><b>Contact Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced capacity within the Contact Centre team</li> <li>• Impact on service delivery will be mitigated by ensuring a similar level of call handlers being available where possible</li> </ul> <p><b>Digital Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased organisational demand for digital innovation and solutions as part of our digital strategy and programme will need to be carefully prioritised as capacity will be reduced.</li> </ul>
3.1.9	<p><b>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</b></p> <p>Restructure and downsize the workforce which will achieve annual cost reductions of £24,642. The restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing more senior management capacity.</p> <p>The review of the service will require a reallocation of duties within the remaining staff, it is however anticipated the reduced capacity will impact upon the performance of the team and the support available to directorates. Streamlining processes to mitigate impact on service delivery is planned.</p> <p>Specific impacts/risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially a longer lead in time to deliver the annual procurement plan, however the organisational oversight will be maintained.</li> <li>• Increased need for service-based staff to lead on reactive high value sourcing activities.</li> <li>• Less support and advice for directorates on procurement and commissioning legislative requirements, however this would be prioritised to focus on key Council projects. Advice and guidance on national changes to legislation would still be communicated and reflected in policy and practice.</li> <li>• Increased risk of non-compliant 3rd party spend.</li> </ul>

3.1.10	<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>Restructure and downsize the workforce by 1 FTE reducing managerial capacity.</p> <p>The review of the service will require a reallocation of duties within the remaining staff however the reduced capacity will impact upon the performance of the team and service delivery levels. Options to mitigate the impact are currently being explored which could include a restructure and/or a collaborative model.</p> <p>Specific impacts/risks include: •</p> <p>Reputational – There will be some impact with the reduction in management resource to deal with reputational management or crisis management. However, there remains experience and skill within the delivery team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less support and advice for Directorates on marketing and communications.</li> <li>• Reduced Communications campaigns, the focus will be on key Council, priorities.</li> <li>• Less control of brand, however clear corporate guidelines are in place and should be followed by directorates.</li> <li>• Fragmented (silo) approach to delivering corporate communications. However there is a corporate communications strategy in place supported by a clear delivery plan and approach and advice and guidance is provided by the communications team. .</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended Option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and Assumptions</b>
	Pay assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy has been utilised to assess the financial impact of the proposals.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	Not relevant at this point.
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	Where downsizing cannot be achieved through vacant posts and where redeployment opportunities cannot be identified, there will be termination costs incurred e.g. redundancy and pension strain costs. These costs will be one off, funding for these is currently being considered.

	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£347,100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£347,100</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£347,100	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£347,100		
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6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>																
6.1	<p>This proposal will be delivered through a review and downsizing of the current staffing structure and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with staff, Trade Unions and Organisation Development.</li> </ul>																

## Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been designed to help support the Council in making informed and effective decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of statutory legislation, such as the Equality Act 2010. It consists of 10 main sections as outlined below:

- Section 1 - Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2 - Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards
- Section 3 - Socio-economic Duty
- Section 4 - Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way
- Section 5 - Data
- Section 6 - Consultation
- Section 7 - Decision

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Bernadette Elias	Andrea Prosser Leanne Roberts Lee Williams Hannah Meyrick Sean Scannell	Corporate Services / Commercial and Customer departmental review of staffing structures	Jan 2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this. **What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2024 with inflation remaining high at 4.2% (January 2024), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.

The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.

Across the Council, service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.

The Commercial and Customer division budget is predominantly staffing and therefore, proposals to reduce costs will impact on the staff numbers and impact on the level of service provided both internally within the organisation and for more front facing services.

The Commercial and Customer service areas support whole organisational design and business change programmes that support our staff, infrastructure and operations to deliver high quality outcomes for our communities.

The Commercial and Customer Division is headed by the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer and the proposal is to undertake a departmental review of staffing structures across the division to meet the £347,100 budget target.

The following service areas are included within this Integrated Impact Assessment:

**Business Support;**

The proposal for the Business Support Service is to downsize the workforce to achieve a cost reduction of £162,179. The proposals will be achieved through streamlining or introducing new systems and processes in some areas, by reallocating some duties to the wider team and by ceasing to support

certain functions for the Council's Services. It is anticipated that the proposals will be achieved by voluntary redundancy means. The proposals are as follows: -

- 0.50 FTE post. This reduction will result in the support currently provided by the post holder ceasing. However, the Business Support service will endeavour to provide some support at peak times, from the wider service.
- 0.60 FTE - This reduction will result in some of the support currently provided by the post holder ceasing and other elements being transferred to the wider team. The result would be that Council Officers would be required to carry out the functions themselves (with instructions) and where the functions are being redistributed to the wider Business Support team, there will be a delay in the timescales.
- 1 FTE - This reduction can only be achieved through reviewing and implementing more automated processes that can be picked up in the wider Business Support team.
- 0.50 FTE post This reduction can be achieved through streamlining current processes and integrating them with other functions delivered within the team.
- 0.50 FTE This reduction would result in all bulk and large-scale scanning ceasing, resulting in paper records remaining in situ within buildings that could hinder the consolidation of accommodation in the future.
- 1 FTE Vacant post - New system developments will support the reduction of this vacant post.
- 0.60 FTE post This reduction can be achieved through natural wastage, possible due to a change in systems and processes.

The impact of this proposal will lead to the deletion and cessation of Business Support effort, which will directly impact upon Directorates. The potential impact on any process change and service delivery will need to be further assessed by Directorates.

#### **Benefits Section**

#### **Contact Centre**

#### **Digital Transformation**

The proposal is to review and downsize the workforce to achieve annual cost reductions of £104,608.00. The review of the service will require a reallocation of duties within the remaining staff.

*Benefits Team* - reduction of 1 Vacant FTE post

*Contact Centre* - saving achieved from a management restructure.

This will also impact on the management role within the Community Hubs however will be mitigated by a restructure within this area and realignment of duties

*Digital Transformation* saving achieved from a restructure

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### **Commercial Business Development & Procurement**

Providing strategic oversight of the Council's 3<sup>rd</sup> party commissioning and procurement activities and supporting commercial and business development opportunities

Saving achieved through a restructure. The proposal will require a reallocation of duties to the remaining staff.

The restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing more senior management capacity.

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### **Communication and Marketing**

Providing a corporate communications function including media relations and internal and external communication.

Restructure and downsize the workforce by 1 FTE , with a focus on securing delivery capacity.

<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> <i>(people of all ages)</i>	All Ages	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p> <p>No impact on those with a protected characteristic in terms of the potential communications re-structure.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – opportunity for development and progression for members of the team.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> - The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b></p> <p>Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre service freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b></p> <p>Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected.</p>



<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p><b><u>Communications</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.  <i>Positive</i> - This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – The Business Support service has a comparatively high number of staff who are in the 55 and over age category. Therefore, the reductions in the service could impact upon the workforce that falls into this age category, depending in the posts identified. Also, where workload will need to be redistributed to the wider service when the</p>

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Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p>reductions to capacity are implemented, this will impact upon the staff in the higher age group range. Where support for services will cease, there will be an impact upon the wider Council. Officers will be expected to carry out the functions themselves, which could potentially impact upon staff in the higher age ranges. It is not anticipated that the reductions will impact upon the customers who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<b>Disability</b> <i>(people with disabilities/ long term conditions)</i>	Yes	<i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams <i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more	<b><u>Benefits Service</u></b> <i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect

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		<p>streamlined approach to service delivery</p> <p>No impact on those with a disability in terms of the potential communications re-structure.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – opportunity for development and progression for members of the team.</p>	<p>on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b>            Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.  <i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre service freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Mangement role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b></p>

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			<p><i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> – The Business Support service has a small number of staff with disabilities who could be affected by the reductions to the workforce and a resulting increased workload. The same would apply to the wider Council, where functions will be redistributed and staff falling into this category could be affected.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that members of the community who fall into this category would be affected by the proposals.</p>

<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
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			<p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b>  <i>(anybody who’s gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams  <i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p> <p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b>            Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.  <i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact</p>

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			<p>Centre service freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.  <i>Positive</i> - This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p>

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			<p><b><u>Business Support</u></b> The reduction in staff within the Business Support service will have an impact upon the service, the wider Council and its staff. At this stage it is not anticipated that the changes will impact negatively on our Residents.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b> <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<p><b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i></p>	Yes	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams <i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b> <i>Negative</i> - The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b></p>

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		<p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p>Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre service freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b></p> <p>Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> - This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member</p>



<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p>of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b>            The reduction is staff within the Business Support service will have an impact upon the service, the wider Council and its staff. At this stage it is not anticipated that the changes will impact negatively on our Residents.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	Yes	<i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> - The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit</p>

<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i>		<p><i>Positive – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</i></p> <p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p>administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b>            Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.  <i>Positive - – function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre service freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</i></p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Mangement role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b></p>

**Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011**  
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Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p><i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> - This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> – The Business Support service has a relatively high number of staff within the 29 and under and 30-45 age ranges. Therefore, there are staff who fall within this category who would be affected by the staffing reductions. The impact would be where functions are being redistributed to the wider team and staff having to take on a larger workload. The same applies to the wider Council, where the Business Support service will no longer be in a</p>

<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p>position to support certain functions and these will need to be picked up elsewhere.</p> <p>It is not anticipated at this stage that the reductions will impact upon the customers who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<p><b>Race</b>  <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i></p>	Yes	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams  <i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p> <p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b>  Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.</p>

<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
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			<p><i>Positive</i> – function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.  <i>Positive</i> – This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There</p>

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			<p>would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b>Business Support</b> The reduction is staff within the Business Support service will have an impact upon the service, the wider Council and its staff. It is not anticipated at this stage that the reductions will impact upon the customers who fall within this category.</p> <p><b>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</b> <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<p><b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams <i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p>	<p><b>Benefits Service</b> <i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p>

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		<p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p><b>Contact Centre</b>            Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.  <i>Positive</i> – function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b>Community Hubs</b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected</p> <p><b>Communications</b>  <i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.  <i>Positive</i> – This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic</p>

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			<p>management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b></p> <p>The reduction is staff within the Business Support service will have an impact upon the service, the wider Council and its staff. It is not anticipated at this stage that the reductions will impact upon the customers who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<p><b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit</p>



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<p><i>those who self-identify their gender)</i></p>		<p><i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p> <p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p>administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b>Contact Centre</b> Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b>Community Hubs</b> Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected.</p> <p><b>Communications</b> <i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.</p>

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			<p><i>Positive</i> – This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> - The Business Support Service’s staffing complement is 90% female and a number of them are in part time positions. Therefore, the reductions to the staffing complement will impact upon the workforce that falls into this category. Also, where workload will need to be redistributed to the wider service when the reductions to capacity are implemented, this will impact upon the female members of staff.</p> <p>Where support for services will cease, there will be an impact upon the wider Council. Officers will be expected to</p>

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Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p>carry out the functions themselves, which could potentially impact upon staff who fall within this category. It is not anticipated at this stage that the reductions will impact upon the customers who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	Yes	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams  <i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery</p> <p>The proposed communications re-structure will have no impact on this.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> - The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b>            Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.</p>

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			<p><i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected.</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – There will be a reduction in management capacity in Communications.  <i>Positive</i> – This should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience as provided in the current team structure but a revised structure and model would look to provide an appropriate level of leadership and management.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b></p>

<b>Section 1 – Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011</b> <i>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts, on any groups of people with protected characteristics, who are covered by the Equality Act 2010, as a result of the proposal being considered.</i>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
			<p>The reduction is staff within the Business Support service will have an impact upon the service, the wider Council and its staff. It is not anticipated at this stage that the reductions will impact upon the customers who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>

**Section 2 - Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the [Welsh Language Standards](#) require the Council to have 'due regard' for any positive or negative impacts that proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Requirements	Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts with regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<p><b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>For example, Standards 88 - 93 – policy development and review of existing policies)</i></p>	<p>A neutral impact as same level of support for residents will be delivered as a result of this proposal. No impact on Welsh Language delivery from service perspective Community Hub staff are undergoing welsh language training – 3 members of staff have basic skills in this area and will be able to converse in Welsh once beginners course ends in Feb.</p> <p>The proposed changes to structures within Communications, Procurement and Business Support will have no impact on Welsh Language standards compliance .</p>	<p>No negative impacts in this area as far as compliance.</p>	<p>Training is ongoing within Customer Services areas, staff from Benefits, Contact Centre and Community Hubs are undertaking Welsh language beginners' course to support the delivery of Customer Services across a wide range of services in the medium of welsh.</p> <p>Lanyards are worn by welsh speakers within a front facing environment.</p> <p>All Customer Services posters are bilingual.</p> <p>IVR message is bilingual.</p> <p>All Customer Service staff meet and greet bilingually.</p>

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Requirements	Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts with regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
			<p>The proposals contained within this IIA have no impact on the continuation of this approach.</p> <p>The communications structure changes have no proposals to change operational delivery or reduce capacity within the team. All communications will continue to be promoted bilingually.</p> <p>The proposed changes to the Business Support and Procurement Services will have a neutral impact on the compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</p>
<p><b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>For example, status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i></p>	<p>A neutral impact as same level of support for residents in the delivery of Customer Service and the promotion of the Welsh Language.</p>	<p>No negative impacts in this area as far as compliance is concerned.</p>	<p>Training is ongoing within Customer Services areas, staff from Benefits, Contact Centre and Community Hubs are undertaking Welsh language beginners' course to support the delivery of</p>

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The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the [Welsh Language Standards](#) require the Council to have 'due regard' for any positive or negative impacts that proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Requirements	Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts with regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
	<p>The proposed changes to structures within Communications, Procurement and Business Support will have no impact on Welsh Language standards compliance</p>		<p>Customer Services across a wide range of services in the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Lanyards are worn by Welsh speakers within a front-facing environment.</p> <p>All Customer Services posters are bilingual.</p> <p>IVR message is bilingual.</p> <p>All Customer Service staff meet and greet bilingually.</p> <p>The proposals contained within this IIA have no impact on the continuation of this approach.</p> <p>Welsh language training courses will be promoted on all internal and external communications channels.</p>



**Section 2 - Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the [Welsh Language Standards](#) require the Council to have 'due regard' for any positive or negative impacts that proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Requirements	Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts with regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<p><b>What opportunities are there for a person to use the Welsh Language?</b>  <i>For example, staff, residents and visitors</i></p>	<p>Neutral impact. Customer Service staff will offer the same Welsh language services.</p>	<p>No negative impacts in this area as far as compliance is concerned.</p>	<p>Training is ongoing within Customer Services areas, staff from Benefits, Contact Centre and Community Hubs are undertaking Welsh language beginners' course to support the delivery of Customer Services across a wide range of services in the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Lanyards are worn by Welsh speakers within a front-facing environment.</p> <p>All Customer Services posters are bilingual.</p> <p>IVR message is bilingual.</p> <p>All Customer Service staff meet and greet bilingually.</p> <p>The proposals contained within this IIA have no impact on the continuation of this approach.</p>

**Section 2 - Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the [Welsh Language Standards](#) require the Council to have 'due regard' for any positive or negative impacts that proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Requirements	Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts with regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
			The proposed changes to structure within Communications will have no impact on Welsh Language standards compliance . Welsh language training courses will be promoted on all internal and external communications channels.
<b>Is the Welsh language being treated no less favourably than the English language?</b>	Yes  Welsh speakers will be treated no less favourably under the proposals to change the team structures within the Communications, Business Support and Procurement services.	Some Community Hub staff have a basic understanding of the Welsh language and further training is in the process of being undertaken with 3 of the Officers - proposal does not affect delivery of services through the Welsh language.	No impact on the delivery of services from a welsh language perspective by the proposal contained within this IIA.

**Section 2 - Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the [Welsh Language Standards](#) require the Council to have 'due regard' for any positive or negative impacts that proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Requirements	Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts with regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
		The proposed changes to structure within Communications, Business Support and Procurement will have no impact on Welsh Language standards compliance.	

Page 315

**Section 3 - Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only – Please refer to our Corporate Reporting Guidance)**

Welsh Government's [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework to ensure tackling inequality of outcome is at the forefront of decision making.

**Please consider how your proposal could affect the following groups:**

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

Page 316

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
<p><b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams &amp; also single person households could be affected by the proposals.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery. Community Hubs located in town centres.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service, Contact Centre and Community Hubs</u></b>            Community Hub footfall            Community Hub case studies on range of queries residents attend face to face hubs            Volumes of telephone calls – benefits / contact centre / types of calls            Volumes of benefit applications</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b>            The impact should be limited as the proposal is to delete a</p>

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
	<p>The proposed changes in structure in Communications and Procurement will have no impact.</p>	<p>Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team.</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>          Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face</p>	<p>managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b>          Some of the staff within the service are single person households, or the only earners in the household. Therefore, reductions to the staffing structure could impact negatively on the staff who fall within this category. A large proportion of</p>

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
		service remains unaffected.	our staff are Residents of Blaenau Gwent and live locally.
<p><b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> (enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery. Community Hubs located in town centres.</p>	<p><b>Benefits Service</b> <i>Negative</i> – The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the Team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b>Contact Centre</b> Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team</p>	<p><b>Benefits Service, Contact Centre and Community Hubs</b> The impact should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery. Community Hub footfall Community Hub case studies on range of queries residents attend face to face hubs will continue to support this approach in addition to the volumes of telephone calls – benefits / contact centre / types of calls and volumes of benefit applications</p> <p><b>Communications</b> The impact should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of</p>

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
		<p><i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>          Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected.</p> <p><b><u>Procurement and Communications</u></b>          The proposed changes in structure in Communications and</p>	<p>campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b>          Some of the staff within the service are single person households, or the only earners in the household. Therefore, reductions to the staffing structure could impact negatively on the staff who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery</p>

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
		Procurement will have no impact.	capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.
<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> (<i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e., financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, are located in warm home, hobbies etc.</i>)</p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery.</p> <p>Community Hubs located in town centres.</p> <p>The proposed changes in structure in Communications and Procurement will have no impact.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b></p> <p><i>Negative</i> - The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b></p> <p>Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service, Contact Centre and Community Hubs</u></b></p> <p>Community Hub footfall          Community Hub case studies on range of queries residents attend face to face hubs</p> <p>Volumes of telephone calls – benefits / contact centre / types of calls          Volumes of benefit applications</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b></p> <p>The impact should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management</p>



Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
		<p>impact support available for staff within the team  <i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected.</p>	<p>experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Business Support</u></b>            Some of the staff within the service are single person households, or the only earners in the household. Therefore, reductions to the staffing structure could impact negatively on the staff who fall within this category.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business</u></b>  <b><u>Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will</p>

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
			be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b>  <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i></p>	<p><i>Negative</i> – reduced capacity within the teams</p> <p><i>Positive</i> – New ways of working provide a more streamlined approach to service delivery Positive Community Hubs located in town centres.</p> <p>The proposed changes in structure in Communications, Business Support and Procurement will have no impact.</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> The reduction in staff within the Benefit Service would reduce overall capacity within the team, benefit administration could take longer, this would have an effect on residents who are reliant on the services and ultimately reputational damage.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Centre</u></b>            Reduction in management within the Contact Centre will have no direct impact on service delivery, will impact support available for staff within the team</p>	<p><b><u>Benefits Service, Contact Centre and Community Hubs</u></b>            Community Hub footfall            Community Hub case studies on range of queries residents attend face to face hubs            Volumes of telephone calls – benefits / contact centre / types of calls            Volumes of benefit applications</p> <p><b><u>Communications</u></b>            The impact should be limited as the proposal is to delete a managerial position and not reduce the operational delivery of campaigns. There will be a loss of strategic management experience. However, there is an opportunity for a member of the team to take more responsibility</p>

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
		<p><i>Positive</i> - function to self serve for benefit queries where possible, basic telephone calls taken within the Contact Centre freeing up more complex queries to be resolved in the service area.</p> <p><b><u>Community Hubs</u></b>            Whilst there will be an impact on the Management role within the Community Hubs, the service delivery is unaffected by proposal, therefore face to face service remains unaffected.</p>	<p>and provide management and direction for the team. There would also be strategic leadership for communications within the proposed revised structure for the team.</p> <p><b><u>Commercial Business Development &amp; Procurement</u></b>  <i>Negative</i> – Whilst the restructure will focus on securing delivery capacity and reducing senior management capacity, there will be a reduction in overall staff resources, which will result in longer lead times and prioritisation of workloads.</p>
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b>  <i>(social class i.e., parents' education, employment and income)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<b>Socio Economic Disadvantages</b>	<b>Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?</b>	<b>How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?</b>	<b>Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)</b>
<i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>			

**Section 4 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	N/A	No	
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	N/A	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	N/A	No	

**Section 5 - Data**

*Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal. For example, this can be previous consultations, national/regional/local data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.*

<b>What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b>	<b>What were the key findings?</b>	<b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b>
<p>Customer service data – there are a lot of different data sets gathered across the Customer Services teams. Data has been analysed to ensure no area outlined within this IIA is adversely affected by the proposal. The proposals set out within the Customer Service areas have opportunities to streamline service delivery to support the customer service delivery moving forward.</p>	<p>Streamline of services – self serve where possible but still offering telephony / face to face support to those who need / require these services.</p>	<p>Supported the streamlining of services, looking at basic enquiries v complex needs to ensure issues are resolved for residents.</p>

**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

We can monitor footfall pre and post proposal and also see if impact is seen in any of the customer service functions, Community Hubs, telephone calls and also benefits services.

## Section 6 - Consultation.

*Using the questions below please provide details of any planned consultations or consultations that have been undertaken to support the proposal, referring to the Gunning Principles as appropriate:*

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Please consider the following questions:**

1. Who did you consult?
2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?
3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?
4. What were the findings?
5. Have the findings been considered with regards to the decision?

A consultation process will take place with staff and the Trade Unions at the appropriate juncture, to ensure that they are clear on the proposals and how they will be affected.

**Section 7 - Decision**

*Using the information, you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).



## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Governance and Partnerships – Proposed Cost Reductions

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Sarah King</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Gemma Wasley</b>
Organisation:	<b>Governance and Partnerships</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gemma Wasley	Gemma Wasley	30/10/23 06/11/23 20/11/23
Reviewed by:	Sarah King	Sarah King	20/11/23
Approved by:	Sarah King	Sarah King	20/11/23

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
1.1	The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for delivering cost reductions for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
1.2	This business case will detail the options identified to deliver a reduction in staff costs following a review of the Governance and Partnership Section. There are no vacant posts within the section and a number of posts are grant funded, therefore, the review is considering the potential downsizing and reducing or ceasing aspects of service delivery whilst maintaining a core service.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
2.1	The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.
2.2	The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.
2.3	Across the Council, service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.
2.4	<p>The Governance and Partnership Budget is predominantly staffing, and therefore proposals to reduce costs will impact on the staff numbers and impact on the level of service provided.</p> <p>Member Allowances are included within the budget and aspects of this have been put forward as additional business cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Members Allowances - Additional Superannuation Budget - £12,000</b></li> <li>• <b>Co-opted Members Allowance Budget - £12,000</b></li> <li>• <b>Members Carers Allowance Budget - £6,500</b></li> </ul>
2.5	<p>Employee information for the Governance and Partnership Section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of staff – 46</li> <li>• 5% Savings from staff - £72,000</li> <li>• There are no current vacancies within the service</li> <li>• Of the 46 employees, 7 FTE are grant funded and therefore out of scope. The £72,000 is against fully funded Blaenau Gwent employees</li> </ul>
2.5.1	The Governance and Partnership Section, headed by the Head of Democratic Services, Governance and Partnerships, comprises of a number of services:

2.5.2	<p><b>Policy</b>  Providing expert advice and support in relation to all aspects of policy across the Council. Also, development and implementation by the team of policy areas on behalf of the Council in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Town and Community Council's</li> <li>○ Public Service Board</li> <li>○ Local Delivery Group</li> <li>○ Assessments, Engagement, Plans, Annual Reports, Partnerships/Groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Equalities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Equality Act 2010: the Public Sector Equality Duty</li> <li>○ Strategic Equality Plan</li> <li>○ Anti-Racism Action Plans Wales</li> <li>○ LGBTQ+ Action Plans</li> <li>○ Disability Action Plans</li> <li>○ Equality and Human Rights Commission</li> <li>○ Socio-economic Duty</li> <li>○ Integrated Impact Assessments</li> <li>○ Engagement, Plans and Action Plans, Annual Reports, Policy development</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Welsh Language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh language standards</li> <li>○ The Council is subject to the Compliance Notice – Section 44 Issue Date: 30/09/2015</li> <li>○ Assessments, Engagement, Plans and Action Plans, Annual Reports, guidance policies, liaison, and investigation and enforcement.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)</li> <li>○ Youth forum</li> <li>○ Youth mayor and deputy</li> <li>○ Facilitating representing on regional forums</li> <li>○ Youth Member of Parliament (UK/Wales)</li> <li>○ School Grand Council</li> <li>○ National Principles for Engagement in Wales</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Climate Change</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change</li> <li>○ Net Zero 2030 in Wales</li> <li>○ Net Zero 2050 - The Environment (Wales) Act 2016</li> <li>○ Assessments, Engagement, Plans and Action Plans, Annual Reports, performance management, guidance, policy development</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>CCTV</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CCTV surveillance used to help tackle community safety issues such as crime and anti-social behaviour</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Impact Assessments, Codes of Practice, Plans and Action Plans, Annual Reports, guidance policies, liaison, and contract management.</li> </ul>
2.5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Community Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Responsible for leading on the Council's approach to Community Safety including advice and support. Community safety is a partnership approach to reduce crime and disorder in local communities. Work includes:</li> <li>○ Anti Social Behaviour</li> <li>○ Public Space Protection Orders</li> <li>○ Domestic Abuse / Domestic Homicide Review (VAWDASV)</li> <li>○ Community Safety Partnership</li> <li>○ Prevent</li> <li>○ Substance Misuse</li> <li>○ Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>○ Community Safety Action Plan to support delivery of statutory functions</li> <li>○ Implementation of the Serious Violence Duty</li> <li>○ CONTEST: Protect, Prepare and Prevent</li> <li>○ Community Cohesion</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2.5.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Performance</b> Providing expert data, analytics and system development across Council Services. Provision of advice and support in relation to all aspects of performance across the Council. Development and implementation by the team of strategies and documentation on behalf of the Council. Development of meaningful, accurate and balanced reporting mechanisms. Supporting the organisation to effectively operate systems to collate and utilise data and intelligence.</li> <li>● <b>Social Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social Services Data - The analysis and production of management information for Adults and Children's Social Services, and Education Services with a focus on Children Looked After (CLA) personal education planning. They are responsible for the monitoring, data validation, quality assurance and presentation of performance information, including the submission of statutory returns to the Welsh Government.</li> <li>○ SSWB Act - Production of performance and monitoring indicators and metrics. Children's and Adults censuses</li> <li>○ Collation and development of the ACRF</li> <li>○ WCCIS - The development, implementation and technical support of information technology systems within the Social Services Directorate. Providing formal training to system users for new system modules, functionality changes and the roll out of upgrades to the WCCIS system. Contributes to SQL server maintenance and develops SQL reporting systems via Microsoft Reporting Services, Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio and Microsoft Business Intelligence Studio.</li> <li>○ On an annual basis, the children looked after data</li> <li>○ Response plans and working arrangements in place to avoid continuity issues</li> <li>○ Robust working links with SRS to ensure system upgrades and network infrastructure is in place</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Creating and reporting of national data requirements in a timely manner.
- To provide continued support and training to 'Superusers'
- Explore WCCIS functionality and identify opportunities to fully utilise systems capabilities. Mapping processes and legislative requirements to undertake service reviews
- Support system upgrades and testing and respond to any service continuity issues
- Develop and maintain forms to ensure they are fit for purpose to record data items used in the production of performance indicators to monitor and evaluate service delivery and to limit duplication of effort
- Helpdesk support
- **Education**
  - Education Data – eFSM, Attendance, exclusions, attainment etc.
  - Education Director's Report
  - Schools support
  - Undertake quarterly / annual statutory reporting e.g. PLASC, NDC, NT, SWAC, Attendance
  - Provide accurate and timely information to service areas and partners e.g. LHB, Dental Service, Youth Offending Service, Early Identification Tool, Wellbeing Data Packs
  - Development of basic and dynamic data extraction reporting and exception reporting
  - Implementation of Capita and supporting frameworks ensuring information reflects other systems in order to minimise the use of data sources outside the Capita ONE environment.
  - Support areas to improve processes, recording and reporting of information.
  - Provide access to automated, timely and relevant reports for staff.
  - Provide technical support for the schools' SIMS systems to ensure continuity of access to the system.
  - Ensure that staff are able to access and utilise systems to support them in school related work activity - e.g. HWB, DEWi, FFT and Aspire.
  - Undertake quality control activities to validate the data held within SIMS and other systems e.g. FSM reconciliation, PLASC analyses.
  - Provide support to schools in the development and use of systems to record and track pupil attainment and progress, timetabling, target setting, exam functions, use of the Fischer Family Trust platform to review performance v estimates, record targets.
- **Community Services and Regeneration**
  - Community Services Data
  - Regeneration Data
  - Director Report
  - Evolutive
  - Waste Data Flow
  - Street Cleansing
- **Corporate**
  - Corporate Data

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complaints and compliments</li> <li>○ Welsh</li> <li>○ Equalities</li> <li>○ Climate Change</li> <li>○ Community Safety</li> <li>○ Safeguarding Report</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Governance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Corporate Planning</li> <li>○ Self Assessment</li> <li>○ Peer Assessment</li> <li>○ Business planning</li> <li>○ Performance Management Framework</li> <li>○ Working across directorates to ensure all data requirements are captured and embedded into practice.</li> <li>○ Implementation of the Council responsibilities against the Well-being of Future Generations Act</li> <li>○ Implementation of the Local Government &amp; Elections Act</li> <li>○ Development of the statutory Well-being Objectives and Corporate Plan including establishment of performance indicators and regular monitoring arrangements</li> <li>○ Joint Report</li> <li>○ Data Maturity Assessment</li> <li>○ Data Strategy</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Auditors and Regulators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regular engagement with Auditors &amp; across the Council on Performance Audits</li> <li>○ Management of all Audit Wales audits including management of responses and monitoring proposals for improvement</li> <li>○ Leading on the report tracker for external audits</li> <li>○ Administering documentation and interviews for Audit Wales</li> <li>○ Development of the Annual Governance Statement</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Data, Analysis, Statistics &amp; Geographical Information Systems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local Land and Property Gazetteer</li> <li>○ Data Co-operation Agreement (DCA)</li> <li>○ Statistical analysis across the Council</li> <li>○ Mapping of services across the Council</li> <li>○ Acorn Data</li> <li>○ Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>○ Power BI</li> <li>○ Assessments, Analysis Plans and Action Plans, Statutory daily and monthly returns, data integration, liaison and representation, and investigation and enforcement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2.5.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Democratic Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Responsible for management of democratic services and all related member functions. Development and embedding of the democratic arrangements of</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>the Council to effectively support members and modernise and manage the function effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership, Cabinet Support and Presiding Member support</li> <li>○ Support to Committees</li> <li>○ Provision of advice and guidance to officers and members</li> <li>○ Provision of advice at meetings</li> <li>○ Providing the statutory scrutiny function</li> <li>○ Further development and refinement to manage and modernise the democratic function</li> <li>○ Member development</li> <li>○ Constituency work</li> <li>○ Support to members on outside bodies</li> <li>○ Support to member champions</li> <li>○ Requirements under the Local Government and Elections Act – Live broadcasting, Participation in the democratic function, Petitions</li> <li>○ Induction Programme</li> <li>○ Supporting and embedding partnership committee arrangements</li> <li>○ Provision of PDRs, Competency Framework, Member Reports</li> <li>○ Amendments and revisions to guidance, documents and protocols</li> </ul>
2.5.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Resettlement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Responsible for the management and coordination of accommodation requirements in line with requirements under WG Homes requirements.</li> <li>○ Resettlement Programmes - Management &amp; Co-ordination of the Blaenau Gwent Homes for Ukraine Scheme participation &amp; Asylum Dispersal</li> <li>○ Meeting the Home Office expectations relating to resettlement programmes e.g. Refugee Programmes and Asylum Dispersal</li> <li>○ Provide a key advisory role to LA's in Wales with Initial Accommodation to support with continuous move on, and provide additional operational resource and expertise to support move on ahead of IA closures.</li> <li>○ Work with Pan Wales resettlement teams and housing teams to develop move on plans and options for all guests arriving into BG through the Wales super sponsor route.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
3.2	<b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b>
3.2.1	This option would not deliver financial efficiencies but would ensure that capacity is maintained to continue existing service delivery levels.
3.3	<p><b>Option 2 – Review and downsize Governance and Partnerships to reduce Staffing costs by:</b></p> <p><b>A. £43,100 if choice 1a, 2, 3 and 4 is supported (approximately 60% of the saving target); or</b></p> <p><b>B. £22,100 if only choices 2, 3 and 4 are supported (rejecting option 1), (approximately 30% of the savings target).</b></p>

	<b>C.</b>
3.3.1	<p><b>1. CCTV –</b></p> <p><i>Note – as part of the savings options of the CS05 business case on CCTV, there is an option to reduce the staffing capacity of a Policy Officer.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1a. Reduced hours to 22.20hrs (3 days per week) (should a reduction in CCTV provision be identified) would be a saving of £21,000.</li> </ul> <p>Saving achieved against reduction in hours is subject to change pending outcome of pay award.</p>
3.3.2	<p><b>2. Reduce the staffing budget of 1 FTE scale 9 post (37hrs) to 0.86 FTE (32hrs) saving approximately £9,000</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The post is funded as 1 FTE at a scale 9</li> <li>The current officer in post works 32hrs per week</li> <li>The option is to reduce the allocation to this post to 32hrs only</li> <li>There is a risk that the officer will request to go back to full time hours which will create a cost pressure in future</li> <li>Should the current officer leave, the post could only be put out as 32hrs in future</li> </ul>
3.3.3	<p><b>3. Reduce the staffing budget of 1 FTE scale 7 post (37hrs) to 0.81% FTE (30hrs) saving approximately £10,200</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The post is funded as 1 FTE at a scale 7</li> <li>The current officer in post works 30hrs per week</li> <li>The option is to reduce the allocation to this post to 30hrs only</li> <li>There is a risk that the officer will request to go back to full time hours which will create a cost pressure in future</li> <li>Should the current officer leave, the post could only be put out as 30hrs in future</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Saving of £2,900 for a scale 9 Officer at the beginning of the spinal point.</b></p>
3.3.4	
3.3	<p><b>Option 3 – Review and downsize Governance and Partnerships to reduce Staffing costs by £72,000 (5%)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Should option B above be supported the Governance and Partnership Section would need to find an additional £28,900 (an additional 40% to make the target)</b></li> <li><b>Should option C above be supported the Governance and Partnership Section would need to find an additional £49,900 (an additional 69% to make the target)</b></li> </ol>
	In order to fully achieve the 5% staffing reduction of £72,000 a full review of the service will need to be undertaken.



	<p>As mentioned earlier in the proposal, the section has a total of 46 staff members, and, of these, 7 FTE are grant funded and therefore out of scope, leaving only 39 staff. There are also no current vacancies within the service, therefore, additional staffing proposals would need to be scoped and would require for the canvassing of voluntary or even compulsory redundancy in order to make the savings.</p> <p>With any restructure all associated risks on service delivery and service continuity would need to be considered as well as discussions with OD. A reduction in staff will result in a reduced service.</p> <p>The additional amount to be saved will be dependent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of savings achieved as part of option 2;</li> <li>• the level of restructure to take place; and</li> <li>• considering all associated risks and service impacts.</li> </ul> <p>As downsizing cannot be achieved through vacant posts there will be termination costs incurred e.g., redundancy and pension strain costs. These costs will be one off, funding for these is currently being considered.</p>
3.5	<b>Recommended option</b>
3.5.1	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.
3.6	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
3.6.1	Pay assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy have been utilised to assess the financial impact of the proposals.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b> N/A
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
5.1.1	As downsizing cannot be achieved through vacant posts there will be termination costs incurred e.g. redundancy and pension strain costs. These costs will be one off, funding for these is currently being considered.
5.1.2	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2a Budget reduction of £43,100 (£21,000 included within separate CCTV business case)</li> <li>- Option 2b Budget reduction of £22,100</li> </ul>

	Year	Potential Saving		
		Option 2a	Option 2b	
	2024/2025	£43,100	£22,100	
	2025/2026	£0	£0	
	2026/2027	£0	£0	
	2027/2028	£0	£0	
	2028/2029	£0	£0	
	CCTV BC (Considered Separately)	(£21,000)		
	Total	£22,100	£22,100	
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>			
6.1	<p>This proposal will be delivered through a review and downsizing of the current staffing structure and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with staff, Trade Unions and Organisation Development.</li> </ul>			

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### All Portfolios – Proposed Budget Cut

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Rhian Hayden</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Gina Taylor</b>
Organisation:	<b>Resources Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gina Taylor		
Reviewed by:	Rhian Hayden		
Approved by:	Rhian Hayden		

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
1.1	The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for delivering budget reductions for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
1.2	This business case will detail the options identified to deliver budget cuts including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% budget cut across all budgets / Portfolios</li> <li>• 2% budget cut across all budgets / Portfolios</li> </ul>
1.3	This proposal is additional to the individual business cases also under consideration.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
2.1	The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.
2.2	The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.
2.3	Across the Council service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
3.1.1	After applying the assumptions included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to the 2023/2024 Portfolio Budgets, it is proposed to:
3.1.2	<b>Option 1 – Cut the uplift applied to all Portfolio Budgets by 1% for 2024/2025 (based on the adjusted estimate for 2023/2024)</b>
3.1.3	<b>Option 2 - Cut the uplift applied to all Portfolio Budgets by 2% for 2024/2025 (based on the adjusted estimate for 2023/2024)</b>
3.1.4	The tables below show the financial impact per portfolio of the 2 options. The Individual Schools Budget (ISB) and Leisure Services have not been included as there are separate Business Cases.

**Table 1: Option 1 – 1% Budget Cut**

Portfolio	Uplift included in the MTFS £'000	Option 1 – 1% Cut £'000	Adjusted Uplift £'000
Corporate Services	1,165	142	1,023
Social Services	2,767	498	2,269
Education	476	89	387
Economy	38	7	31
Environment	1,801	253	1,548
Planning	59	11	48
Licensing	10	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,316</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>5,315</b>

**Table 2: Option 2 – 2% Budget Cut**

Portfolio	Uplift included in the MTFS £'000	Option 2 – 2% Cut £'000	Net Uplift £'000
Corporate Services	1,165	284	881
Social Services	2,767	996	1,771
Education	476	178	298
Economy	38	14	24
Environment	1,801	506	1,295
Planning	59	22	37
Licensing	10	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,316</b>	<b>2,002</b>	<b>4,314</b>

3.1.5

**Risks identified for all 2 Options:**

- Services maybe have insufficient budget to deliver services to the current level with the impact of high inflation and pay awards.
- This proposal does not consider the impact of other business cases presented for consideration.
- There may be significant cost pressures emerging during 2024/2025
- Emergency measures including a freeze on non-essential spend recruitment to vacant posts may need to be implemented to avoid an unplanned draw from Reserves at year end.

3.1.6

**Mitigating Actions:**

- Budget Holders will prioritise their budgets on essential expenditure.
- Regular budget monitoring and reporting should identify cost pressures as they emerge to allow actions to be put in place to address the cost pressure.

	Emergency measures including a freeze on non-essential spend and filling vacant posts may need to be in place throughout 2024/2025 to bring the spend in line with the budget.
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
3.2.1	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
3.3.1	<p>The proposed cut has been based on the adjusted estimate for 2023/2024 and does not take into account any other Business Cases under consideration.</p> <p>The calculation of the adjusted estimate excludes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fire Levy</li> <li>• Apprenticeship Levy</li> <li>• Pension costs</li> <li>• Cross Cutting Budgets</li> <li>• Reverses a number of internal recharges including central support, Administration Buildings, IT and Insurance</li> </ul>
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
4.1	Not relevant at this point.
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
5.1	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap for 2024/2025 in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 Budget reduction of £1m</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £2m</li> </ul>
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>
6.1	This proposal will be delivered through the Portfolio budget being reduced during the budget setting process.

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### All Portfolios – Increase in Fees & Charges by a Minimum of 5%

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Rhian Hayden</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Gina Taylor</b>
Organisation:	<b>Resources Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gina Taylor		
Reviewed by:	Rhian Hayden		
Approved by:	Rhian Hayden		





1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for increasing income for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.</p> <p>This business case will propose increasing discretionary Fees &amp; Charges by a minimum of 5%.</p>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Across the Council service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.</p> <p>The Council has previously agreed a policy of full cost recovery therefore all fees &amp; charges must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure where appropriate the costs of providing the services are reflected in the fees &amp; charges agreed and implemented.</p> <p>For 2024/25 employee costs are expected to increase by at least 5% with other costs anticipated to increase by an average 4% (CPI assumption MTFs). Given these estimated higher costs of delivering services to the public, where charged income levels should be considered / revised.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p>The budget assessment of income generated from all Fees &amp; Charges for 2023/2024 is £14.5m and this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £10m from Discretionary Fees &amp; Charges</li> <li>• £4.2m from fees &amp; charges set nationally (e.g., Planning &amp; Building Control Fees, Fixed Penalty Notices, Fairer Charging etc)</li> <li>• £0.2m from Consortia arrangements</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Option 1 – Do not increase discretionary Fees &amp; Charges for 2024/2025.</b></p> <p>The assumption in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is to increase all income budgets by 4% in line with the assumption for inflation. This will increase income budgets by £0.6m.</p> <p>If individual discretionary fees &amp; charges are not increased by a minimum of 4% there is a risk that this will result in a cost pressure in 2024/2025 as fees &amp; charges will not increase in line with budget targets.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – Increase discretionary Fees &amp; Charges by 4% in line with the assumption within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy</b></p> <p>Increasing all discretionary fees &amp; charges by 4% should generate the income required to meet the proposed income budgets for 2024/2025, however will not generate additional income to contribute to the current identified budget gap within the MTFS.</p> <p><b>Option 3 – Increase discretionary Fees &amp; Charges by 5% (as a minimum)</b></p> <p>This proposal is to increase discretionary charges by an additional 1% over and above the assumption within the MTFS. This option would deliver an increase in income of approximately £100,000 and would include increasing internal SLAs (with Schools, Corporate Landlord etc) by 5%.</p> <p><b>Risks identified for Options 2 and 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand may drop off when prices are increased resulting in lower income levels being generated and budget cost pressures emerging as a consequence.</li> <li>• Increasing the costs to both external and internal customers resulting in increased pressures facing schools and other budgets.</li> <li>• Schools may consider withdrawing from the SLAs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mitigating Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular monitoring of fees and charges should identify cost pressures as they emerge and allow actions to be put in place to address the cost pressure.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>

	An analysis of income budgets and forecast income (at quarter 2) have formed the basis of the calculations within this proposal.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 Will increase the budget gap identified in the MTFS by £0.6m</li> <li>- Option 2 No financial impact on the budget gap identified in the MTFS.</li> <li>- Option 3 Increased income and a reduction in the budget gap of £0.1m</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Income Generation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£0.1m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£0.1m</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Income Generation	2024/2025	£0.1m	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£0.1m
Year	Potential Income Generation														
2024/2025	£0.1m														
2025/2026	£0														
2026/2027	£0														
2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£0.1m														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	Council will consider Fees & Charges as part of the budget setting process and the review of the Fees & Charges Register for 2024/2025.														

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Rhain Hayden	Gina Taylor	All Services	08/02/2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

It is proposed to increase discretionary fees & charges for 2024/2025 by a minimum of 5%, this would generate additional income in excess of £100,000 towards the Council's budget gap for 2024/2025. The current assumption within the Medium Term Finance Strategy is an increase of 4%.

<b>Section 1</b> <b>Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> and the EHRC guidance <a href="#">The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC</a></b> <b>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.</b>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	Yes	There will be a financial impact from increased fees on residents who access Council Services for which there is a discretionary charge including social care, meals on wheels, school meals, Planning Fees etc.  In most instances the services provided are discretionary and people have the option to not procure the services offered.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is</i>	No	Yes	As above

<i>different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i>			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Religion or Belief</b> ( <i>people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Sex</b> ( <i>women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender</i> )	No	Yes	As above

<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	No	Yes	As above
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**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

**Commented [RH1]:** I agree section 2 does not need to be completed - the Council's agreed policy is full cost recovery (unless decision is made to subsidise)




<p><b>Section 2</b> <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b> <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i></p> <p><b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
<b>Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.</b>	<b>Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?</b>	<b>How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?</b>	<b>Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.</b>
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>			
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings)</i>			





<i>to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>			
<b>Material Deprivation</b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>			
<b>Area Deprivation</b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?)</i>			
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>			
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>			

<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b> <i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	Income from Fees & Charges generates £14m per annum towards the Council's budget, providing funding to support the delivery of services.
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WCFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

<b>Five Ways of Working</b>	<b>How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?</b>
<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</i></p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</i></p>
<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</i></p>

<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</i></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p><i>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</i></p>

<b>How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.</b>	
1. <b>A PROSPEROUS WALES ...</b> an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	n/a
2. <b>A RESILIENT WALES ...</b> a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.	n/a
3. <b>A HEALTHIER WALES ...</b> a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.	n/a
4. <b>A MORE EQUAL WALES ...</b> A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).	n/a
5. <b>A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...</b> attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.	n/a

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

n/a

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

n/a



<b>Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards</b> <i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	No		
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>	No		
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>	No		
<b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b>	No		

**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	



**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	No	No	
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	No	No	

<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)	No	No	
<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	
<b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	
<b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)	No	No	
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	No	No	

Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a>			
Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> </ul>	No	No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is,</p>	No	No	

<p>primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	

Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.		
Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<p>The Fees &amp; Charges Register and ongoing monitoring of fee income compared to budgets.</p> <p>The need to identify budget cuts / increased income to balance the budget for 2024/2025.</p>	<p>For 2023/2024, the Council is forecasting achieving in excess of the overall estimate for all Fees &amp; Charges.</p> <p>Cost of providing these discretionary services are increasing significantly.</p> <p>Council has an agreed policy of full cost recovery although they have determined that some services have been subsidised.</p>	<p>This proposal will generate additional income in excess of £100,000 towards the budget gap for 2024/2025 <u>and move some fees / charges towards full cost recovery.-</u></p>

Commented [RH2]: Why this finding ?

**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**This proposal has been included within the Budget Consultation and Engagement with Members, Trade Unions, Town & Community Councils and residents and other stakeholders within Blaenau Gwent.**

**Where relevant consultation has / will be undertaken with businesses impacted by proposal e.g. taxi's, gambling.**



Section 11-Monitoring and Review	
How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?	This will be monitored and reported as part of the Financial Management Framework.
What monitoring tools will be used?	Financial Reports / presentations to Members
How will the results be used for future development?	Outcomes will inform the review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and assumptions applied.
How and when will it be reviewed?	During 2024/2025 financial year in consultation with CLT, wider CLT, Budget Holders and Members
Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?	Rhian Hayden / Gina Taylor

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Name of person completing the IIA	
Name:	Gina Taylor

<b>Job Title:</b>	Service Manager Accountancy
<b>Date:</b>	8/2/2024

<b>Head of Service Approval</b>			
<b>Name:</b>	Rhian Hayden		
<b>Job Title:</b>	Chief Officer Resources		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	8/2/2024

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) .

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Increase Council Tax

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Rhian Hayden</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Dave Elias</b>
Organisation:	<b>Resources Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Rhian Hayden		
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:	Rhian Hayden		

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the Business Case is to provide options for increasing income for 2024/2025 onwards (as part of the council's Bridging the gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.</p> <p>This business case will propose increasing Council Tax by 5% for 2024/25.</p>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost of living crisis continues into 2023 with inflation remaining high at 6.7% (September 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Across the Council service delivery methods are being reviewed including, staffing structures, external costs to identify budget cuts to contribute to mitigating the Council's budget gap.</p> <p>The Council's revenue budget is funded by Welsh Government (WG) Revenue Support Grant, income from fees &amp; charges and Council Tax.</p> <p>For 2024/25 the revenue support grant received from WG is estimated to increase across Wales by an average of 3.1% however the Council's costs to deliver the current level of services to the Blaenau Gwent public is significantly out stripping the expected increase in this funding resulting in the forecast budget gap over the next 5 years.</p> <p>The Council has the option to raise additional income by increasing Council Tax to help set a balanced budget for 2024/25.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p>The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumes a Council Tax increase of 4% for 2024/25 which if agreed will result in an additional £1.52m compared to 2023/24.</p> <p><b>Options for Consideration: -</b></p>

	<p><b>Option 1 – Increase Council Tax by 4% for 2024/2025, in line with the assumption within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy</b></p> <p>Increasing Council Tax by 4% in line with the assumption for inflation, will increase income by £1.52m. The increase on Band D (before considering precepts) would be an increase of approx. £73 per annum.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – Increase Council Tax by 5% for 2024/2025</b></p> <p>Increasing council tax by 5% is estimated to increase income / yield by £1.9m This is £0.38m above the current assumption within the MTFs and if agreed will reduce the budget gap by £0.38m in 2024/25 and £0.45m over the next 5 years. The increase on Band D (before considering precepts) would be approx. £91 per annum.</p> <p><b>Option 3 – Increase Council Tax by more than 5%</b></p> <p>Any additional increase to Council Tax will generate higher levels of income. Every 1% increase will result in an additional £0.38m to contribute towards the budget gap forecast for 2024/25 and future years and support the achievement of a balanced budget.</p> <p><b>Risks identified for all Options:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability of the residents of Blaenau Gwent to pay increased costs leading to increased council tax debt.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mitigating Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This proposal will form part of public consultation and engagement.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	The assumption in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is to increase council tax by 4% per annum over the life of the strategy. A 1% increase will increase Council Tax income by £380,000.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	Not relevant at this point.

5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No impact on the budget gap for 2024/2025</li> <li>- Option 2 Reduce the gap by £0.38m</li> <li>- Option 3 Not known.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>
	Council will consider Council Tax Charges as part of the budget setting process.

## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Co-opted Members Allowance Budget

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Sarah King</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC – Governance and Partnerships</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gemma Wasley	Gemma Wasley	29/08/23
Reviewed by:	Sarah King		
Approved by:			

1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>1.1 The proposal is to cut or reduce the budget aligned to Co-opted Member Allowances. Following a recent review of the budget it has been identified that £12,000 could be removed from the budget in line with forecast expenditure and historical spend data. Currently, Blaenau Gwent Co-optees are not claiming expenses.</p> <p>1.2 The IRPW has determined that a daily or half daily fee is appropriate remuneration for the important role undertaken by co-opted members of authorities with voting rights. Recognising the important role that co-opted members discharge, payment must be made for travel and preparation time; committee and other types of meetings as well as other activities, including training.</p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p> <p>2.1 Alongside the requirements of the IRPW, the Council allocates monies to support Co-opted Members for travel and preparation time; committee and other types of meetings as well as other activities, including training.</p> <p>2.2 To date, Co-opted Members have not claimed for Allowances. This has created an underspend in the budget.</p>
3.	<p><b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b></p>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b></p> <p>3.1.2 <b>Option 1 – Full Allocation</b> £12,000 is the maximum amount available in the Co-optee Members Allowance Budget.</p> <p>3.1.3 <b>Option 2 – Alternative Amounts</b> Alternative amounts, lower than £12,000 could also be considered.</p> <p>3.1.4 <b>Risks to Option 1 and 2</b> For Option 1 and 2 there is a risk of Co-opted Members claiming for Allowances.</p> <p><i>Note: we cannot discourage or stop any Co-opted Member from claiming allowances and it is a statutory right.</i></p> <p>3.1.5 <b>Option 3 – Do Nothing</b> If no monies are taken, then the underspend has traditionally been used to cover overspends in other Council budgets.</p>



3.2	<p><b>Recommended option</b></p> <p>3.2.1 Reduction or removal of the Co-optee Member Allowance would support cost savings across the Council. It is suggested that the monies could be removed from the budget from 2023/24. This assumption is in line with forecast expenditure and historical spend data.</p> <p>There is a risk if the budget is reduced by £12,000 or less should Co-opted Members claim Allowances in future years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option 1 and 2 would put the budget in an overspend situation, with monies needing to be identified from elsewhere.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: we cannot discourage or stop any Co-opted Member from claiming allowances as it is a statutory right.</i></p>
3.3	<p><b>Sources and assumptions</b></p> <p>The assumption is in line with forecast expenditure and historical spend data.</p>
4.	<p><b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b></p> <p>N/A</p>
5.	<p><b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b></p> <p>At this present time, this budget is not claimed for by Co-opted Members. This proposal will deliver financial efficiencies of £12,000 for 2024/2025.</p>
6.	<p><b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a proposal to remove or reduce an existing budget which has not been utilised this year as Co-opted Members have chosen to not claim for Allowances.</li> <li>• If approved, the budget can be reduced from 2023/24.</li> <li>• Risks are identified above.</li> <li>• Principal councils must maintain an annual schedule of member remuneration detailing the payments it will make to members in the coming municipal year. Principal councils must also publish a Statement of Payments by 30th September each year. This document details all payments made to elected members in the previous municipal year.</li> </ul>

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Estates – Review of Staffing Structure

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Steve Smith</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:			
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to provide options for reducing the budget for Estates to deliver cost reductions through a decrease in FTE (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5 year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>All budget areas across the Council are being reviewed to support the delivery of the MTFs. The service area comprises Planning, Building Control and Estates, the team comprises of a mix of professional services vital to the Council's corporate objectives and includes several statutory services. The Property Assets and Review Officer post identified is in a non-statutory area of work and therefore is proposed as a budget reduction to support the mitigation of the estimated Council funding gap.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service level remains at current levels.</li> <li>• New CATs proposals continue to be considered and support can be provided to existing CATs.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No budget reduction to contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 2 - Redundancy of Property Assets and Review Officer</b></p> <p>Planning and Building Control are statutory services and cutting below present service levels risks reducing service capacity to below acceptable standards. The Estates team is similarly positioned with the exception of this post which is largely responsible for delivery of CATS and assisting in their ongoing viability. This is a non-statutory function. The redundancy of this post would result in a budget reduction of <b>£60,170</b>.</p>

	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget reduction would contribute to the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The post is a single point of failure and there is no capacity to share existing workload amongst colleagues. The proposal will therefore result in cessation of this area of work in its entirety for the service area, impacting upon consideration of new CAT proposals and ongoing liaison with existing CATs.</li> <li>There will be a loss of capacity to support some corporate priorities such as community gardens and impact upon the timescales of other areas such as the Strategic Asset Management Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New CAT proposals cannot be considered and progressed by the service area to support future service delivery.</li> <li>Existing CATs that require ongoing support may become unsustainable and assets returned to the Council, with unknown resource/financial impact.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few difficult cases aside; the delivery of CATs is nearing completion. This post is therefore considered to have the least impact on day to day service delivery.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	The above proposals outline the savings and potential risks to the Council and specifically the Estates budget, however the proposal has been based in the knowledge of the overall service area and the deliverability of a budget reduction through FTE reduction. Pay assumptions within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been utilised to assess the financial impact of the proposal.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	Not applicable
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1 No Impact</li> </ul>

	- Option 2 Budget reduction of £60,170														
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£60,170</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£60,170</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£60,170	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£60,170
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2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£60,170														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>This proposal will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with staff, the Trade Union and Organisation Development.</li> <li>• An exit plan for dealing with outstanding work would be agreed with the post holder but no new CAT cases will be possible.</li> </ul>														

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Business & Regeneration – Income Generation

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Owen Ashton</b>
Organisation:	

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Owen Ashton		
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of this Business Case is to provide options to identify alternative income streams within the Business & Regeneration service area to deliver overall cost reductions (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5 year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>For a number of years, the Business &amp; Regeneration Division has secured external grant funding to support the delivery of regeneration projects across Blaenau Gwent and to fund technical delivery teams within the Authority to oversee projects. The significant costs and expertise of the Business &amp; Regeneration teams have in the main been absorbed and covered within the departmental budget but have in some instances been covered by external funding sources.</p> <p>In order to develop further income streams for the authority, there is a need and an opportunity for staff to fee earn by charging their time against projects and programmes, and the most appropriate way of doing this is through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund over 2023-24 and 2024-25.</p> <p>Business &amp; Regeneration have already committed to securing £30,000 per annum income and the identification of additional income of £17,000 for 2024/25 is being proposed.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no impact upon current service delivery or how employees are funded.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No budget reduction to contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Option 2 – Additional income generation</b></p> <p>Generation of an additional £17,000 through the charging of employee costs against specific grants and schemes. Staff within Business &amp; Regeneration will charge their time where relevant against projects, mainly focussed on the Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional income will contribute towards the Council’s Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be additional workload in monitoring and evidencing allocations of staff time against specific projects/grants.</li> <li>• There is a future need for the continuation of the income streams, alternative funding may be needed should the primary income stream/grant scheme should cease.</li> </ul> <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant schemes may cease, and no alternative funding streams introduced that can replace it, resulting in a potential future cost pressure for 2026/2027 if no further grant funding programmes are secured.</li> <li>• Timescales of grants may result in time pressures for the allocation of staff time to specific grants (i.e., late notification of underspending grant schemes meaning additional resource needed to complete appropriate administration tasks).</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close monitoring of grant spending/planning in order to ensure eligible expenditure in the form staff time allocations are appropriately charged against the grant schemes.</li> <li>• The Council has experience of managing multiple grant schemes and the charging of eligible expenditure against specific schemes including staff time allocations/</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part pf the consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	The main source of funding for this proposal is through the UK Government’s Shared Prosperity Fund and the assumption is that the funding can be used to cover staff costs and suitable grant schemes will be available to charge staff time allocations against, where staff costs are an eligible expenditure.



4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not applicable at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>The income will be funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £17,000</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£17,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£17,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£17,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£17,000
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2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£17,000														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	Staff will charge their time against relevant projects within the Shared Prosperity Fund programme.														

**Business & Regeneration – Review of Service Delivery /  
Alternative Service Delivery / Income Generation**

SRO:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Owen Ashton</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC</b>

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Prepared by:	Owen Ashton		Nov 2023
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to propose utilisation of grant during 2024/24 to deliver elements of the Destination Management function alongside the exploration of future alternative delivery opportunities for this service in the medium / long term.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>As part of the efficiency measures, staff savings are being considered across the whole Council. The proposal will look at reviewing the service delivery model within the Business and Regeneration service.</p> <p>The following options have been developed using this case and this Business Case proposes savings of £50,000 for 2024/25.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b>  <i>2 Options</i>  <i>1 – Do Nothing – No revenue saving achieved</i>  <i>2 – Subject to Member Agreement – undertake the changes proposed to achieve the required savings.</i></p>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing</b>  This option does not render any savings for the authority.</p> <p><b>Option 2 Service review of Business and Regeneration including consideration of income generation to produce financial efficiencies of £50,000.</b>  This business case is based on Income Generation and maximisation of grant funding for 2024/25 to deliver the elements of the service, alongside the exploration of future alternative delivery opportunities, including a regional or joint approach for future years.</p> <p>Service Impact: for this year the service will not be impacted, the funding will enable many of the existing and planned activities to continue either unchanged or changed slightly to ensure funding compliance.</p> <p>If the external funding is not utilised the risks are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no spare resource in the Business and Regeneration service to take on these duties, and so any ongoing work/support will not continue.</li> <li>• The CJC will be taking forward some elements of work and the Council may need to take on some temporary resource to manage the BG element of the work.</li> </ul>

3.2	<b>Recommended option</b> To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	The proposal has been based on the assumptions in the MTFS and 2024/2025 draft estimates.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b> <i>Not applicable at this stage.</i>
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	This proposal, if approved will deliver financial efficiencies of £50,000 for 2024/2025.
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### EAS – Reduction in Contribution

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Luisa Munro-Morris</b>
Organisation:	<b>Education Directorate</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Luisa Munro-Morris	<i>L. Munro-Morris</i>	20.09.23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to provide options with regards Blaenau Gwent's annual contribution to the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and to deliver cost reductions over the medium term (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>The Council currently contributes £332,000 per annum towards their share in the EAS, which is a school improvement service formed in 2012 in partnership with the 5 local authorities in the former Gwent area.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do nothing / Business as Usual</b> To continue with the annual contributions to the service.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contribution Blaenau Gwent makes to the EAS is smaller than other LAs in the SEWC region, due to its size, however we are able to access the same level of support, including school improvement, professional learning opportunities, governor support and school improvement grant management.</li> <li>• Blaenau Gwent has developed a positive working relationship with the EAS and its senior leaders, and this has enabled progress to be made in many of our schools. The positive relationship was also recognised in the recent Estyn inspection of the LA.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option would not deliver budget reductions towards the Council's Bridging the Gap proposals over the medium to long term.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 2 - Reduce contribution to EAS in 2024/25 by a further 10%</b> The Local Authority commissions the EAS with the other SEWC LAs to undertake school improvement roles and responsibilities. This includes support for school governance and the management of Welsh Government grants linked to school improvement e.g., the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) and the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG). The proposal is to cut Blaenau Gwent's contribution to this commissioning arrangement by 10% which would</p>

	<p>realise a saving of around £34,000. This will be the second year of cuts as the contribution for 2023/2024 was cut by 10%. Other LAs in the SEWC region are also considering a 10% cut to their EAS contributions for 2024/2025.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This would create a saving to the Local Authority's core budget.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may lead to a reduction in services from the EAS, in particular if all LAs in the SEWC region make similar cuts.</li> <li>This could result in less support for schools and negatively impact on pupil outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All LAs in the SEWC region reduced their contribution to the EAS by at least 10% in 2023/24 and the EAS was able to make savings so that there was no reduction to the services they provide to the LAs.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	<p>The financial information is based on the 2023/2024 contribution.</p> <p>The above proposal outlines the savings and the potential risks to the Education Directorate however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.</p> <p>Informal discussions with the EAS have indicated that they are expecting all LAs to request a 10% cut and are currently working on this premise and planning accordingly. If cuts are identified to achieve a 10% reduction across all LAs this could potentially lead to redundancies.</p>
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	Not relevant at this point.
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>Option 2 Budget reduction of £34,000</li> </ul>

Year	Potential Saving
2024/2025	£34,000
2025/2026	£0
2026/2027	£0
2027/2028	£0
2028/2029	£0
Total	£34,000

6. **DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS**

If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:

- Continue to engage with staff in DLT about proposed reduction.
- Engage with the schools about proposed reduction (if ASOS allows).
- Engage with the trade unions!
- Liaise with EAS and SEWC



## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Aneurin Leisure Trust – Review of Management Fee

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Luisa Munro-Morris</b>
Organisation:	<b>Education Directorate</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Luisa Munro-Morris	<i>L. Munro-Morris</i>	20.09.23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to provide options for reviewing the Management Fee provided to Aneurin Leisure Trust (ALT) and Awen for 2024/2025 as part of the Council's budget planning in attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2027/2028 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>The Council commissions ALT to deliver leisure services to the residents of Blaenau Gwent through a Management Fee of £3.16m per annum and Awen to manage the Metropole Theatre for £0.22m per annum. The Management Fees are increased year on year in line with CPI as determined in the contractual arrangements included in the Funding and Management Agreement.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do nothing / Business as Usual</b>  Increase the Management Fee for 2024/2025 in line with CPI (as at September 2023 CPI is 6.7%). The current assumed inflationary uplift included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is 4%.</p> <p>The increase in the Management Fee at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4% is £135,670.</li> <li>• 6.7% is £223,000.</li> </ul> <p>An uplift based on current CPI of 6.7%, will be a cost pressure of £87,000.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trust have forecast by the end of this financial year its reserves will have significantly reduced due to utility cost pressures of circa £1.1 million and additional staff costs, doing nothing would be a contributing mitigating factor.</li> <li>• This option would enable new cost related projects such as Trinity Chapel to be actioned.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Option 2 – Cash Flat Management Fee for 2024/2025</b></p> <p><b>Service Impact</b> This would provide the Council with a financial efficiency of £135,670 towards the Council’s funding gap for 2024/2025.</p> <p>Like the Council, the Trust is faced with significant cost increases, largely due to increased utility bills, inflation and pay awards. Consequently, the Trust are currently undertaking a review of all services to identify potential areas that can be cut. The review will cover services that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income generating – and reviewing if further income can be generated.</li> <li>• Non-income generating – review of how much it costs to run each service.</li> <li>• Grant funded services.</li> </ul> <p>The Trust will then present a range of proposals for the Council to consider e.g., the closure of Blaina Library and the area to be served by the mobile library service instead which would realise savings of approximately £30,000. All proposed cuts to services would need to be considered and approved by the Council.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This would create a saving to the Local Authority’s core budget.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These savings would lead to significant cuts in the services the Leisure Trust is able to provide to the community.</li> <li>• This could put certain people at risk e.g., reduction to library services may negatively impact on people who are isolated or at risk of becoming isolated, and reduction in leisure services may increase anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• By the end of this financial year the Trust has forecast to have wiped out all reserves due to utility cost pressures of circa £1.1 million and additional staff costs.</li> <li>• Any new projects, in particular Trinity Chapel, will be put at risk.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.

3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	The inflation assumption within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been utilised to assess the financial impact of the proposals.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £135,670</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£135,670</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£135,670</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£135,670	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£135,670
Year	Potential Saving														
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2028/2029	£0														
Total	£135,670														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage with staff in DLT about proposal.</li> <li>• Support the Leisure Trust in their review of all service areas.</li> <li>• Engage with relevant staff, OD, Trade Unions and other key stakeholders.</li> </ul>														

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Reduction to Individual Schools Budget (ISB)

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Luisa Munro-Morris</b>
Organisation:	<b>Education Directorate</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Luisa Munro-Morris	<i>L. Munro-Morris</i>	20.09.23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>																																																										
	The purpose of the business case is to provide options for reviewing the funding provided to schools as part of the Council's budget planning in attaining a balanced budget for 2024/2025.																																																										
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>																																																										
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>The 2023/2024 Individual Schools Budget (ISB) which is the funding delegated to schools is £52.6m, this equates to 76% of the total Education Portfolio's budget of £68.9m and 28.9% of the Council's overall budget.</p> <p>The WG Statistical Bulletin for Local Authority Budgeted Expenditure on Schools 2023-2024 indicates that Blaenau Gwent's funding per pupil across all sectors is £6,606 and is ranked the highest in Wales (Welsh average was £5,998). The table below shows the break down per sector and the ranking for both 2022/2023 and 2023/2024:</p> <p><b>Table 1: Total Schools Budgeted Expenditure per Pupil</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Sector</th> <th colspan="3">2022/2023</th> <th colspan="3">2023/2024</th> </tr> <tr> <th>BG</th> <th>Wales</th> <th>Ranking</th> <th>BG</th> <th>Wales</th> <th>Ranking</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Primary</td> <td>5,725</td> <td>5,059</td> <td>1</td> <td>6,006</td> <td>5,380</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middle</td> <td>6,097</td> <td>5,628</td> <td>3</td> <td>6,368</td> <td>6,046</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary</td> <td>6,062</td> <td>5,806</td> <td>6</td> <td>6,427</td> <td>6,192</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Special</td> <td>26,006</td> <td>24,795</td> <td>7</td> <td>26,070</td> <td>26,041</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Sectors</td> <td>6,300</td> <td>5,617</td> <td>1</td> <td>6,606</td> <td>5,998</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>When comparing the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA), (which informs the Revenue Support Grant) for 2023/2024 of £60.5m to the Education budget of across Education services of £66.45m indicates that Education is funded £5.9m above SSA.</p> <p>In addition to potentially reducing levels of funding, schools are also experiencing significant cost pressures largely due to increased utility bills, inflation and teachers pay awards. For 2024/2025 these are estimated as follows:</p> <p><b>Table 2: School Cost Pressures</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Teachers Pay Award – assumed at 5%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£835,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-Teachers Pay Award</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£321,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Third Party Expenditure – assumed 4% inflationary increase</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£19,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Energy (based on 2023/2024 forecast)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,335,540</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£2,510,540</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sector	2022/2023			2023/2024			BG	Wales	Ranking	BG	Wales	Ranking	Primary	5,725	5,059	1	6,006	5,380	1	Middle	6,097	5,628	3	6,368	6,046	4	Secondary	6,062	5,806	6	6,427	6,192	6	Special	26,006	24,795	7	26,070	26,041	10	All Sectors	6,300	5,617	1	6,606	5,998	1	Teachers Pay Award – assumed at 5%	£835,000	Non-Teachers Pay Award	£321,000	Third Party Expenditure – assumed 4% inflationary increase	£19,000	Energy (based on 2023/2024 forecast)	£1,335,540		<b>£2,510,540</b>
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	At the start of 2022/23 school balances were £6.214m, by the end of the financial year they had reduced to £4.821m a reduction of £1.393m. During 2023/24 there is one school currently forecasting a deficit year end position. However, overall surplus balances are expected to significantly reduce by March 2024.
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do nothing / Business as Usual</b> Increase the ISB budget for 2024/2025 in line with the proposed uplift in the Revenue Support Grant, as included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy of 2%.</p> <p>The increase to the ISB at 2% is £1.051m - see table 3 below for the financial impact on schools per sector.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the ISB will assist schools in managing to achieve a balanced budget at the end of 2024/2025. Schools in a deficit position would need to consider redundancies as staff costs represent a significant proportion of a school budget.</li> <li>• Would provide funding towards addressing school cost pressures.</li> <li>• An increase in budgets is likely to impact positively on school's ability to deliver high quality teaching and learning which should impact positively on pupil outcomes.</li> <li>• The LA received a positive outcome in its inspection of Education Services in February 2023, an increase to ISBs is likely to enable services that were recognised by Estyn as good to continue to be delivered by schools.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option would not deliver budget reductions towards the Council's Bridging the Gap proposals over the medium to long term.</li> <li>• Insufficient funding to mitigate all school cost pressures as identified in table 2 below.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 2 – Cash flat ISB in 2024/2025</b> Do not provide an uplift of 2% to the ISB. This proposal would deliver financial efficiencies of £1.051m towards the funding gap. - see table 3 below for impact on schools per sector</p> <p><b>Option 3 – Cut the ISB in 2024/2025 by £2m.</b> Cut the ISB by £2m, this would equate to a 4% reduction (after allowing for 2% uplift as per the assumption in the MTFs). The financial impact is shown in the table 3 below.</p>

**Option 4 – Cut the ISB in 2024/2025 by £3m.**

Cut the ISB by £3m, this would equate to a 6% reduction (after allowing for 2% uplift as per the assumption in the MTFs). The financial impact is shown in the table 3 below.

**Impact on Schools:**

The following table illustrates the average impact on each of the sectors:

**Table 3 – Average Financial Impact of Options per Sector**

Sector	Option 1 2% Increase in funding	Option 2 Cash Flat	Option 3 Cut of 4%	Option 4 Cut of 6%
Primary	£24,389	0	(£46,399)	(£69,599)
Secondary	£78,002	0	(£148,398)	(£222,596)
Middle	£171,782	0	(£326,815)	(£490,223)
Special	£44,150	0	(£83,994)	(£125,991)

Options 2-4 have similar benefits / disbenefits as follows:

**Benefits:**

- This would contribute to reducing the Council's funding gap.

**Disbenefits:**

- Cutting the ISB will lead to schools being in a deficit position and having to implement deficit reduction plans to balance the budget as funding will be insufficient to meet rising costs of inflation, pay award, utility costs etc. This will include reductions to staffing which will impact on teaching and learning and pupil outcomes and could incur significant redundancy costs.
- Cutting the ISB is likely to impact negatively on school's ability to deliver high quality teaching and learning due to the need to make savings which could impact negatively on pupil outcomes.
- The LA received a positive outcome in its inspection of Education Services in February 2023, cuts to ISB may impact negatively on the services delivered to children and young people by schools, which were recognised by Estyn to be good.

**Mitigating factors:**

- Schools currently have surplus balances of £4.8m. at the end of 2022/2023. However, it is expected that these will significantly reduce during the current financial year as schools fund increasing costs in relation to utilities, pay etc.



3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>																															
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.																															
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>																															
	The above proposals have been based on the assumptions in the MTFS and outlines the savings and the potential risks to Schools and the Education Directorate however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.																															
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>																															
	Not relevant at this point.																															
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>																															
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £1.051m</li> <li>- Option 3 Budget reduction of £2m</li> <li>- Option 4 Budget reduction of £3m</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Year</th> <th colspan="3">Potential Saving</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Option 2</th> <th>Option 3</th> <th>Option 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£1,051,000</td> <td>£2,000,000</td> <td>£3,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£1,051,000</td> <td>£2,000,000</td> <td>£3,000,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving			Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	2024/2025	£1,051,000	£2,000,000	£3,000,000	2025/2026	£0	£0	£0	2026/2027	£0	£0	£0	2027/2028	£0	£0	£0	2028/2029	£0	£0	£0	Total	£1,051,000	£2,000,000	£3,000,000
Year	Potential Saving																															
	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4																													
2024/2025	£1,051,000	£2,000,000	£3,000,000																													
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Total	£1,051,000	£2,000,000	£3,000,000																													
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>																															
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage with staff in DLT about proposed reduction.</li> <li>• Engage with the schools about proposed reduction (if ASOS allows).</li> <li>• Engage with the trade unions.</li> </ul>																															

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Staffing Reduction - Education Directorate

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Luisa Munro-Morris</b>
Organisation:	<b>Education Directorate</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Luisa Munro-Morris	<i>L. Munro-Morris</i>	19.11.23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to provide a review of the Education Directorate staffing provision and options for efficiencies, with a view of delivering cost reductions (as part of the Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget whilst also retaining key frontline services where required.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>As part of the efficiency measures a 5% staff saving across the whole Council is one of the proposals being put forward across each Directorate. Many posts in the Education Directorate are funded through grants and therefore cannot form part of the overall 5% saving. When these posts are disaggregated, a 5% saving equates to £107,460.</p> <p>It is proposed that a departmental re-structure would realise the 5% saving. This would include some posts moving from core funding to grant funding, and some posts moving from full time to part time. It would also include income generation from Capital Funding and through Communities for Work Plus funding, to part fund some posts. In particular, £11,000 of income generation could be costed against 21<sup>st</sup> Century funding for the work of the Service Manager for Inclusion for the ongoing work on ALN reform, including additional resource bases, proposed observation classroom and support for the Welsh medium seedling provision. In addition, income generation from Communities for Work Plus could be utilised to part fund youth work posts which are currently being 100% core funded.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do nothing / Business as Usual</b></p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The directorate would continue to operate under its current staffing structure, this would provide a level of stability in the directorate.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option would not deliver budget reductions towards the Councils Bridging the Gap programme over the medium to long term.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Option 2 – Undertake a Departmental Restructure</b></p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed re-structure would realise a 5% saving across core funded posts in the Education Directorate.</li> <li>• The proposed re-structure would not result in any additional redundancy costs as it is not proposed to make any posts redundant.</li> </ul> <p>Disbenefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving posts from core funding to grant funding creates a level of instability in the directorate due to the possibility that grants could come to an end.</li> <li>• The ability to generate income may not be a long-term solution, so the costs may need to be covered by core funding again at a future date.</li> <li>• One full time post is being considered to move to part time hours on a permanent basis. This may make it hard to recruit to this post if it becomes permanently part time if the post was to become vacant in the future. This is a statutory post, and it is currently being covered by someone on a part time basis.</li> </ul>								
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>								
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process								
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>								
	The above proposal outlines the savings and the potential risks to the Education Directorate however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.								
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>								
	Not relevant at this point.								
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>								
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £107,460</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£107,460</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£107,460	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0
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2025/2026	£0								
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		2027/2028	£0
		2028/2029	£0
		Total	£107,460
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>		
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage with staff in DLT about proposal.</li> <li>• Engage with the trade unions.</li> <li>• Engage with finance and OD.</li> </ul>		

## Public Protection Staff Reduction Proposals 2024-2025

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Ellie Fry		Jan 2024
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>The purpose of this proposal is to achieve budget savings for 2024/25 onwards as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget corporately. This proposal seeks to achieve a target of £100,000.</p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p> <p>The current economic climate is challenging for both the public and private sector as the cost-of-living crisis continues into 2023/24 with inflation remaining high at 7.9% (June 2023), higher than anticipated pay costs, increased borrowing costs, increased energy and fuel costs, all continuing to put pressure on budgets and the cost of delivering services to our residents.</p> <p>2.1 The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funded gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p>
3.	<p><b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b></p>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b>  <i>2 Options</i></p> <p><b><u>Option 1 – Do Nothing/Business As Usual</u></b></p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Council will retain the current levels of services in Public Protection that are revenue funded.</li> </ul> <p>Dis-benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No budget reduction to contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme.</li> </ul>
3.2	<p><b><u>Option 2 – Service restructure and reductions in statutory programmed inspections and other statutory work.</u></b></p> <p>To meet the £100,000 target outlined in section 1, the proposal is to undertake a small service restructure of Public Protection, with the added potential to consider other structural changes to facilitate further expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy. This option rationalises the senior level team from 4 to 3, with remaining posts to take on additional responsibility. An expression of interest for Voluntary redundancy for the post that would be deleted from the structure and made redundant.</p> <p>The restructure will enable management changes/staff reductions, and future succession planning. Core statutory responsibilities will continue to be delivered however the proposed changes will lead to some reductions of statutory programmed inspections and other statutory work. The key changes will include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rationalisation of 4 senior leader roles to 3 – an expression of interest has been submitted for Voluntary redundancy from one of the post holders affected which may avoid a compulsory redundancy situation.</li> <li>• Management Restructure and other role changes to enable resilience and succession planning</li> <li>• Deletion/Changes to 2 No. Vacant Posts</li> <li>• Procuring specialist services as needed</li> <li>• Changes &amp; reallocation of Supplies &amp; Services Budgets</li> <li>• Minimisation of service reductions, but reduced capacity will result in less proactive work being done in programmed services with reactive work only</li> </ul> <p>Below sets out what will continue and what will need to be reduced or stopped. Generally, the statutory work will continue and non-statutory work will either continue at a lower level, or stop.</p>
3.2.1	<p>The majority of the Public Protection Service will remain, with the two areas of Environmental Health and Trading Standards continuing to provide statutory inspections and continue to respond to issues and emergencies. The Housing Solutions Team remain as existing. The following reductions are being made:</p> <p><u><i>Reduce programmed Commercial Health &amp; Safety activities - reactive and priority work only.</i></u>  BG is an enforcing Authority under the Health &amp; Safety at work Act 1974 section 18 (4). In 2022/23 - 61 inspections and 176 advice requests were dealt with. As a result of the proposed change, proactive intelligence-led work will be reduced, and reflected in the statutory annual work plan. The Authority will continue to respond to accidents/incidents.</p> <p><u><i>Reduce statutory programmed food hygiene and food standards inspections annually</i></u>  Under EU Regulation 2017/16 Article 9, Food Authorities must perform official food controls on all operators regularly, on a risk basis and frequently. During 2022/23, 322 Hygiene and 214 Standards inspections visits were completed in accordance with regulations and the FSA post covid recovery plan. The number of inspections will reduce as a result of this proposal.</p> <p><u><i>Discontinue food and other sampling programmes</i></u>  The Authority is required to outline its food sampling programme as part of its food law service delivery plan in 2022/23 - 124 were undertaken. Under this proposal, the Authority will discontinue proactive/programmed regional and national food sampling surveys due to loss of posts (i.e. Wales Food Microbiological Forum Survey or Trading Standards/Other).</p> <p><u><i>Reduced ability to respond to outbreaks of infectious disease (temporary additional support would be needed for medium/large outbreaks)</i></u>  Reduction in ability to respond to outbreaks of communicable disease. During 2022/23, Officers responded to 155 notifications of infectious disease and 5 outbreak/cluster incidents.</p> <p><u><i>Discontinue proactive housing inspections (except programmed HMO Licensing visits).</i></u></p>



BG responds to approx. 250 complaints a year relating to poor conditions in private sector housing, this will continue. However, as part of this proposal proactive inspections (e.g, requested by clients, internal departments or outside agencies/partners) will be discontinued. (i.e. NEST (energy efficiency – pre-inspections; Immigration inspections (regular home office); Refugee related inspections (Ukraine hosting, other)). The above inspections could be undertaken on a voluntary overtime basis (Saturdays) if specific funding is available/fee earning.

*Review regulation and inspection regime of Permitted Polluting Industrial Processes that fall under the Local Authority regulatory regime.*

BG is responsible for the regulating Pollution from [Part A\(2\) & Part B](#) industrial processes, currently there are 21 such businesses in BG. This can increase or decrease dependent on economic climate/investment (e.g. Ciner).

Regularity of inspections will be reviewed within the legislation. Consideration will be given to externalising these inspections at reduced cost offset against staff savings. This would mitigate legal and reputational risks, but this proposal would reduce the capacity and resilience in the current team for the remaining work.

*Reduce programmed Trading Standards activities as part of the response plan to the annual Strategic Assessment and other work plans*

Trading Standards activities are already scaled back and reprioritised to be intelligence-led. They continue to maintain statutory consumer protection; provide safety responses and prevention work to protect the most vulnerable clients.

In addition, Trading Standards staff visit/inspect approximately 400 town centre/high street retail premises, inspections of manufacturers, online businesses and car traders. The service deals with approximately 600 consumer complaints a year, 40 trade advice requests and supports approx. 100 vulnerable scam victims. This proposal will further reduce programmed Trading Standards activities as part of the response plan in the annual Strategic Assessment.

*Reduce Housing Solutions Budgets – Supplies & Services*

This proposal will reduce Supplies & Services Budgets

*The Benefits, Disbenefits & Risks of the proposal are:-*

Benefits:

- Budget reduction would contribute towards the Council's Bridging the Gap programme albeit some monies would need to be retained to buy-in inspections from Agencies/Consultants. There will still be a need to respond to complaints relating to these premises.

Dis-benefits:

- Reduction in staff capacity resilience in the wider team members (including the reduction in expertise to pick up this work in short notice going forward along with other work).
- Proactive intelligence-led work will be reduced.

- The Authority will continue to respond to accidents/incidents where appropriate. The risk is that these will increase as programmed interventions reduce.
- Reduction in ability to respond to outbreaks of communicable disease without the need for temporary additional support - especially for medium/large outbreaks (including the ability to scale up for any Covid new variants).
- Advice requests from new/existing businesses (outside of inspection visits) have been scaled back in previous years and will be reduced further or discontinued completely. Also, internal advice requests will be either charged for or scaled back/discontinued.
- Reductions will/may also impact on the Authority's ability to implement new legislation (WG programme for Government - i.e. Special Procedures).
- Discontinuation of proactive product (non-food) sampling. Samples will only be taken in response to reactive/complaints/investigations.
- Reduction in food hygiene and standards inspection (albeit there will remain scope to buy-in inspections from external contractors)
- Food Complaints will need to be risk assessed with only high-risk complaints receiving a full response/inspection visit etc.
- Reduced ability to deliver the statutory National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (Scores on the Doors) as part of the above hygiene inspections
- Agency/consultants will need to be instructed/managed to undertake the permit inspections, including management of subsequent follow-up work.
- Staff reduction will lead to a significant reduction in resilience of specialist Health and safety enforcement areas and prejudice the ability to train graduates/apprenticeships/new members of staff.
- Reduction in Supplies & Service budgets in order enable the goals of the re-structure and savings targets to be met.

Risks:

- The Council will need to tolerate the reputational risks associated with reducing this work to a minimum and the reduction in compliance standards in food businesses. WG and the HSE will need to be informed, where necessary.
- The Food Standards Agency (FSA) will need to be informed.
- The Wales Communicable Disease Outbreak Control Plan has been reviewed post pandemic with the outcome that local government will be involved as part of Outbreak Control Teams dealing with a wider range of infections (Food, Water and Environmental). Public Health Wales will need to be informed that the Authority's resources have been reduced that may reduce the ability to respond as expected under the new plan.
- Reduced ability to proactively intervene to protect public health where programmed sampling indicates a local/regional/national problem.
- Non-compliance levels are likely to increase in a need for enforcement action and increased risk to the public with the above reductions in inspections
- There may be additional impact on Public Protection as a result of the proposed WG Workplace Recycling regulations (to be determined).
- Following a recent (Sep 2023) Audit, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) stated that the Food Safety & Standards service had a shortfall in resources that the Authority was working to bridge. This proposal would affect the ability to do that, and the level of assurance (moderate) awarded by the FSA is dependent on

	<p>having the necessary resources to deliver the Food Law recovery plans, post Covid, and the regulated inspection frequencies which results in a risk to the Authority.</p> <p>Risks will be minimised as far as practicable and mitigated against relevant grant income, where possible.</p>														
	<p><b>Recommended option</b> This is a savings proposal involving the changes to statutory and residual non-statutory services and a service restructure against the backdrop of the budget setting challenges for 2024/25.</p>														
	<p><b>Sources and assumptions</b> To meet the £100,000 target, the proposal is to undertake a service restructure of Public Protection. The restructure will enable management changes/staff reductions and future succession planning and will lead to reductions of statutory programmed inspections and other statutory work.</p>														
3.3	<p>If Option 2 is approved then the changes will be delivered in accordance with the advice, guidance and consolation, as appropriate, from/with CLT, Director of Regeneration &amp; Community Services, Organisational Development, Accountancy, Public Protection Staff, Trades unions and relevant others. This draft proposal and savings target has not taken into account any relevant severance costs.</p>														
3.4	<p><b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b> Subject to approval of the proposal, any necessary buying in of support will be undertaken in accordance with corporate procurement rules.</p>														
3.4.2	<p><b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b> The proposal is to make revenue budget savings for 2024/25. No additional funding is required. Should the elected members choose to make the savings then a financial strategy will be included as part of the required business case.</p>														
3.4.3	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £100,000</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£100,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£100,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£100,000
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Total	£100,000														

5.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b> <i>Subject to elected Member agreement of the proposed changes (in full or in part) and risks etc, The Director will work with relevant PP, OD &amp; Accountancy colleagues to deliver the restructure and service changes by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 or as soon as practicable thereafter.</i>

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
E Fry	D Thompson	Public Protection	Feb 2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

To meet the £100k target outlined in section 1, the proposal is to undertake a small service restructure of Public Protection, with the added potential to consider other structural changes to facilitate further expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy. This option rationalises the senior level team from 4 to 3, with remaining posts to take on additional responsibility. An expression of interest for VR for the post that would be deleted from the structure and made redundant.

The restructure will enable management changes/staff reductions, and future succession planning. Core statutory responsibilities will continue to be delivered however the proposed changes will lead to some reductions of statutory programmed inspections and other statutory work.

**Section 1**  
**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**  
**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	Yes	Potential for a reduced response in relation to infections disease outbreaks, work place health and safety investigations (e.g, accidents, dangerous occurrences), Food, reduction in food inspections in relevant premises, reduction in proactive/non statutory housing inspections.Reduction in Trading Standards responses.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	<b>No</b>	Yes	As above
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )	<b>No</b>	Yes	As Bove

<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	No	Yes	,AS above
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Religion or Belief</b> ( <i>people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Sex</b> ( <i>women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> ( <i>lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other</i> )	No	Yes	As above





**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.




Section 2			
Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)			
The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.			
.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	neutral		
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings)</i>	neutral		

<i>to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>			
<b>Material Deprivation</b> ( <i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i> )	<b>neutral</b>		
<b>Area Deprivation</b> ( <i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i> )	<b>neutral</b>		
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> ( <i>social class i.e. parents education, employment and income</i> )	<b>neutral</b>	<b>Hard to measure</b>	
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> ( <i>What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged</i> )	<b>neutral</b>		

<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b> <i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	N/A
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	The proposal will have a small negative impact on this priority
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	The proposal will have some negative effect on the delivery of quality services.
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	The proposal will have some negative impact on this priority

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

<b>Five Ways of Working</b>	<b>How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?</b>
<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p>The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection interventions and advice which may prejudice levels of regulatory compliance in the longer term. Hard to measure.</p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p>The proposal will reduce preventive interventions by the service.</p>

<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p> <p>The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection advice provided to other services in our communities.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p>The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection advice provided to other internal departments.</p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p>Corporate consultation on the proposals.</p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection interventions and advice provided to business (that the contributes to a level playing field for business) and the general public at large

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

No notable impact

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES ...** a society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection interventions and advice provided to business (that the contributes to a level playing field for business) and the general public at large

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection interventions and advice provided to the general public

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.


The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection interventions and advice provided to communities

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

No direct impact

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES** ... a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

The proposal will reduce the amount of public health and consumer protection interventions and advice provided to the general public and business. Many of the services regulatory activities contribute to wider environmental improvement and well-being.

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	neutral		



<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>	neutral		
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>	neutral		
<b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b>	neutral		

<b>Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - <a href="#">The Right Way</a></b>			
<p>The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.</p>			
<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>

<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	No	Yes	Increase in non-compliance in food premises and other businesses regulated by the service.. Mitigated as far as possible by intelligence/complaint led responses based on risk rated programmed interventions and responses to complaints.
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	No	No	
<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)	No	Minor impacts on the illegal selling of counterfeit/illegally imported or otherwise illegal tobacco/vapes	Intelligence led work based on annual strategic assessments/ intervention priorities

<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	
<b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	
<b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)	No	No	
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	No	No	

**Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty** [AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf](#)

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care,</li> </ul>	No	No	

<p>mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>	

years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings			
<b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	No	

<b>Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.</b>		
<b>Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b>	<b>What were the key findings?</b>	<b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b>
<b>Budget reduction targets.</b> <b>Current staffing levels/vacant posts</b> <b>Delayed required service restructure</b> <b>Reassessment of priorities</b> <b>Alternative approaches to service delivery</b>	As per the Outline savings proposals	Yes

Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?

None

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision



**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

- 1. Who did you consult?**
- 2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**
- 3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**
- 4. What were the findings?**
- 5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

To date, consultation has been undertaken in accordance with Corporate Leadership Team processes and with the Lead Cxbinet Member, Director and HR colleagues

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	<b>Reports to Corporate Leadership Team and Council, as required</b>
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	<b>Reports</b>
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	<b>Outcomes to be monitored in accordance with corporate requirements</b>
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	<b>Director of Regeneration &amp; Community Services.</b>

Page 434

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<del>No</del> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Name of person completing the IIA	
Name:	
Job Title:	
Date:	

Head of Service Approval			
Name:	E Fry		
Job Title:	Director of regeneration & Community Services		
Signature:		Date:	Feb 2024

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [kate.james@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:kate.james@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Trade Waste Price Increases

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Matthew Stent</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC – Neighbourhood Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Lisa Jones		02/10/23
Reviewed by:	Matthew Stent		02/10/23
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	The purpose of the business case is to provide options for reviewing Trade Waste charges in order to generate additional income (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5 year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>The collection of trade waste is a statutory service; however the Council do not have to provide it and can sign post to private operators.</p> <p>The service recovers its costs through charging customers and fully recovers the direct costs in delivering the service. The trade waste service has direct costs of approximately £295,000.</p> <p>Collection of trade waste covers both external customers and internal customers including schools and corporate landlord buildings. This Business Case provides options for increasing the trade waste prices for all customers and external customers only which would generate additional income that could contribute to the mitigating the estimated funding gap. Any price increase over 4% for internal customers will create a budget cost pressure for those services. External customers make up approximately 47% of the income generated by the service.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Business as usual</b> – increase all customer charges in line with the assumption in the Medium Term Financial Strategy of 4%.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – Do minimum – increase customer prices by 5%.</b> This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £4,749, based on current customer base.</p> <p><b>Option 2 a - Do minimum – increase external customer prices by 5%.</b> This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £2,220, based on current customer base.</p> <p><b>Option 3 - increase the customer prices by 10%.</b> This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £21,452, based on current customer base.</p>

**Option 3a - increase the external customer prices by 10%.** This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £10,063, based on current customer base.

**Option 4 – increase the customer prices by 15%.** This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £38,154, based on current customer base.

**Option 4a – increase the external customer prices by 15%.** This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £17,907, based on current customer base.

**Option 5 – increase the customer prices by 20%.** This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £54,856, based on current customer base.

**Option 5a – increase the external customer prices by 20%.** This would achieve an estimated annual income increase of £25,750, based on current customer base.

Increases applied to the whole customer base returns:				
5%	10%	15%	20%	
£4,749	£21,452	£38,154	£54,856	
Increases applied to the external customers only returns:				
5%	10%	15%	20%	45%
£2,220	£10,063	£17,907	£25,750	£64,968

**Impact / Risks:**

- Reputational damage
- Reduction in customer base as increasing costs will likely lead to customers going elsewhere for the service.
- No scope for re-investment in the service.
- Expected loss of customers and therefore income.
- Any additional charges above 4% for internal customers will generate cost pressures for their service areas (such as schools, catering and corporate landlord).
- The Authority operates a compliant service which is a USP in the current marketplace for attracting/retaining customers, as it is currently operating at above market average pricing.

**3.2 Recommended option**

To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.

3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	The financial impact included within the options is over and above the 4% increase included within the MTFS assumptions and based on the current client base.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not applicable at this stage.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £2,220 - £54,856 through increased income.</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£2,220 – £54,856</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£2,220 – £54,856</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£2,220 – £54,856	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£2,220 – £54,856
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Total	£2,220 – £54,856														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	The proposal will be delivered by an increase in the identified income budgets when set for 2024/2025, and achievement will be monitored and reported through the Council’s standard budgetary control procedures reviewing income and expenditure against budgets.														

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Charging for Residual Bins and Recycling Bags

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Matthew Stent</b>
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC – Neighbourhood Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Lisa Jones		02/10/23
Reviewed by:	Matthew Stent		02/10/23
Approved by:			



1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	To consider the options for charging residents for replacement wheeled bins and charging residents for green waste recycling bags which would generate additional income (as part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5 year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>To combat the rising costs of waste and recycling receptacles and to bring services in line with other Welsh local authorities who are charging residents for replacement bins and green waste collections, BG are proposing options of this potential revenue generating practice.</p> <p>There is evidence that a number of other authorities already have this as general practice. BG would be an outlier if some charges to cover costs were not introduced.</p> <p>The proposals would therefore generate additional income that could contribute to mitigating the estimated Council funding gap.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Business as usual</b> – continue to supply all bins and bags free of charge.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – charge residents for replacement and first issue wheeled bins and green waste recycling bags.</b> Many local authorities in Wales charge an administration and delivery charge for wheeled bins to residents and many charge for the green waste service. BG are proposing to introduce administration and delivery charge of £20 for replacement wheeled bins and an administration and delivery charge of £2 for green waste recycling bags.</p> <p><b>Option 3 – charge residents for replacement wheeled bins only.</b> - £20 each</p> <p><b>Option 4 – charge residents for first issue and replacement wheeled bins.</b> - £20 each</p> <p><b>Option 5 – Do minimum</b> - charge residents for green waste recycling sacks. - £2</p>

	<p><b>a) Potential Income:</b> Based on £2 per request: Total No. of requests for green sacks [2022/23] – 1831 x £2 = <b>£3,662.00</b></p> <p><b>b) However, a number of requests were for more than 1 green sack.</b> Total No. of green sacks requested [2022/23] – 4275 x £2 = <b>£8,550.00</b></p> <p>No of requests for wheeled bins [2022/23] – 943 x £20 = <b>£18,860.00</b></p> <p>What did we spend on both in 2022/23 –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheeled bins - £11,520.00</li> <li>• Green Waste sacks - £10,680.00</li> </ul> <p>The charges are only for administration / delivery, not the actual cost of the bin or sack. By only charging for admin / delivery we retain the right to make certain stipulations i.e., where the bin is stored (if it's causing an obstruction, no excess waste etc.).</p> <p><b>Impact / Risks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reputational damage</li> <li>• Dis-incentivises recycling behaviour [green sacks]</li> <li>• Wheel bins are not mandatory so would likely lead to more resident placing bags for collection rather than pay for a replacement wheeled bin.</li> </ul> <p>The charging administered by other Local Authorities has been considered and attached at Appendix 1.</p>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	The above proposal has been based upon the assumptions in the MTFs, the historical spend data of the department and the service requests received by the service area.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	Not applicable at this stage.
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £27,410</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 3 Budget reduction of less than £18,860</li> <li>- Option 4 Budget reduction of £18,860</li> <li>- Option 5a Budget reduction of £3,662</li> <li>- Option 5b Budget reduction of £8,550</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£3,662 - £27,410</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£3.662 - £27,410</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£3,662 - £27,410	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£3.662 - £27,410
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Total	£3.662 - £27,410														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>The proposal will be delivered by an increase in the identified income budgets when set for 2024/2025, and achievement will be monitored and reported through the Council's standard budgetary control procedures reviewing income and expenditure against budgets.</p>														

**Replacement charges for residual and recycling containers**

LA	Charges for replacements?	Exemptions?	Additional info
Anglesey	A charge for new or replacement residual bins	No charge for recycling and food waste containers	
Blaenau Gwent	No charge	N/A	
Bridgend	No charge	N/A	
Caerphilly	They charge for replacement residual and recycling bins. They currently charge £25.50 for a new replacement and £10.20 for a reconditioned replacement if available.	The only exemptions they make is if they have damaged the bin or the bin has gone in the back of one of their vehicles.	The same applies for commercial, the only difference being the cost of the replacement based on the size of the receptacle.
Cardiff	Cardiff charge for replacement/additional garden waste containers and for replacement black wheeled bins, reviewing their prices on an annual basis.	If the bin is damaged they will exchange free of charge. Green bags for comingled recycling – free Food caddy liners – free Kerbside food caddies – free	The following fees and charges are applicable from May 2021: Green Garden Waste Bin (240 l) - £35 (currently £25) Black Residual Waste Bin (140l) - £25 Reusable Garden Waste Sack (Bag areas only) - £3.50 (currently £3.00)
Carmarthenshire	No charge	N/A	Run a bag service, only food and garden waste have containers
Ceredigion	No charge	They charge for garden waste bags (£1.50 per bag) and the larger food waste bags. Residual waste is bag collection, but they can buy a wheelie bin	Recycling mainly bag collection service and bags are provided
Conwy	No charge	N/A	
Denbighshire	They are about to implement charges for new and replacement recycling bins and residual bins at £25 (supply and delivery). Charges for communal 4 wheeled bins to property management companies and landlords will also apply (rental or outright purchase).	Any new containers required as part of their future service change (as they move to a source segregated service) will be supplied free of charge initially but charges will apply for replacements longer term. Kitchen and kerbside Caddies and sacks will continue to be free.	Will be implemented once the delegated decision report and policy is finalised and ICT are preparing the CRM forms
Flintshire	Will charge for a residual bin replacement unless they can prove it was damaged during collection.	No charge for recycling containers	
Gwynedd	No charges listed on website		
Merthyr Tydfil	From 1st April £15 administration and delivery charge for any new and replacement wheeled bins for residual waste.	Recycling containers are free	
Monmouthshire	No charge		They don't charge for replacement recycling containers but they are a bag collection authority for residual so n/a to bins.
Neath Port Talbot	Only green waste sacks have £1 charge	All other replacement items are free	
Newport	No charge	Last year they introduced a new fee for new developments so that they charge for the first set of bins/boxes delivered to new properties.	
Pembrokeshire	No charge	Only 23 litre food bags cost £6.70 per roll	
Powys	No charge	N/A	They don't charge for replacements, but they do make checks if residual wheeled bins are requested to ensure they are not simply trying to get additional capacity.
RCT	They charge for replacement residual bins unless their Collection team has damaged the bin or the bin has been stolen and reported to the Police. Cost £29.35	No charge for food bins, nappy bins and recyclings bags	
Swansea	The only charge for recycling containers is for garden sacks.	Food caddys and recycling bags are provide/replaced for free	Swansea don't use domestic residual bins, they operate a bag system.
Torfaen	They charge £5 for a replacement residual bin, other recycling containers are free of charge.	No charge for residual bin if damaged during collection.	
Vale of Glamorgan	No charge	N/A	They currently provide recycling bags and boxes free of charge to Vale of Glamorgan residents but there is no provision for residual containers, residents are expected to provide black bags at their own expense.
Wrexham	They charge for residual and garden waste containers	They don't charge for recycling containers.	

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Partial / Full Closure of Household Waste Recycling Centres

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Ellie Fry</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Matthew Stent</b>
Organisation:	<b>Blaenau Gwent CBC [Neighbourhood Services]</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Matthew Stent		02/10/23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	Blaenau Gwent has 2 Household Waste Recycling Centres; Roseheyworth [RH] in Abertillery and New Vale [NV] in Ebbw Vale, both are open 6 days a week with RH being closed on a Tuesday and NV on a Thursday.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5 year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>The purpose of this business case is to provide options for part closure / full closure of HWRC's to realise savings from 2024/25 and onwards.</p> <p>An additional consideration within the proposal is also included for the reintroduction of scheduling public visits [booking system] to HWRC's to enable the Council to manage staff numbers more efficiently.</p> <p>The estimated cost of delivering the HWRC services in 2024/25 is £699,000.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<b>Main options</b>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Business as Usual</b> Continuation of current operations with both sites open 6 days per week, however this option does not contribute to identifying budget reductions in support of the Bridging the Gap programme.</p> <p><b>Option 2 - Full closure of New Vale HWRC - £100,000 [4-5 FTE]</b> Saving mainly associated with staffing [the site would still need to be maintained etc for any future re-opening]. The remaining site would need to revert to 7 day opening to meet Statutory Requirements and this is included in the saving calculation. This option will avoid imminent capital costs associated with retrospective engineering of the site to comply with Fire prevention and mitigation requirements that will be Statutorily enforced by the Regulator, NRW. Potential alternative use of site for Council purposes or income value for sale of land / rental opportunity. <b>It should be noted that we have received £180,000 WG capital funding to develop a Bulky Re-Use Shop at New Vale, works are at an advanced stage, so access to this new facility would need to be maintained in line with the Terms &amp; Conditions of the grant.</b></p> <p><b>Option 3 - Both sites closed an extra weekday - £34,000 [1 FTE]</b> i.e., 5 day opening.</p>

**Option 4 - Both sites closed one day on the weekend - £62,000 [2-3 FTE]**

For example, one site closes Saturday, the other closes Sunday.

**Option 5 - 1 site open 4 days a week / another site open 3 days a week - £110,000 [4-5 FTE]**

For example, NV HWRC Mon to Wed (or Sun to Wed) / RH HWRC Thu to Sun (or Thu to Sat), this pattern being required to continue servicing RRV cardboard deliveries that have recently been introduced to alleviate capacity issues at the kerbside. Minimal savings associated with running costs. The decision around the operational pattern of the sites will need to be determined upon the available evidence in respect of site usage (including usage data from when the booking system was previously operational in order to anticipate potential demand) and specific operational considerations such as the cardboard deliveries identified above.

All the above options will have the following impact to differing degree...

- HWRC access allow for residents to dispose of their waste correctly themselves, this proposal diminishes this and will potentially encourage fly tipping, although historically this has not been proven to the case under similar scenarios.
- Reduced recycling performance – leading to increased risk of WG fines for not meeting Statutory Recycling Targets, which could offset some or all of the savings offered by the proposed reduction in service provision, this risk could be mitigated by restoration of booking service to improve focus on recycling activities at the site(s)
- Increase volumes of waste at the kerbside / residential properties potential increase in vermin / disease – Pest Control Service likely to be affected.
- Increase in the demand on kerbside collection capacities which are already at or nearing full capacity – Potential need to purchase additional RRV to deal with any materialising capacity increase at the kerbside.
- Potential geographical inconvenience and additional traveling requirement for some Constituents, based on proximity to the open site.
- Potential loss of sites for ongoing RRV cardboard deliveries
- Minor civils works required to provide physical demarcation between HWRC operations and Reuse Shop, to allow the latter to continue opening (also Education Centre at RH HWRC) on proposed days of HWRC closure.
- Reputational Damage.
- Increase intruder activity and vandalism during non-manned hours.
- Return of the booking system will be required to help deal with increased traffic volumes and mitigate any negative impact on recycling performance levels – Elected Members requested removal of the booking system so it's reinstatement could lead to reputational damage and possible disincentive to use the site[s]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return to full bag sorting requirements at the site(s) to mitigate any negative impact on recycling performance levels.</li> </ul> <p>Alongside any of these options, we can also reintroduce booking systems for both HWRCs. A number of other local authorities did not stop their booking arrangements post-pandemic. By using a booking system, we will have the data on how many members of the public will visit per day and also the booking system gives the service the benefit of having those visits spaced out across the day. By doing this the number of staff can correspond to the needs rather than putting on more staff to cover H&amp;S needs when many members of the public all turn up at once. It should however be noted that the booking system was removed Post-Pandemic following requests from the public and Elected Members who wanted a to return to access without booking.</p> <p>The HWRC centres administered by other Local Authorities has been considered and included at Appendix 1.</p>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	This proposal includes the assumptions from the MTFS and is based upon historical operational data.
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	Not applicable at this stage.
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £100,000</li> <li>- Option 3 Budget reduction of £34,000</li> <li>- Option 4 Budget reduction of £62,000</li> <li>- Option 5 Budget reduction of £110,000</li> </ul>



Year	Potential Saving – Option 2	Potential Saving – Option 3	Potential Saving – Option 4	Potential Saving – Option 5
2024/2025	£100,000	£34,000	£62,000	£110,000
2025/2026	£0	£0	£0	£0
2026/2027	£0	£0	£0	£0
2027/2028	£0	£0	£0	£0
2028/2029	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£100,000	£34,000	£62,000	£110,000

6. **DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS**

If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:

- Engage with staff as a matter of urgency.
- Engage with the Trade Unions
- Engage with Organisational Development

HWRC

Authority	No. Of Sites	Opening Hours	Booking System?	Any Restrictions?	Additional Info
Anglesey	2	10am - 4:30pm	Only at one site	Booking required at one site. Permits needed for a pickup, small van, short wheel base transit van, small mini bus or a private car with a medium sized trailer between 1.8m and 3m bed length, a car with sign writing.	One site closes Monday and Tuesday, the other site closes Wednesday and Thursday
Blaenau Gwent	2	9am - 5:30pm	No	Van permit required [booking systems have been removed]	Recently offered trade waste collections at HWRC on a permit basis only at Roseheyrworth, customers can have one off permits or up to 24 per 12 months at a cost. Roseheyrworth closed on Tuesdays and the New Vale closed on Thursdays
Bridgend	3	9am - 4pm	No	Permits needed for vans and pick ups and for vehicles with a trailer between 5ft and 6ft 6in at two sites. Tipping permit needed for asbestos.	All sites open 7 days a week
Caerphilly	6	Summer - 9am to 5:30pm Winter - 9am to 4:30pm	No	Permits needed for vans and trailers.	4 Sites shut 2 days a week 2 sites shut 1 day a week
Cardiff	2	Summer - 7:30am to 6:30pm Winter 9am to 6pm	Yes	f you are visiting in a car, you can use your allowance flexibly but cannot visit more than three times per day.If you are visiting in a van, or a car with a trailer, you can only book 1 visit per month	Offer a trade service at HWRC's Open 7 days a week
Carmarthenshire	4	Summer - 8:30 to 6pm Winter 8:30am to 4pm	Yes	Booking required. Vans, pickups and trailers require permits. Proof of residency	one site open 7 days a week. 2 Sites closed on a Tuesday and the other site closed Wednesday and Thursday. Only 26 visits allowed per year for residents
Ceredigion	4	Monday - Friday 9am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday 10am to 3pm	No	No Trade Waste No Builders waste, gas cylinders or tyres allowed. Proof of residency	On site is only open 3 days a week 10am to 5pm
Conwy	2	Summer- 9am to 5pm and 9 to 4pm on Sunday Winter - 9am to 4pm all days	Yes	Permits needed for vans and trailers. Bookings are required	
Denbighshire	3	Summer- 9am to 5pm and 9 to 4pm on Sunday Winter - 9am to 4pm all days	Yes	Permit needed for trailer with more than one axle or using a commercial-type vehicle. Booking required. Proof of residency	
Flintshire	5	9am to 5pm Daily	Partly	Booking required for: tyres mattresses and asbestos. Permits are required for trailers and vans. Proof of residency	
Gwynedd	8	9am - 4pm	Yes	Booking required. Van permit needed.	No site open on a Sunday. Two only open Monday/Friday and Saturday
Merthyr	2	Summer - 9am to 8pm Winter - 9am to 4:30pm	No	Van and trailer permit needed. Proof of residency	Open 7 days a week
Monmouthshire	3	8am to 4pm	Yes	Booking required. Booking form for vans and trailers.	All sites are closed 2 days a week on different days
NPT	3 (1 is shared with powys)	Website not working to check	Yes	A time slot is required to be made before visiting HWRC with integrated booking system for vans and trailers which are restricted to 12 permits per year.	
Newport	1	7:30am to 6pm Mon-Fri 8am to 6pm Sat + Sun	Yes	15 minute limit on site, Commercial vehicles and any size van designed or used for the carriage of goods will be not given access	Commercial vans etc can use their landfill site
Pembrokeshire	6	Summer 8:30am to 5:30pm Winter 8:30am to 4pm	Yes	ID check to match the booking	Businesses can book slots up to 12 a year. Varied site closures throughout all 6 sites

Powys	5	9am to 5pm through weekdays 10am to 4pm Weekends	No	Permits needed for commercial vehicles and trailers	Varied closures through the week, no site is closed on the weekend
RCT	6	Summer - 8am to 7:30pm Winter 8am to 5:30 pm	No	Proof of residency Permits for vans through a booking	All sites are open 7 days a week
Swansea	5	8:30am to 5pm	Only at one site	Proof of residency Permits for vans only allowed at 2 centres	
Torfaen	1	Summe - 8am to 5:45pm Mon - Sat and 9am to 5:45 pm Sunday Winter - 10am to 3:45pmm all week	No	Vans need to pre book. Van and trailer permit needed and costs £5.	
VofG	2	One site open 8am to 6pm the other site open 10am to 5pm	Yes	Booking required. Permits required for vans and trailers charge of £15.50.	Residents must show proof of residency with their booking email on site
Wrexham	3	Varied	No	Proof of residency	One site is open 8-8 all year round. The other two sites Vary from 9-4 9-6 and 9-8 at different stages of the year

## Business Case

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Environment Department – Staff Reduction Proposals 2024-25

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK  
(£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Elli Fry</b>
Project Manager:	
Organisation:	<b>BGCBC</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:			Nov 2023
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<p>The purpose of the business case is to provide a review of the current Directorate staffing provision and options for efficiencies, with a view of delivering cost reductions (as part of the Bridging the Gap programme) in support of attaining a balanced budget whilst also retaining key frontline services where required.</p>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Council has significant financial challenges over the next few years in delivering services to meet the needs of residents. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 indicates a budget gap of £34m over the 5-year period, with an estimated funding gap of £10m in 2024/2025.</p> <p>As part of the efficiency measures, a 5% staff saving across the whole Council is one of the proposals being put forward across each Directorate. For Environment, Economy, Planning &amp; Licensing, a 5% reduction would equate to a proposal to deliver £730,000 and assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the resources in each delivery area,</li> <li>• Service and staff reduction Business Case proposals already identified with associated staff implications</li> <li>• existing single points of failure and areas already merged that perform multi-disciplinary work supporting more than one service area with minimal staff,</li> <li>• those staff funded through external grant (fully and partially),</li> <li>• the current use of agency staff to undertake shift cover for teams with minimal/insufficient staff already.</li> </ul> <p>Not included in the Savings Target: Catering has not been included as the service is part funded through SLAs with schools and is currently rolling out Universal Free School Meals and additional WG grant funding is included in a separate Business Case.</p> <p>Cleaning has not been included as this service is funded through SLAs with Schools and Corporate Landlord. A review of Property &amp; Assets will include the Cleaning Service.</p> <p>Fee earning staff within Technical Services have also been excluded to ensure the income stream from both internal and external professional fees is maintained.</p> <p>The following options have been developed using this case and this Business Case proposes savings of £45,000</p>

3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b>  <i>2 Options</i>  <i>1 – Do Nothing – No revenue saving achieved</i>  <i>2 – Subject to Member Agreement – undertake the changes proposed to achieve the required savings.</i></p>
	<p><b>Option 1 – Do Nothing</b>  This option does not render any savings for the authority.</p> <p><b>Option 2 – Identification of potential efficiencies</b></p> <p><b>Economy - £45,000</b>  An employee budget of £45,000 in the departmental budget for Regeneration has been held for match funding purposes and to support a future restructure of the Department.</p> <p>Service Impact:  Relinquishing this budget should have minimum service impact, however it may affect the amount of revenue funding that can be attracted where match funding is required.</p> <p>Further reviews will be carried out to identify financial efficiencies over the short to medium term on the use of agency staff currently employed to support front line services within Environment including Refuse Collection, Grounds Maintenance and the Integrated Front Line</p>
3.2	<p><b>Recommended option</b></p> <p>To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process .</p>
3.3	<p><b>Sources and assumptions</b></p> <p>The proposal has been based on the assumptions in the MTFS and 2024/2025 draft estimates.</p>

3.3.1	<p><b>Other Proposals containing staffing reductions</b></p> <p>For context to Option 2, there are already a number of Business Cases for consideration proposing staff reductions totalling between £300,000 and £380,000 and these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ENV05 - School Crossing Patrollers - £80,000 to £189,000</li> <li>• ENV03 - Flexible retirement - £20,000</li> <li>• ENV01 - Public Protection - £100,000</li> <li>• ENV12 - Partial or full closure of HWRCs - £34,000 to £110,000</li> <li>• ECON01 – Reduction of staff in Estates - £61,000</li> </ul> <p>These proposals include the school crossing patrol changes; changes put forward to the Public Protection Team that includes deletion of a Management Post; deletion of posts in both Estates and Regeneration; and further fee income generation in regeneration.</p>														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	<i>Not applicable at this stage.</i>														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £45,000</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving – Option 2</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£45,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£45,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving – Option 2	2024/2025	£45,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£45,000
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2028/2029	£0														
Total	£45,000														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>This proposal will be delivered through a budget reduction to the identified budget. Monitoring will be completed through the Council's quarterly budget monitoring processes. There will be appropriate engagement with staff, internal support services and Trade Unions where appropriate.</p>														

## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

**Newly created Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service**

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K  
VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Andrew Day</b>
Organisation:	<b>Adult Services Social Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Alyson Hoskins		10/09/23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			



1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p>
	<p>These proposals are being considered as an outcome of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings for 24/25 and future years.</p> <p>The proposals below are identified within the Social Services bridging the gap theme of workforce rationalisation and collaboration opportunities, as it proposes the option of merging the two teams of the Supporting People Team and the Social Care Commissioning Team and develops one core commissioning team with a streamlined management structure.</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent's commissioning teams (both social care and housing support) have an excellent reputation for providing high quality services. Both teams are regularly asked to support with regional and national initiatives and have led in the implementation and testing of new guidance etc for the Gwent region and often Wales wide.</p> <p>The teams consist of (as of September 23): -</p> <p><b>Supporting People Team:</b></p> <p>Team Manager – scale 10  Commissioning Officers x 2 – scale 7  Gateway Officer x1 – scale 5 (HSG grant funded)  Regional Supported Housing (RPB) lead – scale 7 (WG funded)</p> <p><b>Social Care Commissioning Team:</b></p> <p>Team Manager – scale 10  Commissioning Officers x 3– scale 7  Brokerage Officers – x 2 scale 5</p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p>
	<p>Social Services currently has two teams that undertake distinct but similar functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supporting People Team</b> who commission, monitor and provide housing related support services via the Welsh Government Housing Support programme (HSG). This team also contains the Housing Related Support Gateway service which matches requests for housing related support service with available support providers. This team also leads on assistive technology support to enable people to remain at home as independently as possible.</li> <li>• <b>Social Care Commissioning Team</b> who functions across both Children and Adult Services who oversee a framework to support all areas of the social services Directorate and the Council in adopting a consistent, comprehensive legal and robust approach to commissioning, decommissioning, commercial activity, and income and charging and</li> </ul>

	<p>encourage long-term strategic planning. The commissioning team also contains the Brokerage Service that is a vital and critical component of matching domiciliary care providers with care and support plans that have been created as part of the social work assessments (SSWB Act 2014).</p> <p>In addition, both teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with social care / housing support providers and where necessary take steps to develop the third sector and private sector to deliver services for including market shaping and market influencing processes for social care.</li> <li>• Ensure all commissioning decisions are based on local need and the views of residents and services users adhering to necessary legislation and regulations.</li> <li>• Promote commissioning, procurement, and contract management as a driver for the transformation of council services and encourages challenge of existing methods of service delivery.</li> <li>• Set out how we will work with partners to develop our strategic commissioning and commercial approach across service groups.</li> <li>• Provides transparency to the Strategic Procurement Board on the social care commissioning activity and spend.</li> <li>• Promotes partnership and collaboration working across internal and external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Provide a valuable link with Welsh Government leading on the implementation of new guidance and policy relating to social care and supported housing.</li> <li>• Collaboratively support the Regional Partnership Board and regional sub-groups in delivering the health, housing, and social care responsibilities for Gwent citizens.</li> </ul> <p>During recent years several authorities in Wales have recognised the similarities in the functions of the two teams and many have aligned the housing support grant element of commissioning and contract monitoring with that of their social care commissioning service as this not only provides additional resilience to the team management structure but also provides service efficiencies.</p> <p>This proposal is therefore recommending the merger of the Blaenau Gwent Supporting People Team with the Social Care Commissioning Team. It is also proposing that the complement of the new Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service is reviewed, and a revised structure implemented from April 2024. The review will also consider the potential impact of the loss of HSG grant funding for the Gateway post should WG funding for the HSG be reduced in future financial settlement announcements.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b></p> <p>There are 3 main options within this report:</p>

	<p><b>Option 1</b> is to do nothing and continue to have 2 separate teams from April 2024</p> <p><b>Option 2</b> merge the two teams with their existing staff structures and delete team manager x1 post to create a new team Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service.</p> <p><b>Option 3</b> to merge the 2 existing teams of Social Care Commissioning and Supporting People Team. Delete a team manager post x 1 and create a new team with a revised structure namely the Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service which includes senior commissioning officer post – which will require job evaluation. The new team structure will include a robust brokerage / gateway function which will also support the commercial opportunities that are proposed within the business case for the review of the community options team and the new function of developing work / training and volunteering opportunities and looking to develop opportunities to commission and implement technology-based solutions to meet care and support assessed needs.</p> <p>The current service manager for Commissioning and Safeguarding will provide line management oversight – both strategically and operationally to this newly created team.</p> <p><b>Cost saving of approximately £57,000 – subject to redundancy costs.</b></p> <p>Provides a structure that includes ability to have a senior officer structure which enables there to be delegation of responsibility in the absence of the team manager. It also enables the team to meet the increasing social care commissioning demand and better manage staff absence.</p> <p>Deliverability by April 2024 enabling there to be full years savings for 2024/25 – subject to redundancy costs.</p> <p>Ability to align the working of this team to the newly proposed model of Community Options and alternative ways of meeting day activities for vulnerable adults through training, work, and volunteering options. It is proposed that the Service Manager for Commissioning and Safeguarding will also oversee the Community Options service and have a focus on alternative models of day activity delivery through social enterprise opportunities and the 5 principles of the SSWB Act 2014 of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Co-production</li> <li>• Asset based approach.</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Early intervention</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended options</b>
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.

3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	<p>This proposal has been developed by the Departmental Management Team in Adult Service via discussions and research of good practice models of delivery across Welsh Local Authorities.</p> <p>It has also been developed alongside plans to review the current model of operations within the Community Options Team and create increased joint working across the new Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service and Community Options Team and Direct Payments service to meet the assessed care and support outcomes of vulnerable adults in a more preventative and community-based way - which in addition will provide additional service efficiencies and cost savings / cost avoidance.</p>														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 No Impact</li> <li>- Option 2 Budget reduction of £57,000</li> <li>- Option 3 Budget reduction of £57,000</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£57,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£57,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£57,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£57,000
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Total	£57,000														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>Day to day operational lead for the merger of the teams will be Service Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning as project lead.</p> <p>A project board will be created to oversee the merger with representatives from the staff team / AS DMT / OD / Finance etc.</p>														

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Andrew Day/Michelle Church	Alyson Hoskins	Social Services – Adult Services	23/1/24

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

The proposals below are identified within the Social Services bridging the gap theme of workforce rationalisation and collaboration opportunities, as it proposes the option of merging the two teams of the Supporting People Team and the Social Care Commissioning Team and develops one core commissioning team with a streamlined management structure.

Blaenau Gwent is commissioning teams (both social care and housing support) have an excellent reputation for providing high quality services. Both teams are regularly asked to support with regional and national initiatives and have led in the implementation and testing of new guidance etc for the Gwent region and often Wales wide.

The teams consist of (as of September 23) :

**Supporting People Team:**

Team Manager – scale 10

Commissioning Officers x 2 – scale 7

Gateway Officer x1 – scale 5 (HSG grant funded)

Regional Supported Housing (RPB) lead – scale 7 (WG funded)

**Social Care Commissioning Team:**

Team Manager – scale 10

Commissioning Officers x 3– scale 7

Brokerage Officers – x 2 scale 5

The proposal is to merge the 2 existing teams of Social Care Commissioning and Supporting People Team. Delete a team manager post x 1 and create a new team with a revised structure namely the Social Care and Housing Support Commissioning Service which includes senior commissioning officer post – which will require job evaluation. The new team structure will include a robust brokerage / gateway function which will also support the commercial opportunities that are proposed within the business case for the review of the community options team and the new function of developing work / training and volunteering opportunities and also looking to develop opportunities to commission and implement technology-based solutions to meet care and support assessed needs.

The current service manager for Commissioning and Safeguarding will provide line management oversight – both strategically and operationally to this newly created team.

The purpose of the SSWBA is to foster integration between Health, Social Services and commissioned services. By working in partnership with key stakeholders in re-modelling service provision the department is able to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where it needs to be in the future to support a sustainable and viable service.

**Section 1**

**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**

**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	No	There is no anticipated impact on the services in the community. There will be continuation of Multi-agency partnership working with health board, third sector, carers and regional partnership board to deliver support and services to improve outcomes for citizens.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	No	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )	No	No	



<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	No	No	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	No	No	
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds</i> )	No	No	
<b>Religion or Belief</b> ( <i>people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs</i> )	No	No	
<b>Sex</b> ( <i>women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender</i> )	No	No	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> ( <i>lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other</i> )	No	No	

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

Section 2			
Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)			
<i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i>			
.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>			
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings)</i>			




<p><i>to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p>			
<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>			
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i></p>			
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>			
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>			



**Section 3-Corporate Plan**

*Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -[BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)*

<p><b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent</p>	
<p><b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities</p>	
<p><b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place</p>	
<p><b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient</p>	

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p>
<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p>

<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES ...** an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

2. **A RESILIENT WALES ...** a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES ...** a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.


4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.



Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	n/a		
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>			
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh</b>			

Language? <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>			
Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?			

**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	

<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b>	No	No	

(consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)			
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	No	No	
<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)	No	No	
<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	
<b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	

<b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)	<b>No</b>	No	
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	<b>No</b>	No	

<b>Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a></b>			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul>	No	No	

<p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> </ul>	<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>No</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>			
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**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

<b>Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b>	<b>What were the key findings?</b>	<b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b>
<p>Social Services currently has two teams that undertake distinct but similar functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supporting People Team</b> who commission, monitor and provide housing related support services via the Welsh Government Housing Support programme (HSG). This team also contains the Housing Related Support Gateway service which matches requests for housing related support service with available support providers. This team also leads on assistive technology support to enable people to remain at home as independently as possible.</li> <li>• <b>Social Care Commissioning Team</b> who function across both Children and Adult Services who oversee a framework to support all areas of the social services Directorate and the Council in adopting a consistent,</li> </ul>	<p>During recent years several authorities in Wales have recognised the similarities in the functions of the two teams and many have aligned the housing support grant element of commissioning and contract monitoring with that of their social care commissioning service as this not only provides additional resilience to the team management structure but also provides service efficiencies.</p>	<p>Engage with social care / housing support providers and where necessary take steps to develop the third sector and private sector to deliver services for including market shaping and market influencing processes for social care</p> <p>Ensure all commissioning decisions are based on local need and the views of residents and services users adhering to necessary legislation and regulations</p> <p>Promote commissioning, procurement and contract management as a driver for the transformation of council services and encourages challenge of existing methods of service delivery.</p>



<p>comprehensive legal and robust approach to commissioning, decommissioning, commercial activity and income and charging and encourage long-term strategic planning. The commissioning team also contains the Brokerage Service that is a vital and critical component of matching domiciliary care providers with care and support plans that have been created as part of the social work assessments (SSWB Act 2014)</p>		<p>Set out how we will work with partners to develop our strategic commissioning and commercial approach across service groups. Provides transparency to the Strategic Procurement Board on the social care commissioning activity and spend Promotes partnership and collaboration working across internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>Provide a valuable link with Welsh Government leading on the implementation of new guidance and policy relating to social care and supported housing.</p> <p>Collaboratively support the Regional Partnership Board and regional sub groups in delivering the health, housing and social care responsibilities for Gwent citizens.</p>
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**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

**1. Who did you consult?**

**Service Managers/ Team managers for both teams - Consultation took place with the Supporting People and Commissioning Team, Adults DMT and Social Services SLT**

**Currently also subject to public consultation**

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

**Dec 23 – service managers / team managers**

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

**Yes**

**4. What were the findings?**

**They have been reflected in the development of the proposal**

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**Yes**

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	<b>Via Adults SLT, Departmental Business Plan, Finance and Performance Activity of the Team</b>
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	<b>Business Plan, supervisions, and appraisals</b>
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	<b>Through continuous monitoring to measure the impact and the outcomes to support future service delivery</b>
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	<b>Quarterly basis and through Policy and Performance Workshops</b>
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	<b>Adults DMT</b>

Page 483

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form Yes  No

Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal

Yes

No

**Name of person completing the IIA**

**Name:** Andrew Day and Michelle Church

**Job Title:** Service Managers Adult Services

**Date:** 23.1.24

**Head of Service Approval**

**Name:** Alyson Hoskins

**Job Title:** Head of Adult Services

**Signature:** A Hoskins

**Date:** 23.1.24

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Rationalization / Reduction of staffing levels

SRO:	<b>Tanya Evans</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>
Organisation:	<b>Social Services Department</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Alyson Hoskins		31/08/2023
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p>
	<p>These proposals are being considered as an outcome of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings for 24/25 and future years.</p> <p>The proposals below are identified within the Social Services bridging the gap theme – <b>WORKFORCE RATIONALISATION</b></p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p>
	<p>The proposal is to reduce the Adult Services workforce through the reduction/ deletion of posts across the care management service including:</p> <p>14.5 hrs of scale 9 social work senior practitioner hours (vacant)</p> <p>Approx 30 hrs of scale 6 and 8 – combination of both grades (ad hoc hours tbc)</p> <p>37 hrs of scale 5 service specific post (not vacant) or equivalent similar contracted hours / vacant hours in structure</p> <p>30 hrs of scale 4 service specific post (not vacant) or equivalent similar contracted hours / vacant hours in structure</p> <p>Cost avoidance – MH practitioner post (vacant)</p>
3.	<p><b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b></p>
3.1	<p><b><u>Methodology for savings:</u></b></p> <p>The Adult Services managers are currently reviewing their team budgets and staff configuration and have identified that the following hours can be deleted from the existing staff structure and core budget through the permanent reduction of staff team following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option 1 - Scale 9 post – reduction of x1 post from 5 days to 3 days per week - <b>£13,000</b></li> <li>• Option 2 - Scale 8 post – (mental health team) cost avoidance due to health recruiting MH forensic post - <b>£10,000</b></li> <li>• Option 3 - Scale 5 – deletion of post - <b>£42,000</b> but will incur redundancy costs.</li> <li>• Option 4 - Scale 4 – deletion of post - <b>£28,000</b> but will incur redundancy costs.</li> <li>• Option 5 - Ad hoc care management hours as a result of staff requests to reduce hours / flexible working plans. Approx 30 hours - <b>£30,000</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Proposal:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Savings to the budget:</u></b></p> <p>Total savings to budget across care management are £113,000 but there are redundancy costs associated with 2 of the posts unless redeployment options are available. There is also an additional cost avoidance / reduction in a cost pressure of £10,000.</p> <p><b><u>Benefits to proposal:</u></b></p> <p>Adult Services have identified several areas that can create savings across the care management functions that will have limited impact on service delivery at a time when we are seeing increasing complexity of demand.</p> <p><b><u>Risks identified to proposal:</u></b></p> <p>It is anticipated that the work of the two posts that are proposed as being deleted from the structure can be absorbed into the wider team roles as part of new preventative ways of working across health and social care and the trusted assessor model, we are developing in line with WG guidance.</p> <p><b><u>Mitigating factors:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reduction of the senior practitioner post scale 9 has already been approved and the staff member already works reduced hours. This has provided a part year budget saving for 23/24 and will provide a full year saving for 24/25.</li> <li>• The cost avoidance proposal for the scale 8 forensic mental health post has already been agreed with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB). We have agreed that the workload of this vacant post will be transferred back to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and they will employ the new worker.</li> <li>• The post holder scale 4 is a non-statutory post in this service area and has been deemed to be non-essential by the service area – this post can specifically be considered or equivalent vacant hours if also available.</li> <li>• Post holder scale 5 – is a non-statutory post but consideration will need to be taken on the distribution of some of the functions of this post across wider teams including any potential WG implementation plans that relate to this area of work.</li> <li>• Further discussions are required with staff teams / staff members in relation to current fixed term flexible working patterns to determine if staff are wanting these arrangements to be agreed on a permanent basis. This will be undertaken during the next few weeks as a number of staff have requested the opportunity to reduce their hours. A full risk assessment on posts / demand will be completed in line with LA policy.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	To be determined as part of the consideration and engagement sessions.

3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	The above proposals outline the savings and the potential risks to adult services however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary to make the budgetary cuts required.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
	<p>If approved the financial impact of the above options for 2024/25 will be a financial efficiency of £113,000.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£113,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£113,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£113,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£113,000
Year	Potential Saving														
2024/2025	£113,000														
2025/2026	£0														
2026/2027	£0														
2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£113,000														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage with staff as a matter of urgency.</li> <li>- Engage with the trade unions.</li> <li>- Engage with Organisational Development</li> </ul> <p>The impact of these savings will be monitored via the Adult Services Departmental Management Team.</p>														



## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Reduction in Domiciliary Care Packages

#### SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)

SRO:	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>
Project Manager:	<b>tbc</b>
Organisation:	<b>Adult Services Social Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Alyson Hoskins		10/09/23 – updated Jan 24
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>These proposals are being considered as an outcome of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings for 24/25 and future years.</p> <p>The proposals below are identified within the Social Services bridging the gap theme <b>of service reduction and transformation / practice change.</b></p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p> <p>The Adult Services department promotes the principles of balancing rights and responsibilities for vulnerable adults and only providing statutory support to meet care and support outcomes, as a last resort. We focus on prevention and strengths-based assessments and outcomes.</p> <p>Provision of domiciliary care is often problematic, with availability a challenge and although Blaenau Gwent has developed a robust domiciliary care framework through our collaborative commissioning with Caerphilly CBC – over reliance on the domiciliary care market is needs to be addressed. Ensuring that we do not over prescribe domiciliary care following a care and support assessment is a priority for our BG assessment staff and we are working collaboratively with our Gwent neighbour LA's to have consistency in our practice and ensure that the limited domiciliary care resources are offered to those people most in need.</p> <p>Therefore, we have developed a number of proposals to restrict the reliance on domiciliary care packages and focus on reablement / enablement initiatives that promote independence.</p> <p>These include increased use of alternative solutions to meet care and support needs including :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased use of assistive technology as a preventative measure</li> <li>2. Promotion of single-handed (better care) care techniques and specialist equipment to promote dignity of care and reduce the need for double handed care packages</li> <li>3. Increased quality assurance by service managers / team managers as part of care and support planning process</li> <li>4. All new packages of care are considered via a rightsizing approach to avoid over prescribing dom care including promotion of reablement models.</li> </ol> <p>During the bridging the gap discussions for 23/24 it was estimated that the application of the initiatives in 1 to 4 above would result in a savings target of £240,000 for 24/25.</p>
3.	<p><b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b></p>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b></p> <p>There is one main option within this report:</p>

	<p><b>Option 1</b> is to continue to promote the use of alternative options to reduce the expenditure in relation to domiciliary care support at home with a saving target of £240,000 for 2024/25.</p> <p>There are no specific risks associated with this proposal as this is a continuation of the practice that staff are working to within Adult Services.</p>
3.2	<p><b>Recommended option</b></p> <p>To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process</p>
3.3	<p><b>Sources and assumptions</b></p> <p>This proposal has been developed by the Departmental Management Team in Adult Service.</p>
4.	<p><b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b> N/A</p>
5.	<p><b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b></p>
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Option 1 Budget reduction of £240,000 for 2024/2025</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b></p> <p>Day to day operational lead for this proposal will be monitored via the Adult Services authorisation process and weekly care home placement panel.</p>

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Alyson Hoskins	Alyson Hoskins	Adult Services	15/01/24

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.  
**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

The proposal is a planned reduction in staff hours across our care management teams within Adult Service. Approx saving £113k. The proposal does not include the deletion of any current occupied statutory posts (social workers etc) through compulsory redundancy.

This proposal will therefore include:

1. Potential deletion of non-statutory posts within the service area and / or consideration of voluntary redundancy requests and cross match opportunities across care management teams.
2. Deletion of any surplus / ad hoc uncommitted contracted hours we have within the care management structure including 1 x 14.5 hrs senior practitioner post and vacant mental health senior prac post hours.

**Section 1**

**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**

**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	Yes	There is the potential that with the reduced staffing within Adult Services that older people and vulnerable adults (including adult carers ) , could be waiting for support from our Adult Services teams longer than previously. However in order to implement these changes, the department will ensure – as per our current working arrangements all new referrals to our prevention and longer term teams, requests for reassessments of existing care and support plans and reviews will be prioritised and the changes will therefore not impact on those who are in a crisis situation or require urgent care and support.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	Yes	There is the potential that with the reduced staffing within Adult Services that people with disabilities / long term conditions and vulnerable adults (including adult carers ) , could be waiting for support from our Adult Services teams

			longer than previously. However in order to implement these changes, the department will ensure – as per our current working arrangements all new referrals to our prevention and longer term teams, requests for reassessments of existing care and support plans and reviews will be prioritised and the changes will therefore not impact on those who are in a crisis situation or require urgent care and support.
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i>	No	No	
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	No	No	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i>	No	No	
<b>Race</b> <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and</i>	No	No	

<i>different racial backgrounds)</i>			
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	No	No	
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i>	No	No	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	No	No	

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

**Section 2**

**Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)**

The Welsh Governments [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.

**.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:**



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➤ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➤ Pensioners</li> <li>➤ Looked after children</li> <li>➤ Homeless people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Carers</li> <li>➤ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➤ Students</li> <li>➤ Single adult households</li> <li>➤ People misusing substances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➤ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➤ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➤ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>
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Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<p><b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p><b>Potential negative impact</b></p>	<p>Through the use of a robust initial assessment and screening process which prioritises those referrals / support requests that require an urgent or immediate response and ensures that those who are having to wait for the allocation of an appropriate social care worker:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are notified of the period of wait</li> <li>2. Are given contact details should their situation change whilst waiting so that the referrals / support request can be prioritised.</li> </ol>	<p>Knowledge and information from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current demand and performance data</li> <li>2. Team manager / senior practitioners allocation processes and case loads</li> <li>3. Information on case load complexities and safeguarding alerts</li> </ol>




		<b>This includes referrals / support requests from fellow professionals including health etc</b>	
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> ( <i>enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future</i> )	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Material Deprivation</b> ( <i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i> )	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Area Deprivation</b> ( <i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i> )	<b>No impact</b>		
<b>Socio-economic Background</b>	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>

<i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>			
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>

<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b> <i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	<b>Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG.</b>

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p>Long Tern</p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>With appropriate and safe mitigations via our care referral screening and allocations processes – as listed above - there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access Adult Social Care. The reduction in staffing hours to support our most vulnerable adults will be carefully managed via robust initial assessment and screening processes and urgent and crisis interventions will not be impacted by these reductions. The deletion of current adhoc hours within our staffing structures will have no impact on current practice as they are already surplus to our staffing compliment. The deletion of any non-statutory posts will result in changes of practice in terms of business processes and support for some of our care management practitioners. This will be managed via our quality assurance and amended internal processes.</b></p>
<p>Prevention</p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>As above</b></p>

<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p> <p><b>There may be an impact in relation to referrals and new contacts from our colleagues in ABUHB but as stated above with appropriate and safe mitigations via our care referral screening and allocations processes – as listed above - there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access Adult Social Care. ABUHB colleagues will be communicated with and explanations given as to any delays in non urgent or crisis referrals.</b></p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>Adult Service will continue to work collaboratively with our key partners and this will not be impacted by this budget proposal.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>Frontline staff / team managers and Service Managers will be actively involved in the implementation of any reductions in staffing across our care management teams and the mitigations that will be put in place to reduce the minimal impact on our communities.</b></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

N/A

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

N/A

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

N/A

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.


N/A

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

N/A

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

N/A

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	No		
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>	No		
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh</b>	No		



Language? <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>			
Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?	No		

**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	

<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No	No	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b>	No	No	

(consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)			
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	No	No	
<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)	No	No	
<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	
<b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)	No	No	

<b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)	<b>No</b>	No	
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	<b>No</b>	No	

<b>Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a></b>			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul>	No	No	

<p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> </ul>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> </ul>	No	No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>			
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**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<p>Staffing profiles and reports from OD</p> <p>Team case load information from the LA performance team.</p> <p>Finance profile and team budgets</p> <p>Welsh Government Checkpoint data</p> <p>CIW review information</p>		<p>Both have enabled us to review the staffing compliment and case load activity within current care management</p>

**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

No

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

**1. Who did you consult?**

**Staff team managers and Service Managers**

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

**As part of preparing the budget proposal in August / September 2023.**



**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

**Yes as was based on team structure information and case load knowledge/ data.**

**4. What were the findings?**

**The outcome was the detail provided in the budget proposal and resulted in the proposals to reduce staffing only where we have unused hours and reduce the non-statutory posts only . It was clear that we could not lose current staff who are carrying active case loads as this will destabilise the work force and the teams will then be unable to meet current demand.**

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**Yes**

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<p><b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b></p>	<p><b>Adult Service management team (fortnightly)          Team Managers ‘fishbowl’ discussions (weekly)          Front line staff /Team Manager / Service Manager Supervisions</b></p>
<p><b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b></p>	<p><b>Structured meetings with data discussions and feedback          Face to Face supervision sessions          Quality assurance framework          Workforce Strategy / Business plans</b></p>
<p><b>How will the results be used for future development?</b></p>	<p><b>Via performance reports</b></p>
<p><b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b></p>	<p><b>As above</b></p>
<p><b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b></p>	<p><b>Head of Adult Service and Service Managers</b></p>

Page 514

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

<p>Continue with the proposal in its current form</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
---	-------------------

Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	Alyson Hoskins
<b>Job Title:</b>	Head of Adult Services
<b>Date:</b>	28/01/24

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>	Tanya Evans		
<b>Job Title:</b>	Interim Director SSD		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Reduction in Community Options / Day Centre transport

#### SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)

SRO:	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Mary Welch / Mark Morris</b>
Organisation:	<b>Adult Services Social Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Alyson Hoskins		10/09/23
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
1.	<p>These proposals are being considered as an outcome of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings for 24/25 and future years.</p> <p>The proposals below are identified within the Social Services bridging the gap theme <b>of service reduction/ capping of services.</b></p>
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The Adult Services department offers day activities / community options to adults at our Community Options bases at Lake View and Bert Denning Centre.</p> <p>Post COVID pandemic we have seen a significant reduction in vulnerable adults accessing our building-based day activity buildings and we now only have 2 buildings open each week- Lake View which offers building based activities for 15 people each day and is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm and Bert Denning Centre for 9 people each day and currently only opening 4 days a week.</p> <p>In 2019 the Council agreed to implement a revised transport policy which resulted in only 13 of attendees currently being eligible for transport to and from the day centre building as a result of exceptional circumstances, and the majority of people accessing via their own transport including their Motability vehicle, public transport, their family members or by arranging their own taxis.</p> <p>As part of the bridging the gap budget saving for 2023/24 it was agreed that the Community Options fleet would be reduced to 2 vehicles and that as a saving of £58,000 would be achieved by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reducing transport fleet to 2 vehicles</li> <li>2. Deleting transport manager lead officer post 37 hrs grade 4</li> <li>3. Not replacing vacant driver hours (grade 3)</li> </ol> <p>This was implemented with little impact on those who attended Community Options and the saving was made in full from April 23.</p> <p>During the summer of 2023 we have reviewed the current demand for transport and the following options are proposed.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b></p> <p>There are 4 main options within this report:</p> <p><b>Option 1</b> keep the current fleet and staffing to support and not further reduce the provision on LA transport for Community Options but implement a charging methodology for people who use the bus – based on equivalent public transport –</p>

estimated income of £7,000 with each journey costing an average of £5.40 per return journey.

**Option 2** keep the current fleet and staffing to support and not further reduce the provision on LA transport for Community Options but implement a full cost recovery methodology or subsidised fee methodology for people who use the bus estimated income will be £153,560, with each journey costing approximately £47.25 – if full cost recovery agreed.

**Option 3** reduce the fleet by 1 vehicle ,1x Driver 20hrs and 1 x escort 15hrs with a saving of £45,000 and implement the options 1 or 2 above for those people who are continuing to access the transport. This figure will be subject to potential redundancy costs.

**Option 4** reduce the fleet by 2 vehicles and 4 staff and no longer provide transport for the 1 attendee who is assessed as being eligible for transport as per the LA transport policy. Alternative transport will be sourced for the remaining 12 who are eligible only under exceptional circumstances and this will be commissioned by external providers / taxi etc. Estimated saving will be £107,000.

#### Risks

**Option 1** – any method of charging will require the implementation of a means for collecting the charge and also a debt recovery system. This will need to be scoped as the collection of a nominal fee could cost more than the actual charge.

**Option 2** – as per option 1 plus there is a risk that full cost recovery or a similar subsidised methodology, will not be affordable to those using the transport.

**Option 3** – having only one bus will mean that routes will need to be reviewed alongside the days of attendance for those accessing services. In addition, numbers accessing the transport (up to 12 seated people maximum) will be dependent on how many wheelchair users are accessing the vehicle (maximum 4 wheelchairs) This option will be scoped alongside the capping / reduction of community options proposal including decisions as to the number of days that our building-based facilities will open. This option may reduce the numbers of people who can be offered support to reach their outcomes within Community Options.

**Option 4** – the impact of withdrawing of all assisted transport will result in approximately 13 people being unable to access our community options activities without either being transported by family, accessing public transport or commissioning taxi provision etc. The costs of this will need to be scoped and factored into the cost savings proposal.

#### Mitigation

Attendees' routes and sessions available will need to be revised and this may result in days attending being changed / reduced which may impact friendship groups and

	<p>outcomes for those 13 people accessing transport and also on their wider family carers.</p> <p>Policy on charging will need to be revised and a formal impact assessment and consultation undertaken.</p> <p>Contingency planning will be required should only on vehicle require repairs etc and be out of use for any period of time.</p>																																			
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>																																			
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.																																			
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>																																			
	N/A																																			
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>																																			
	Not relevant at this point.																																			
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>																																			
	<p>If approved the financial impact on the funding gap in relation to the above options would be:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Option 1</th> <th>Option 2</th> <th>Option 3</th> <th>Option 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£7,000</td> <td>£153,560</td> <td>£45,000</td> <td>£107,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£7,000</td> <td>£153,560</td> <td>£45,000</td> <td>£107,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	2024/2025	£7,000	£153,560	£45,000	£107,000	2025/2026	£0	£0	£0	£0	2026/2027	£0	£0	£0	£0	2027/2028	£0	£0	£0	£0	2028/2029	£0	£0	£0	£0	Total	£7,000	£153,560	£45,000	£107,000
Year	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4																																
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Total	£7,000	£153,560	£45,000	£107,000																																
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>																																			
	<p>The Team Manager for Community Options will oversee this project and consultation will be required with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People who access transport</li> <li>2. Staff / Trade Unions and OD</li> </ol>																																			

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment Option1**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal



Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Mary Welch	Alyson Hoskins	Adult Services Community Options	29/1/2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**Option 1 keep the current fleet and staffing to support and not further reduce the provision on LA transport for Community Options but implement a charging methodology for people who use the bus which** is currently 6 individuals– based on equivalent public transport – estimated income of £4,860 with each journey costing an average of £5.40 per return journey.

Currently 41 people access Community Options activity based facilities on a weekly basis

- There are 9 people registered to attend The Bert Denning Centre weekly with an average of 6 people daily of which 4 access via assisted transport.
- There are 32 people registered to attend The Lake View facility weekly with an average of 13 people daily of which 2 access via assisted transport.

**Risks**

**Option 1 – any method of charging will require the implementation of a means for collecting the charge and also a debt recovery system. This will need to be scoped as the collection of a nominal fee could cost more than the actual charge.**

<b>Section 1</b> <b>Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> and the EHRC guidance <a href="#">The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC</a></b> <b>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.</b>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
Age ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	Yes	Yes	The positive impact means that individuals with protected characteristics could continue to access assisted transport to attend daytime opportunities in line with an assessment of need. However the implementation of a charging policy could have a negative impact due to the additional expense and may result in some people choosing not to access day

			provision and this could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing and also that of any unpaid family carers.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	<b>As above</b>	As above	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )	<b>N/A</b>	N/A	
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	N/A	N/A	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	N/A	N/A	
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and</i>	N/A	N/A	

<i>different racial backgrounds)</i>			
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	N/A	N/A	
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i>	N/A	N/A	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	N/A	N/A	

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance](#).

**Section 2**

**Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)**

The Welsh Governments [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.

**.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:**

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

Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<p><b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b>  <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have a negative impact due to the implementation of a charging policy, for a service which currently operated free of charge,            Due to the disabilities of the individuals concerned it would be extremely challenging for them to access day opportunities using public transport.</p>	<p>The individuals concerned are already in receipt of Department of Work and Pensions benefits, either in the form of funding towards a vehicle to support the transport needs of the individual, or alternatively receive monetary support as part of their benefits.</p>	<p>Each individuals eligibility for assisted transport has been assessed against the Council's Transport Policy and found to be ineligible due to the fact that they are in receipt of support which is highlighted in the previous comment.            Each individuals' circumstances has been assessed and it is determined that in each there are exceptional circumstances, which means that they are still able to access the Council's assisted transport, but MAY be subject to a charge.</p>

<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> ( <i>enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future</i> )	N/A	N/A	
<b>Material Deprivation</b> ( <i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i> )	N/A	N/A	
<b>Area Deprivation</b> ( <i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i> )			<b>The general area is identified as one of the most deprived in Wales and those who are currently utilising the assisted transport live within an area where wheelchair accessible transport may be identified as an alternative however, the cost for this alternative may exceed the current mobility component. In addition Public transport can be sporadic, unreliable, and often difficult to traverse each of the valley communities.</b>

<b>Socio-economic Background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	N/A	N/A	
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	N/A	N/A	



**Section 3-Corporate Plan**  
 Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -[BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)




<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	

<p><b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent</p>	
<p><b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place</p>	
<p><b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient</p>	<p><b>Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG. Our Community Options service provide valuable support to vulnerable adults and their unpaid carers.</b></p>



**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p>Long Tern</p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>With appropriate care management/Financial assessment processes – there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access the Community Options provision by means of assisted transport.</b></p> <p><b>This proposal will enable there to be sustainability of the provision of assisted transport to support vulnerable adults to access day activities and day support.</b></p>
<p>Prevention</p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Continued day support and day activities are critical in supporting and maintaining the wellbeing of vulnerable adults and their family / unpaid carers.</b></p>

<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>Community Options will continue to work collaboratively with Care management teams and this will not be impacted by this budget proposal.</b></p> <p><b>There is an ongoing review of community transport across the wider services and it has been identified that our community options transport has the potential to be included in this work stream.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>The Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</b></p> <p><b>Community Options management team will be actively involved in the implementation of any charge , ensuring those citizens who are impacted are fully consulted with prior to any implementation. In addition, the Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</b></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

N/A

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

N/A

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

N/A


5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

N/A

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

N/A

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	No		
What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language? <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>	No		
What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language? <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>	No		

<p><b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b></p>	<p>No</p>		
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**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

<p><b>Protected characteristics</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b></p>	<p><b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b></p>
<p><b>Participation</b>            (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)</p>	<p>No</p>		
<p><b>Provision</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>		

(the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)			
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	N/A		

<p><b>Section 7– Community Safety</b></p> <p><b>Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications</b></p> <p>Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.</p>			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	No		

<p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b>          (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b>          (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Re-offending</b>          (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Serious Violence</b>          (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>		



(People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)			
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	N/A		

Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a>			
Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul>	N/A		

<p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> </ul>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>		

Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.		
Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<p><b>Consultation was held in 2019 where eligibility and charging were widely discussed with citizens, families and advocacy groups..</b></p>	<p>Many individuals found alternative transport arrangements, those who didn't were generally accepting on the implementation of a charging policy and were happy that they could still access assisted transport.</p>	<p>Previously the assisted transport policy was approved by full council which included the option of implementing a charging policy.</p>
Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?		
Empty space for data gaps		

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions:**

**1. Who did you consult?**

**Proposal currently subject to public consultation. Staff have been consulted on this proposals when developing them and are aware of the options for consideration.**

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

**Currently ongoing**

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

**N/K at this stage of consultation**

**4. What were the findings?**

**TBC**

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**TBC**

Page 542

<b>Section 11-Monitoring and Review</b>	
<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	<b>Via the AS management team</b>
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	<b>Regular service updates from CO managers Attendance figures from CO services</b>
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	<b>May provide options for consideration in relation to future service developments</b>
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	<b>Monthly via supervision with CO team manager</b>
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	<b>Head of Adult Services</b>

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**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	<b>Yes</b>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	<b>Yes</b>

Page 543

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	Mary Welch
<b>Job Title:</b>	Team Manager CO
<b>Date:</b>	27/01/24

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>	Alyson Hoskins		
<b>Job Title:</b>	Head of Adult Services		
<b>Signature:</b>	Alyson Hoskins	<b>Date:</b>	28/01/24

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).



## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment Option 2**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Mary Welch	Alyson Hoskins	Adult Services Community Options	29/1/2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**Option 2** keep the current fleet and staffing to support and not further reduce the provision on LA transport for Community Options but **implement a full cost recovery methodology or subsidised fee methodology** for people who use the bus estimated income will be £153,560, with each return journey costing approximately £180.00 per return journey if full cost recovery agreed

**Option 2** – as per option 1 plus there is a risk that full cost recovery or a similar subsidised methodology, will not be affordable to those using the transport

**Section 1**

Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)

Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.

<p><b>Age</b> (<i>people of all ages</i>)</p>	<p>Assisted Transport would continue be a reliable and available form of transport for the citizen, who would continue to have the appropriate level of support to travel safely.</p>	<p>Due to the decreased numbers of citizens accessing the Assisted Transport who are deemed as exceptional circumstances,full cost recovery could be too great – potentially outweighing the citizen’s personal mobility allowance.</p> <p>Potentially we will see people withdraw from service which could have a adverse impact on their wellbeing and place aadditional pressures on the family/carers.</p>	<p>People who have an assessed need to access the Assisted Transport will continue to do so free of charge ( currently we do not have any eligible citizens) - However, those who have been deemed as exceptional circumstances will continue to access this form of transport at a charge which could potentially be at a detriment to their financial situation. The full cost recovery charge would be in excess of £180.00 per return journey per day. On average individuals who access assisted transport attend day services three days per week, therfore the full cost recovery charge would be in excess of £540.00 per week, this is based on 17 individual jorneyes per week based on 50 weeks per year,and may result in some people chosing not to access day provision and this could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing and also that of any unpaid family carers.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b> (<i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i>)</p>		<p>As above.</p>	
<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b> (<i>anybody who’s gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex</i>)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		

<i>they were assigned at birth)</i>			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	N/A		
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	N/A		
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds</i> )	N/A		
<b>Religion or Belief</b> ( <i>people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs</i> )	N/A		
<b>Sex</b> ( <i>women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender</i> )	N/A		

<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	N/A		
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**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty](#) Welsh Government Guidance.

<b>Section 2</b> <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b> <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i>			
<p><b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
<b>Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.</b>	<b>Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?</b>	<b>How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?</b>	<b>Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.</b>
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	There will be a charge for this service which will incur an additional cost to the person who is not eligible for free assisted transport in line with the assisted		

	<p>transport policy. Due to the number of citizens currently accessing as exceptional circumstances now standing at 6, the full cost recovery could be substantially higher than their personal mobility benefits. The full cost recovery charge would be in excess of £540.00 per week, this is based on 17 individual journeys per week based on 50 weeks per year.</p>		
<p><b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> (<i>enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future</i>)</p>	<p><b>As above</b></p>		
<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> (<i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken</i>)</p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>		

<i>electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>			
<b>Area Deprivation</b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?)</i>	N/A		
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	N/A		
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	<b>Due to the high cost of accessing Assisted Transport, Citizens will not have the finances to cover the full cost recovery, and become isolated at home, putting further pressure on carers/parents and potentially put at risk.</b>	<b>Explore public transport/taxi – less cost to the citizen.</b>	



**Section 3-Corporate Plan**




*Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -[BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)*

<p><b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent</p>	
<p><b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities</p>	
<p><b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place</p>	
<p><b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient</p>	<p><b>Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG. Our Community Options service provide valuable support to vulnerable adults and their unpaid carers</b></p>



**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
*Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p>Long Tern</p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>This proposal will enable there to be sustainability of the provision of assisted transport to support vulnerable adults to access day activities and day support.</b></p> <p><b>With appropriate care management/Financial assessment processes – there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access the Community Options provision by means of assisted transport.</b></p>
<p>Prevention</p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Continued day support and day activities are critical in supporting and maintaining the wellbeing of vulnerable adults and their family / unpaid carers.</b></p>

<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>There is an ongoing review of community transport across the wider services and it has been identified that our community options transport has the potential to be included in this work stream.</b></p> <p><b>Community Options will continue to work collaboratively with Care management teams and this will not be impacted by this budget proposal.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>The Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</b></p> <p><b>Community Options management team will be actively involved in the implementation of any charge , ensuring those citizens who are impacted are fully consulted with prior to any implementation. In addition, the Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</b></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

N/A

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

N/A

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

N/A


5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

N/A

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

N/A

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	N/A		
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>	N/A		
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh</b>	N/A		

Language? <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>			
Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?	N/A		

**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	N/A		

<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	N/A		
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	N?A		

<b>Section 7– Community Safety</b>			
<b>Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications</b>			
Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b>	N/A		

(consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)			
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	N/A		
<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)	N/A		
<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)	N/A		
<b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)	N/A		



<b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)	N/A		
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	N/A		

<b>Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a></b>			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul>	N/A		

<p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> </ul>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>			
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**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
	<p>Many individuals found alternative transport arrangements, those who didn't were generally accepting on the implementation of a charging policy and were happy that they could still access assisted transport.</p>	<p>Previously the assisted transport policy was approved by full council which included the option of implementing a charging policy.</p>

**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

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**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions:**

**1. Who did you consult?**

**Proposal currently subject to public consultation. Staff have been consulted on this proposals when developing them and are aware of the options for consideration.**

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

**Currently ongoing**

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

**N/K at this stage of consultation**

**4. What were the findings?**

**TBC**

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

TBC

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	Via the AS management team
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	Regular service updates from CO managers Attendance figures from CO services
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	May provide options for consideration in relation to future service developments
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	Monthly via supervision with CO team manager
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	Head of AS / Service Manager for CO

Page 567

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	<b>No</b>
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Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal

**Name of person completing the IIA**

<b>Name:</b>	Mary Welch
<b>Job Title:</b>	CO team manager
<b>Date:</b>	28/01/24

**Head of Service Approval**

<b>Name:</b>	Alyson Hoskins		
<b>Job Title:</b>	Head of Adult Services		
<b>Signature:</b>	Alyson Hoskins	<b>Date:</b>	28/01/24

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).



### **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment Option 3**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Mary Welch	Alyson Hoskins	Adult Services Community Options	29/1/2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**Option 3** reduce the fleet by 1 vehicle ,1x Driver 20hrs and 1 x escort 15hrs with a saving of £45,760 and implement the options 1 or 2 above for those people who are continuing to access the transport. This figure will be subject to potential redundancy costs.

**Option 3 –** having only one bus will mean that routes will need to be reviewed alongside the days of attendance for those accessing services. In addition, numbers accessing the transport (up to 12 seated people maximum) will be dependent on how many wheelchair users are accessing the vehicle (maximum 4 wheelchairs) This option will be scoped alongside decisions as to the number of days that our building-based facilities will open. This option may impact on the named days that current attendees may be attending our building-based facilities depending on the days that the transport will be provided in their home geographical area. For example person A attends currently on a Monday and Wednesday via transport from home area (X) and has done so since the service re-opened following the Covid pandemic , she has attended with the same 4 people who live in areas X/Y and Z. The impact of the reduction in transport may mean that the transport ‘run’ from home area (X) could be on a different day to that of people attending from areas Y and Z.

**Section 1**

**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**

**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age (people of all ages)</b>	Assisted Transport would continue be a reliable and available form of transport for the citizen, who would continue to have the appropriate level of support to travel safely.	Pick up and drop off times and days may change – leading to potential for reduced service/shorter days.  With only one vehicle there is the potential - in the event of transport breakdown – that there could be limited reliance on family/carers and this could negatively affect care and support arrangements.	To minimise a negative impact, Family would be required to support where unforeseen circumstances arise, assisted transport will continue to be an option for those deemed eligible free of charge and those who are deemed as exceptional circumstances at an agreed fee which are illustrated in options 1 and may result in some people choosing not to access day provision and this could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing and also that of any unpaid family carers.  The reduced co-hort of staff to support transport as back up in the event of staff absence, can be mitigated via the development of relief staff to be called on from other areas of the Council.

		A further negative impact would be having to cover driver/escort duties where sickness/annual leave/training occurs – utilising staff who are ordinarily on a higher rate of pay or arranging for relief staff to be brought in from other areas of the council.	
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )		As above	As above plus potential positive impact – as the proposal recommends people with a disability continue to access this service using an adapted vehicle with the correct level of support.
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )	N/A		
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	N/A		

<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)	N/A		
<b>Race</b> (people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)	N/A		
<b>Religion or Belief</b> (people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)	N/A		
<b>Sex</b> (women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)	N/A		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)	N/A		

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

<b>Section 2</b> <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b> <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i>			
<b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	N/A		
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>	N/A		

<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> (<i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i>)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> (<i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i>)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b> (<i>social class i.e. parents education, employment and income</i>)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> (<i>What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged</i>)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		

**Section 3-Corporate Plan**

*Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -[BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)*




<p><b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent</p>	
<p><b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities</p>	
<p><b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place</p>	
<p><b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient</p>	<p><b>Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG. Our Community Options service provide valuable support to vulnerable adults and their unpaid carers</b></p>



**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**

*Sustainable development principles. The WCFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)*

<p><b>Five Ways of Working</b></p>	<p><b>How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?</b></p>
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<p><b>Long Term</b></p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>This proposal will enable there to be sustainability of the provision of assisted transport to support vulnerable adults to access day activities and day support.</b></p> <p><b>With appropriate care management/Financial assessment processes – there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access the Community Options provision by means of assisted transport.</b></p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Continued day support and day activities are critical in supporting and maintaining the wellbeing of vulnerable adults and their family / unpaid carers.</b></p>
<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p>

<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>There is an ongoing review of community transport across the wider services and it has been identified that our community options transport has the potential to be included in this work stream.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>The Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</b></p> <p><b>Community Options management team will be actively involved in the implementation of any charge , ensuring those citizens who are impacted are fully consulted with prior to any implementation. In addition, the Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</b></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.


3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>			
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>			
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>			

<p><b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b></p>			
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**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

<p><b>Protected characteristics</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b></p>	<p><b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b></p>
<p><b>Participation</b>            (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)</p>			
<p><b>Provision</b></p>			

(the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)			
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)			

<p><b>Section 7– Community Safety</b></p> <p><b>Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications</b></p> <p>Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.</p>			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	N/A		

<p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b>          (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b>          (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Re-offending</b>          (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Serious Violence</b>          (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>		



(People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)			
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	N/A		

Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a>			
Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul>	N/A		

<p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>		

**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

<b>Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b>	<b>What were the key findings?</b>	<b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b>
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<p><b>Consultation was held in 2019 where eligibility and charging were widely discussed with citizens, families and advocacy groups..</b></p>	<p>Many individuals found alternative transport arrangements, those who didn't were generally accepting on the implementation of a charging policy and were happy that they could still access assisted transport.</p>	<p>Previously the assisted transport policy was approved by full council which included the option of implementing a charging policy.</p>
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**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions:**

**1. Who did you consult?**

**Proposal currently subject to public consultation. Staff have been consulted on this proposals when developing them and are aware of the options for consideration.**

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

**Currently ongoing**

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

**N/K at this stage of consultation**

**4. What were the findings?**

**TBC**

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**TBC**

Page 590

<b>Section 11-Monitoring and Review</b>	
<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	<b>Via the AS management team</b>
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	<b>Regular service updates from CO managers</b>

	<b>Attendance figures from CO services</b>
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	<b>May provide options for consideration in relation to future service developments</b>
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	<b>Monthly via supervision with CO team manager</b>
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	<b>Head of AS / Service Manager for CO</b>

Page 591

**Section 12 - Decision**  
*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	<b>Yes</b>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	<b>Yes</b>

**Name of person completing the IIA**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mary Welch</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Team Manager Community Options</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>27/01/24</b>

<b>Head of Service Approval</b>			
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>		
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Head of Adult Services</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>28/01/24</b>

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).



## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment Option 4**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Mary Welch	Alyson Hoskins	Adult Services Community Options	29/1/2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**Option 4** reduce the fleet by 2 vehicles and 4 staff and no longer provide transport. Alternative transport will be sourced for the remaining 6 who are eligible only under exceptional circumstances and this will be commissioned by external providers / taxi etc. Estimated saving will be £106, 773.

**Option 4** – the impact of withdrawing of all assisted transport will result in approximately 6 people being unable to access our community options activities without either being transported by family, accessing public transport or commissioning taxi provision etc. The costs of this will need to be scoped and factored into the cost savings proposal.

<b>Section 1</b> <b>Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> and the EHRC guidance <a href="#">The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC</a></b> <b>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.</b>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> (people of all ages)	None.	<p>This proposal will significantly reduce the opportunity for community access for some, due to mobility, behavioural issues etc.</p> <p>Family/carers may decide on the persons behalf not to source other forms of transport, therefore there is a potential of isolation /potential family stressors/risk.</p>	Community Options along with Care Management will support in exploring alternative transport for the person ie taxi's, and may result in some people chosing not to access day provision and this could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing and also that of any unpaid family carers.
<b>Disability</b> (people with disabilities/ long term conditions)		As above	

<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b>  <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Race</b> <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		

<b>Sex</b> (women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)	N/A		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)	N/A		

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance](#).



<p><b>Section 2</b>  <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b>  <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i></p>			
<p><b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
<b>Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.</b>	<b>Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?</b>	<b>How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?</b>	<b>Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.</b>

<p><b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b>  <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i></p>	<p><b>Lack of availability of wheelchair accessible taxis.</b>   <b>Unreliable bus service, locality of bus stops.</b></p>	<p><b>Work with procurement to identify external transport provision – if available</b></p>	<p><b>We have existing knowledge of availability of private taxi / transport options</b></p>
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b></p>	<p><b>Cost implications where personal benefits do not cover the cost of</b></p>		




<i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	<b>taxis. Possible impact on wider family circumstances.</b>		
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	<b>N/A</b>		

<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b>	
<i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	<b>Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG. Our Community</b>

<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
	<b>Options service provide valuable support to vulnerable adults and their unpaid carers</b>

<b>Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)</b> <i>Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)</i>	
Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<b>Long Tern</b> 	Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.
<b>Prevention</b> 	Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse  <b>Continued day support and day activities are critical in supporting and maintaining the wellbeing of vulnerable adults and their family / unpaid carers.</b>



<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>There is an ongoing review of community transport across the wider services and it has been identified that our community options transport has the potential to be included in this work stream.</b></p> <p><b>Community Options will continue to work collaboratively with Care management teams and this will not be impacted by this budget proposal.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p>

	<p>Community Options management team will be actively involved in the implementation of any charge , ensuring those citizens who are impacted are fully consulted with prior to any implementation. In addition, the Council are actively engaging with the general public on the proposals.</p>
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**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.


3. **A HEALTHIER WALES ...** a society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES** ... a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a> )			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>			
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of</i>			

<i>Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>			
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language? e.g. staff, residents and visitors</b>			
<b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b>			

<p><b>Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - <a href="#">The Right Way</a></b></p> <p>The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.</p>			
<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>

<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)			
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)			
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)			

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)			
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)			
<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)			
<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)			

<p><b>Serious Violence</b>          (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>			
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b>          (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)</p>			
<p><b>Community Cohesion</b>          (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)</p>			

<p><b>Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty</b> <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a></p>			
<p><b>Impacts</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?</b></p>	<p><b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b></p>



<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> </ul>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other</p>			

voluntary adult education settings			
<b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>			

Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.		
Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<b>Consultation was held in 2019 where eligibility and charging were widely discussed with citizens, families and advocacy groups..</b>	Many individuals found alternative transport arrangements, those who didn't were generally accepting on the implementation of a charging policy and were happy that they could still access assisted transport.	Previously the assisted transport policy was approved by full council which included the option of implementing a charging policy.

<p><b>Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?</b></p>		
<p></p>		

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions:**

**1. Who did you consult?**

Proposal currently subject to public consultation. Staff have been consulted on this proposals when developing them and are aware of the options for consideration.

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

Currently ongoing

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

N/K at this stage of consultation

**4. What were the findings?**

TBC

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

TBC

<b>Section 11-Monitoring and Review</b>	
<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	<b>Via the AS management team</b>
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	<b>Regular service updates from CO managers Attendance figures from CO services</b>
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	<b>May provide options for consideration in relation to future service developments</b>
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	<b>Monthly via supervision with CO team manager</b>
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	<b>Head of Adult Services</b>

<b>Section 12 - Decision</b>	
<i>Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.</i>	
Continue with the proposal in its current form	<b>No</b>

Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal

**Yes**

**Name of person completing the IIA**

**Name:** Mary Welch

**Job Title:** Team Manager

**Date:** 27/01/24

**Head of Service Approval**

**Name:** Alyson Hoskins

**Job Title:** Head of Adult Services

**Signature:** Alyson Hoskins

**Date:** 28/01/24

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Rationalisation / Reduction of staffing Levels - Provider Services

SRO:	<b>Tanya Evans</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>
Organisation:	<b>SSD</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Alyson Hoskins		31/08/2023
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			



1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p>
	<p>These proposals are being considered as an outcome of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings for 2024/25 and future years.</p> <p>The proposals below are identified within the Social Services bridging the gap theme – <b>WORKFORCE RATIONALISATION and service reduction/ capping of services.</b></p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p>
	<p>The proposal is to reduce the existing staff team across our current services. Our Provider teams consist of the 4 services below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cwrt Mytton</li> <li>• LD accommodation (Augusta and Supported Living)</li> <li>• Community Options</li> <li>• Home Care</li> </ul> <p>The way in which the savings will be achieved will in the main focus on deleting existing vacant posts within the structure and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Capping the level of provision to the remaining budget envelope</li> <li>2. Creating waiting lists for new service provision using a risk management process where new service applications can wait and also looking for alternative funded commissioned services (with capacity) to meet the demand.</li> </ol> <p>The outcome of this will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Cwrt Mytton</b> – we will continue cap the level of service to current 25 beds (capacity of for 36) and continue the current review of Cwrt Mytton accommodation offer and alternative use of the facility as part of our income generation plans.</li> <li>2. <b>LD accommodation (Augusta and Supported Living)</b> – continue the current review of the staff rotas / staff contracts to ensure we can continue to meet the current demand /outcomes for tenants and increase opportunities for staff to work across both Augusta and Supported Living as part of the newly developed LD accommodation service. We will also continue to the review of the BG offer for supported accommodation in with a targeted focus on how we can use the menu of support we offer including the BG PODS, Augusta and supported living bungalows to provide a promoting independence model of support as opposed to a home for life. This will include use of multi professionals and a multi-disciplinary approach across Social Care, Health and our third sector partners.</li> <li>3. <b>Community Options</b> – continue the review of our current hours of support offered including our Outreach service and building based facilities to ensure that outcomes can be met but within the revised budget envelope. This may include reducing some hours of opening and also having waiting lists for new people who are looking for day activity support. It will also include</li> </ol>

	<p>increased income generation options for increased use of our building outside of core hours etc.</p> <p>4. <b>Home Care</b> - review our current hours of support offered by our frontline workers and the office-based structure that support the service. The review will include potential revised operations for our emergency home care DASH service based on an analysis of current demand and types of requests for support that are required, review of the out of hours service (currently a pilot phase) and potential capping of the DASH provision to the current level of external funding with reduced reliance on the core home care budget.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b><u>Methodology for savings:</u></b></p> <p>The Provider Services – service managers and team managers are currently reviewing their team budgets and staff configuration and have identified that there are a number of vacant posts that we may not be required to advertise <b>IF</b> we re-configure the services as outlined in the bullet points 1 to 4 above. This work is being undertaken alongside a number of other business case proposals and opportunities for increasing income generation by marketing our services to wider LA's and health board partners and also a number of collaboration opportunities.</p> <p><b><u>Proposal:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Savings to the budget:</u></b></p> <p>It is estimated that the potential total savings to budget across the Provider Services by deleting vacant hours / posts and reconfiguring the service provision is approximately £100,000 to £110,000 – there are potential additional post savings that could be achieved by the potential reduction in current workforce contracts or hours but this will not be known until the full analytical review of the demand, supply, current profile of people accessing the services and potential service reconfiguration is completed by the end of December 23. This will exclude Cwrt Mytton where the review of the current accommodation and potential new build to meet needs for future years require potential application for Welsh Government capital funding and will take approximately 3 years to complete.</p> <p><b><u>Benefits to proposal:</u></b></p> <p>Adult Provider Services have identified a number of areas that can create savings across the 4 main services. These will have some impact on service delivery at a time when we are seeing increasing complexity of demand. The proposals will result in the deletion of any existing vacant posts – where we can safely do so within our required CIW registration and also a reconfiguration of the services base on the revised budget envelope. This will result in minimal – if any -redundancy situations and the services being able to retain our current highly valued staff teams.</p> <p><b><u>Risks identified to proposal:</u></b></p> <p><b>Cwrt Mytton</b> – there are no risks associated with this proposal as all current vacant posts at Cwrt Mytton are being advertised and are not included within this proposal. The home is still reliant on use of some agency staff to cover vacant posts</p>

during recruitment period, ad hoc sickness and holidays. The service is registered with CIW and we have required levels of staffing based on residents complex needs and how we meet their outcomes. The home has already been reduced to 25 residents (from 36) due to ongoing pressures of recruitment and significant cost pressures due to high levels of sickness post COVID which are continuing to improve due to interventions by the care home leadership team.

**LD accommodation (Augusta and Supported Living)** – there are limited vacancies within this service and those that are vacant are currently required to meet current level of care and support for people who access the services. However, there is currently a review of the staff rota ongoing (due to be complete by the end of September) and it is likely that vacant hours may be identified which can be added to the estimated overall budget savings total. Both these services are registered with CIW and require a minimum safe staff complement to meet the needs of people who access them.

**Community Options** – the community options service has changed post COVID and previous budget savings have been made as part of the bridging the gap proposals for 23/24 (£143,000). Further reductions in staffing will reduce the availability of sessions for vulnerable adults and may result in new applications having to wait for available sessions. This will be risk assessed by the social work teams. The staff team are currently analysing the impact of availability of sessions at both the building-based services (Bert Denning / Lake View) and our Outreach Service so that we can measure the true impact of these proposals and quantify how many available sessions we will have each day / week with the reduced workforce.

**Home Care** – our home care team provide care and support at 2 external extra care schemes and also provide emergency domiciliary care (DASH) as a bridging service to support people in the community during a crisis until long term care can be provided by our externally commissioned services. We have a number of vacant posts/ hours within the service which we can delete, and this will reduce the current numbers of hours that the service provides. This may result in us having to ask families/ carers to provide additional support until a package of care becomes available as we may need to develop a waiting list for new packages. This will be risk assessed by the social work teams.

**Mitigating factors:**

- **Cwrt Mytton** – N/A
- **LD accommodation (Augusta and Supported Living)** – work has already commenced on a revised staff rota for this service area and staff and trade unions are part of the discussions. We have also asked our colleagues in ABUHB to undertake a review of the health and social care needs of tenants in the service so that we can ensure that correct levels of care are delivered at the services.
- **Community Options** – the leadership team at CO are developing robust systems to evaluate the levels of staff required to deliver safe care and support each day at our facilities. This work will be used to inform the future model of delivery that we can provide within the service and the maximum numbers of people we can support safely.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Home Care</b> - the leadership team in Home Care are developing robust systems to evaluate the levels of staff required to deliver safe care and support each day across the teams. This work will be used to inform the future model of delivery that we can provide within the service and the maximum numbers of people we can support safely. In addition, we will carefully consider the current staff structure, hours of operation and model that the service will provide from April 24 based on the new budget envelope for Home Care and current grant income that is due to cease in March 25. This work will be completed by end of October 23 and will include savings options for both 24/25 and 25/26 when further posts may be required to be deleted at the end of the WG grant period (Reginal Integration Fund). During the period until April 24, we will work with our colleagues in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) for them to be aware of the revised model of home care we can provide and look to other options to meet the demand in particular around speedy hospital discharges. This may include referring patients to the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) Step Closer to Home (SCTH) temporary care home project as an alternative to remaining in hospital.</li> </ul>														
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>														
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.														
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	The above proposals outline the savings and the potential risks to Provider Service however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
5.1	<p>If approved the financial impact of the above options for 2024/25 will be a financial efficiency of £110,000.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£110,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£110,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£110,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£110,000
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Total	£110,000														

6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Engage with staff as a matter of urgency.</li><li>- Engage with the trade unions.</li><li>- Engage with Organisational Development</li></ul> <p>The impact of these savings will be monitored via the Adult Services Departmental Management Team.</p>

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Alyson Hoskins	Alyson Hoskins	Adult Services	15/01/24

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**The proposal is a planned reduction in staff hours across our Provider Services teams within Adult Service. Approx saving £100k. The proposal does not include the deletion of any current provider services (occupied) posts through compulsory redundancy. This is with the exception of the bridging the gap proposals that relate to the transport proposals specifically for community options ( see separate GTP proposal)**

**This proposal will therefore include:**

- 1. Potential deletion of non-statutory posts within the service area and / or consideration of voluntary redundancy requests and cross match opportunities across other services – as appropriate**
- 2. Deletion of any surplus / ad hoc uncommitted (vacant) contracted hours we have within the provider services areas of Home Care and Community Options budgets and staffing structures.**

**Section 1**

**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**

**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	Yes	There is the potential that with the reduced staffing within Adult Services Provider Services that older people and vulnerable adults , could be waiting for support from our Adult Services teams longer than previously. However the hours that are to be deleted to implement these changes have been vacant on the rotas for several months, as we have left them vacant in prepration for planning the budget savings required and therefore they will not result in any reduction of current service levels but will reduce the ability of the service to increase capacity should demand increase.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	Yes	As above
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or</i>	No	No	



<i>gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i>			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	No	No	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i>	No	No	
<b>Race</b> <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i>	No	No	
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	No	No	
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and</i>	No	No	

<i>those who self-identify their gender)</i>			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	No	No	

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

<p><b>Section 2</b> <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b> <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i></p> <p><b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
<b>Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.</b>	<b>Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?</b>	<b>How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?</b>	<b>Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.</b>
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular</i>	<b>Potential negative impact</b>		

<p><i>payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>		<p><b>Through the use of a robust initial assessment and screening process which prioritises those referrals / care and support requests that require an urgent or immediate response and ensures that those who are having to wait for the allocation of provider services:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Are notified of the period of wait</b></li> <li><b>2. Are given contact details should their situation change whilst waiting so that the referrals / support request can be prioritised.</b></li> <li><b>3. Identify other methods of meeting care and support needs including externally commissioned capacity of dom care / direct payments / third sector day provision etc.</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Maximisation of grant income to support the core budget – where appropriate</b></p>	<p><b>Knowledge and information from:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Current demand and performance data</b></li> <li><b>2. Team manager allocations of vacant hours / available places in both our home care and community options services</b></li> <li><b>3. Information provided from OD and finance in relation to long standing (over 6 months) vacant hours and posts in both home care and community options</b></li> <li><b>4. Use of additional income sources (grant income) to maximise the staffing arrangements in Provider services.</b></li> </ol>
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<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> ( <i>enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future</i> )	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Material Deprivation</b> ( <i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i> )	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Area Deprivation</b> ( <i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i> )	<b>No impact</b>		
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> ( <i>social class i.e. parents education, employment and income</i> )	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>As above</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b>			



<p><i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>	<p><b>Potential negative impact</b></p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above</p>
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**Section 3-Corporate Plan**  
 Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -[BG Corporate Plan 22-27](#)

<p><b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent</p>	
<p><b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities</p>	
<p><b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place</p>	
<p><b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient</p>	<p><b>Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments and service provision - for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG.</b></p>

**Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)**  
 Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)

Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p>Long Tern</p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>With appropriate and safe mitigations via our existing service provision and allocations/ referral processes – as listed above - there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access Adult Social Care. The reduction in staffing hours to support our most vulnerable adults will be carefully managed via robust referral and screening processes and the services are anticipated to be in a position to maintain their current level of service provision. The deletion of current vacant hours within our staffing structures will have no impact on current practice as they are already surplus to our staffing compliment.</b></p>
<p>Prevention</p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>As above</b></p>
<p>Integration</p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p> <p><b>There may be an impact in relation to referrals and new contacts from our colleagues in ABUHB but as stated above with appropriate management of referrals / new applications for services – as listed above - there will be a minimum impact on the wellbeing of people who access both our home care and community options services. ABUHB colleagues will be communicated with and explanations given as to why / how referrals are progressed.</b></p>

<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>Adult Service and Provider teams will continue to work collaboratively with our key partners and this will not be impacted by this budget proposal.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>Provider Team Managers and Service Managers will be actively involved in the implementation of any reductions in staffing across our Provider Teams and the mitigations that will be put in place to reduce the minimal impact on our ability to provider inhouse services.</b></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

/A

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

N/A

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.



Adult Social Services provide care and support assessments and provision for our most vulnerable adults living within the communities of BG

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

N/A

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.


N/A

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ...** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

N/A

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ...** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

N/A

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a></i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	No		
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>	No		
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>	No		

<b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b>	No		
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**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	No	
<b>Provision</b>	<b>No</b>	No	

(the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)			
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	No	No	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	No	No	

<p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b>          (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b>          (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p><b>Re-offending</b>          (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p><b>Serious Violence</b>          (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	

(People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)			
<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)	No	No	

Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a>			
Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> </ul>	No	No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
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<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> </ul>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>			
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<b>Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.</b>		
<b>Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b>	<b>What were the key findings?</b>	<b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b>
<p>Staffing profiles and reports from OD</p> <p>Activity information from the LA performance team.</p> <p>Finance profile and team budgets for Provider Services</p> <p>Grant funding approvals for services that are supporting in house provider staffing budgets</p>		<p>Both have enabled us to review the staffing compliment and activity for in house Provider teams</p>
<b>Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?</b>		

No

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

**1. Who did you consult?**

**Staff Provider managers and Service Managers plus OD and finance teams**

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

**As part of preparing the budget proposal in August / September 2023.**

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

**Yes as was based on provider structure information and staffing details**

**4.What were the findings?**

**The outcome was the detail provided in the budget proposal and resulted in the proposals to reduce staffing only where we have unused hours / vacant hours. It was clear that we could not lose current staff who are currently working in the service as this will destabilise the work force and the Provider teams will then be unable to meet current demand.**

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**Yes**

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<p><b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b></p>	<p><b>Adult Service management team (fortnightly)          Front line staff /Team Manager / Service Manager Supervisions          Finance and OD meetings</b></p>
<p><b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b></p>	<p><b>Structured meetings with data discussions and feedback          Face to Face supervision sessions          Quality assurance framework          Workforce Strategy / Business plans</b></p>
<p><b>How will the results be used for future development?</b></p>	<p><b>Via performance reports</b></p>
<p><b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b></p>	<p><b>As above</b></p>
<p><b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b></p>	<p><b>Head of Adult Service and Service Managers</b></p>

Page 644

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

<p>Continue with the proposal in its current form</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
---	-------------------

Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Alyson Hoskins</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Head of Adult Services</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>28/01/24</b>

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Tanya Evans</b>		
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Interim Director SSD</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).



## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Rationalization / Reduction of Staffing Levels in the Placement Team

#### SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)

SRO:	<b>Alison Ramshaw</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Loredana Moruz</b>
Organisation:	<b>Children Social Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Loredana Moruz		13.10.2023
Reviewed by:	Alison Ramshaw		13.10.2023
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	These proposals are being considered in light of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	The proposal for children's services is to reduce children's services workforce through the radical reforming of service delivery across the sector.
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b><u>Savings for 12 months from vacancy of a full time social worker post in The Placement Team</u></b></p> <p>The Placement Team in Blaenau Gwent is responsible for delivering all the recruitment, assessment, training and support activities for local authority foster carers. The team is also responsible for commissioning placements for children looked after with Independent Fostering Agencies and residential provision within and outside Blaenau Gwent boundaries. Currently the team comprises of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fostering service component: 1 senior practitioner, 6 qualified social workers, 1 support worker, 1 placement officer.</li> <li>- SGO (Special guardianship Order) support service: ½ senior practitioner, 2 qualified social workers, 2 support workers.</li> <li>- Family Time Team (delivering contact sessions for children looked after and their birth families): ½ senior practitioner, 1 family time coordinator, 5 family time workers.</li> </ul> <p>Over the past 2 years the team has faced significant challenges in terms of recruitment and retention of qualified social workers. Since April 2023 adverts have gone out twice for a fixed term full time social worker post with no success. The post holder is currently seconded into another post grant funded for the next 18 months. To mitigate against the poor recruitment issues an agency social worker has been contracted for 6 months and we have used external grant funding to commission independent social workers to complete assessments required by court.</p> <p><b><u>Proposal:</u></b> Offer the savings from 12 months vacancy for a full-time social worker post within the structure of the Placement Team.</p> <p><b><u>Savings to the budget:</u></b> £56,000 This proposal doesn't carry any redundancy costs.</p> <p><b><u>Benefits to proposal:</u></b> Creating savings for the Local Authority core budget</p>

	<p><b><u>Potential risks identified to proposal:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced capacity in the core service to support approved foster carers in compliance with Fostering Regulations</li> <li>- Increased workload for the remaining 5 social workers which may lead to retention difficulties.</li> <li>- Reduced capacity in the core service to complete Connected Persons Assessments as required by court and Form F assessments for new foster carer approvals</li> <li>- Compromised quality of support offered to approved foster carers, leading to placement breakdowns, instability and escalation of need for children currently looked after</li> <li>- Placement breakdown within house foster carers, leading to a likelihood of increased use of IFA (Independent Fostering Agencies) placements or residential placements.</li> <li>- Impact on LA's reputation due to compromised quality of support for LA foster carers</li> <li>- Foster carers leaving the Local Authority</li> <li>- LA being unable to attract new generic foster carers due to reduction of support available.</li> <li>- LA being unable to offer appropriate support to potential IFA foster carers who may want to transfer to Blaenau Gwent in the context of Eliminate Profit agenda drive forward by Welsh Government</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Mitigating factors:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Placement team have functioned successfully without this post for the past six months due to use of time limited grants available for commissioning of fostering services.</li> <li>- The potential risks identified above have not been experienced during the last six months.</li> <li>- Ability to use any underspend from the Placement Team budget. (Recruitment/Panel/ISW budget line) to commission assessments from Independent Social Workers (ISW)</li> <li>- Fixed term use of Foster Wales funding to secure ISW Workers to complete assessments to relieve pressure on current core staff (funding confirmed until March 2025)</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	It is recommended that there is a freeze on advertising this post pending the outcome of the cost saving proposal.
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	The above proposals outline the savings and the potential risks to children's services however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.



4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
5.1	<p>If approved the financial impact of the above options for 2024/25 will be a financial efficiency of £56,000.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£56,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£56,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£56,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£56,000
Year	Potential Saving														
2024/2025	£56,000														
2025/2026	£0														
2026/2027	£0														
2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£56,000														
6.	<b><i>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</i></b>														
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage with staff as a matter of urgency.</li> <li>- Engage with the trade unions.</li> <li>- Engage with Organisational Development</li> <li>-</li> </ul>														


## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Rationalization / Reduction of Staffing Levels in Early Years

#### SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)

SRO:	<b>Tanya Evans</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Alison Ramshaw</b>
Organisation:	<b>SSD</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Alison Ramshaw		31/08/2023
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	These proposals are being considered in light of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	The proposal for children's services is to reduce children's services workforce through the radical reforming of service delivery across the sector. The proposals outlined below will allow us to deliver the service with reduced officers as many childcare settings have now become Flying Start settings and the Childcare Team Leader in Flying Start also has a role in quality.
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b>Main options</b></p> <p><b><u>Reduction of 3 X scale 6 posts within Early Years Childcare &amp; Play (EYCP) to 2 and removal of specialised role of Integrated Childcare Centre (ICC) receptionist</u></b></p> <p>The 3 x scale 6 post and the 1 x Receptionist are currently funded through the Childcare Act RSG budget. We do realise the receptionist should be funded from Business Support portfolio.</p> <p>The roles to be discussed are; -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 x Family Information Service</li> <li>- 1 x Childcare Quality Assurance</li> <li>- 1 x Childcare Business Development</li> <li>- 1 x receptionist for ICC</li> </ul> <p>Under the Childcare Act 2006 (Local Authority Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2016 which came into force on 1 April 2016. And their arrangements with childcare providers and charges for the provision of childcare under sections 23, 24 and 25 of the Childcare Act 2006, there is a requirement on Local Authorities to complete Childcare Sufficiency Assessments, secure sufficient high quality, sustainable childcare provision, for their area, and provide information about the provision of childcare in their area under Section 27. There is also a requirement for local authorities to put in place a programme to support high quality, affordable, sustainable new childcare places, start-up grants, a programme of sustainability grants, a family information service (FIS), and a programme of childcare training support.</p> <p><b><u>Proposal:</u></b></p> <p>It is proposed that by restructuring the 3 scale 6 roles can be reduced to 2 and the receptionist post be deleted.</p> <p>The proposal is; -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Family Information Service (FIS), Receptionist and workforce development roles be combined into one post and will be based on ICC reception – this has been done in other authorities.</li> </ol>

	<p>2) Combine Quality Assurance and Childcare Business Development into one post – Childcare Development Officer – this role was previously in place in BGCBC between years 2000-2010.</p> <p><b><u>Savings to the budget:</u></b></p> <p><b>£65,000 – £73,000</b></p> <p><b><u>Benefits to proposal:</u></b> Creating savings for the Local Authority core budget</p> <p><b><u>Risks identified to proposal:</u></b> No immediate risks identified as Flying Start and Childcare offer childcare is expanding, and we have grants for these elements and therefore we can move more of the quality responsibilities into the Flying Start team to free up RSG funding and we will be maintaining our statutory duties.</p> <p><b><u>Mitigating factors</u></b> N/A</p>														
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>														
	To be determined as part of consideration and engagement process.														
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>														
	The above proposals outline the savings the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>														
	Not relevant at this point.														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
5.1	<p>If approved the financial impact of the above options for 2024/25 will be a financial efficiency of £73,000.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£73,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£73,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£73,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£73,000
Year	Potential Saving														
2024/2025	£73,000														
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2028/2029	£0														
Total	£73,000														

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Ceri Bird	Alison Ramshaw	Children’s Services, Social Services	01/02/24

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.  
**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

The proposal is to not fill the vacancy of Childcare Quality Assurance Officer, made vacant by the staff member leaving her role for another in the service area, and make the scale 6 grade a saving to our RSG budget. Whilst the duties in Sections 22 and 26 of the 2006 Childcare Act require local authorities to shape and support the development of childcare provision in the local area to make it flexible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the community, there is not a breakdown of the requirement to assess high quality childcare.

However, that said, the provision of high quality, part-time childcare is integral to the Flying Start programme and this can be seen in the Welsh Governments vision to roll out high quality part time childcare to all 2 year olds. Guidance states all staff working in childcare have a higher qualification than that required by NMS, also that LA’s should have a Flying Start Early Years Advisory Teacher as a statutory requirement of the Flying Start programme. The requirement and measures for quality Flying Start childcare is directly in line with WFGA goals relating to “A Healthier Wales” and “A more equal Wales” and so there is a requirement for LA’s to ensure this high quality childcare by assessing the level through the advisory teachers and childcare officer. As FS childcare grows and rolls out across BG then so will the FS Childcare Advisory Team, taking the pressure off RSG funding.

Blaenau Gwent has invested heavily in the sector and workforce and created its own Quality Assurance Programme “Quality Matters” that assures us of a settings quality above the National Minimum Standards (NMS), following research (EPPSE 2003) that poor quality childcare can be detrimental to the child, and often considered Best Practice by other Authorities.

**Our FS Early Years Advisory Teacher was on secondment to Welsh Government for 2 years helping them write the new early year's curriculum.**



flyng-start-childcare-  
guidance.pdf

**Section 1**

**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**

**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	No	No	
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	No	NO	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )	No	NO	
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )	No	NO	





<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> ( <i>women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</i> )	NO	NO	
<b>Race</b> ( <i>people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds</i> )	NO	NO	
<b>Religion or Belief</b> ( <i>people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs</i> )	NO	NO	
<b>Sex</b> ( <i>women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender</i> )	NO	NO	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> ( <i>lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other</i> )	NO	NO	




**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

<b>Section 2</b> <b>Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)</b> <i>The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.</i>			
<b>.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	NO	NO	
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>	NO	NO	

<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> (<i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i>)</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>NO</p>	
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> (<i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i>)</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>NO</p>	
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b> (<i>social class i.e. parents education, employment and income</i>)</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>NO</p>	
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> (<i>What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged</i>)</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>NO</p>	

<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b> <i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	<b>Striving to give all children the Best Start in Life</b>
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	<b>High Quality Childcare Provision</b>
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	

Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)	
<i>Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)</i>	
Five Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Investing in high quality childcare and early years’ services can improve babies and young children’s later educational outcomes thus preventing problems later in life. By continuing the service through different funding stream means a saving to RSG whilst also ensuring services will continue to be delivered through an appropriate alternative funding stream.</b></p>

<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

1. **A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

Giving children the best start in life leads to better life chances as adults. Hopefully our priority for high quality childcare leads to better outcomes for the child leading to a higher skilled and well educated population which in turn helps our Welsh economy to prosper.

2. **A RESILIENT WALES** ... a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES** ... a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.


4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES** ... A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES** ... attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING** ... a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.



7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES** ... a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards			
<i>(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a>)</i>			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	Yes – Welsh Language is a compulsory element of all early years programmes.		

<p><b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i></p>	<p>We use Welsh Language in all Early Years settings in BG</p>		
<p><b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i></p>	<p>Both of our FS EY childcare coordinators are fluent Welsh speakers</p>		
<p><b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b></p>	<p>Ofcourse</p>		

<p><b>Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - <a href="#">The Right Way</a></b></p> <p>The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.</p>			
<p><b>Protected characteristics</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?</b></p>	<p><b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b></p>

<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	NO	
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	NO	NO	
<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	NO	NO	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	NO	NO	
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	NO	NO	
<b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b> (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)	NO	NO	
<b>Re-offending</b> (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)	NO	NO	

<p><b>Serious Violence</b> (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	NO	NO	
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b> (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)</p>	NO	NO	
<p><b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)</p>	NO	NO	

**Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty** [AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf](#)

<p><b>Impacts</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?</b></p>	<p><b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?</b></p>	<p><b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b></p>
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<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> </ul>	NO	NO	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admissions</li> <li>Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>Child wellbeing</li> <li>Transport</li> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Additional needs support</li> <li>Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other</p>	NO	NO	

voluntary adult education settings			
<b>Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	NO	NO	

<b>Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.</b>		
<b>Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b>	<b>What were the key findings?</b>	<b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b>



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**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

**I intend to use FS childcare funding to address any gaps in support to our childcare sector.**

Page 673

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**  
**Principle 1:** Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.  
**Principle 2:** Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

**1. Who did you consult?**

Staff at risk

**2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**

December 2023

**3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**

Yes

**4. What were the findings?**

One of the staff members left their role

**5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**Section 11-Monitoring and Review**

<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	

**Section 12 - Decision**  
*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	Ceri Bird
<b>Job Title:</b>	Service Manager, Children's Services
<b>Date:</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2024

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Job Title:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).


## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Revised Proposal in relation to the Supporting Change Team- Childrens Social Services

**SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE  
OF PROCUREMENT)**

SRO:	
Project Manager:	<b>Rachel Price</b>
Organisation:	<b>Children Social Services</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Loredana Moruz		23.01.2024
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>This proposal is being considered in light of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings.</p>
2.	<p><b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b></p> <p>The proposal for children’s services is to reduce children’s services workforce through the radical reforming of service delivery across the sector.</p> <p>Initially two proposals were put forward by the department regarding “Disbanding the Support Change Team” and “ Restructure of 3 locality teams into 2 locality teams” to achieve savings by eliminating two team manager posts. Following consultation with staff and considering those expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy, an alternative proposal was proposed by the team and service managers, and this is subject of this business case.</p>
3.	<p><b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b></p>
3.1	<p><b><u>Restructure of the Supporting Change Team (SCT)</u></b></p> <p>The Supporting Change Team in Children’s services in Blaenau Gwent is responsible for delivering support for children and their families at “the edge of care” who are open to the care planning teams in Children’s Services. In 2017, in response to rising numbers of looked after children, work was undertaken developing a 3 year strategy to safely reduce the numbers of looked after children and the Supporting Change Team became operational in the same year.</p> <p>The Supporting Change Team currently consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>1 Team Manager – permanent, funded through core budget;</b></li> <li>- <b>1 senior practitioner – permanent, funded through core budget;</b></li> <li>- <b>6 support workers – permanent, funded through core budget;</b></li> <li>- <b>1 Education Support Worker - fixed term, funded through RIF Grant;</b></li> <li>- <b>2 Family Group Conference workers - fixed term, funded through RIF Grant;</b></li> <li>- <b>1 Support Worker - fixed term, funded through RIF Grant;</b></li> </ul>

	<p>- <b>2 Support Workers - fixed term, funded through Radical Reform Grant;</b></p> <p>The SCT currently works with:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children whose Integrated Assessments conclude that there is potential for them to become Looked After</li> <li>• Children whose names are on the Child Protection Register where, at point of the first review conference, there are concerns about lack of meaningful progress in respect of the child protection plan.</li> <li>• Children whose names are being included on the child protection register for a second time (or more)</li> <li>• Children who are subject to multi-agency discussion which concludes with a recommendation to seek legal advice in respect of threshold.</li> <li>• Children who are at risk of entering residential care.</li> </ul>
3.2	<p><b><u>Proposal for savings:</u></b></p> <p>Delete the full time Education Support Worker post within the structure of the SCT.</p> <p>Delete the full time Senior Practitioner post within the structure of the SCT.</p> <p>Relocate two Family Group Conference Workers (funded via RIF grant funding) to the Safeguarding Team..</p>
3.3	<p><b><u>Savings to the budget:</u></b></p> <p>Deletion of scale 6 (top) Support Worker saves <b><u>£48.650/year. (This saving does not include any redundancy costs)</u></b> The Education Support Worker post which is proposed to be deleted from the structure is a grant funded post via the Regional Integrated Fund (RIF). The postholder requested voluntary redundancy.</p> <p>The savings for the LA will be achieved by reducing the SCT core budget with the budget associated to one full time support worker and offsetting the core budget with the money we currently have via RIF.</p> <p>Deletion of scale 8 (top) Senior Practitioner saves £64,900/year. (This saving does not include any redundancy costs). The Senior Practitioner postholder re-requested voluntary redundancy.</p>
3.4	<p><b><u>Benefits to proposal:</u></b></p>

3.5	<p>Compared with the previous savings proposals for Supporting Change and locality teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This proposal keeps the current structure of locality teams in the current form with no risk of disruption in moving staff from 3 into 2 teams and no risk of team manager's workload increasing.</li> <li>• The Supporting Change Team will not be divided across two or three teams under the management of different managers and there will be consistency within the service provision.</li> <li>• The Supporting Change Team will continue to function as a standalone service which is cited as being of value to the Children and Families.</li> <li>• The support the staff receive in SCT will continue at close to the same level as is being received now and the team will continue to operate as a designated 'edge of care' service</li> <li>• The team will continue delivering therapeutically based interventions without the risk of the Support Worker roles becoming diluted within a Locality Team</li> <li>• There will be no requirement to upskill two or three Team Mangers in the work of the team, which would be very difficult to achieve in line of their other areas of responsibility</li> <li>• Staff retention in the Supporting Change Team is very high, with staff only tending to leave the team to pursue a secondment onto the Social Work degree. Relocating and dividing the team increases the risk of poor retention of staff, several of who are interested in pursuing a career in social work in the future;</li> <li>• Staff retention in locality teams has historically been difficult due to the nature of the work; maintaining the current structure will reduce staff anxiety and disruption of services, maintaining consistency of allocation, threshold for intervention and supervisory responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Risks identified to proposal:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any additional interventions which have been created as SCT has developed over the years may need to be reduced and the remit of the work undertaken by the SCT may need revert back to working with those only on the 'Edge of Care'.</li> </ul>
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<p>3.6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in capacity for the SCT team manager to attend vital meetings such as threshold or legal meetings and Child Protection Conferences</li> <li>• Increase of workload for the team manager and management oversight for the team in the absence of the team manager (due to removal of the senior practitioner post)</li> <li>• Loss of specific resource aiming to support children at the edge of care to remain and/or return into education</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Mitigating factors:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Service Manager overseeing the SCT will deputise for the Team Manager when on planned leave. If the SCT manager is on unplanned leave for any length of time, other Team Manager across the service will provide support in relation to day to say decision making and staffing issues. This has been done on a number of occasions within he service to manage staff sickness and vacancies.</li> <li>• The education work would need to be absorbed by the other members of staff in the team. However, as this has been the case since the end of May 2023, as the current post holder has had periods of long-term sickness.</li> <li>• Increase in management workload would be more manageable for the Team Manager in SCT than it would be in increasing the workload pressure on the two Locality Team Managers.</li> <li>• In mitigating against the loss of the senior practitioner post, it is of note, the staff in The Supporting Change Team are only Secondary allocated and every child open to The Supporting Change Team are also open to the operational social work teams who maintain overall case responsibility. In the short-term absence of the Team Manager, it is expected the staff in the Supporting Change Team will report back any concerns or issues to the allocated Social Worker/Support Worker and their Team Managers and a Duty to Report will be submitted.</li> </ul>
<p>3.7</p>	<p><b>Recommended option</b></p> <p>It is recommended this proposal is agreed          The benefits of this new proposal far outweigh the benefits of the first two related to Supporting Change Team and locality teams and the risks identified area are easier to mitigate against within this new structure.</p>
<p>3.8</p>	<p><b>Sources and assumptions</b></p>

	The above proposals outline the savings and the potential risks to children’s services however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.														
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b> N/A														
5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
5.1	<p>If the above proposals are approved the approximate saving from children’s services core budget would total £114,000. This is £30,000 less than the initial 2 proposals. HOWEVER if this proposal is accepted it will not have the destabilising effect on this vulnerable service area, PLUS it would take time to implement the restructure of moving from 3 to 2 locality teams which would delay savings being realised. If the 2 posts in this proposal are deleted this could be realised quicker due to the expressions of voluntary redundancy.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Potential Saving</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£114,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£114,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Potential Saving	2024/2025	£114,000	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£114,000
Year	Potential Saving														
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2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£114,000														
6.	<p><b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b></p> <p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage with staff as a matter of urgency</li> <li>- Engage with the trade unions</li> <li>- Engage with Organisational Development</li> </ul>														

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Rachel Price	Alison Ramshaw	Supporting Change Team, Children's Services	30.01.24

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**This proposal is being considered in light of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings. The proposal for children's services is to reduce children's services workforce through the radical reforming of service delivery across the sector.**

**A first proposal was initially put forward by the department regarding "Disbanding the Support Change Team" to achieve savings by eliminating the team manager post. Following consultation with staff, an alternative proposal was proposed by the team, and this is subject of a business case submitted and this Impact Assessment.**

**The Supporting Change Team in Children's services in Blaenau Gwent is responsible for delivering support for children and their families at "the edge of care" who are open to the care planning teams in Children's Services. In 2017, in response to rising numbers of looked after children, work was undertaken developing a 3 year strategy to safely reduce the numbers of looked after children and the Supporting Change Team became operational in the same year.**

**The Supporting Change Team currently consists of:**

- 1 Team Manager – permanent, funded though core budget;**
- 1 senior practitioner – permanent, funded though core budget;**
- 6 support workers – permanent, funded though core budget;**
- 1 Education Support Worker - fixed term, funded through RIF Grant;**
- 2 Family Group Conference workers - fixed term, funded through RIF Grant;**
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- 2 Support Workers - fixed term, funded through Radical Reform Grant;**

**The SCT currently works with:-**

- **Children whose Integrated Assessments conclude that there is potential for them to become Looked After**
- **Children whose names are on the Child Protection Register where, at point of the first review conference, there are concerns about lack of meaningful progress in respect of the child protection plan.**
- **Children whose names are being included on the child protection register for a second time (or more)**
- **Children who are subject to multi-agency discussion which concludes with a recommendation to seek legal advice in respect of threshold.**
- **Children who are at risk of entering residential care.**

**Proposal for savings:**

**Delete the full time Education Support Worker post within the structure of the SCT.**

**Delete the Senior Practitioner post in the SCT.**

**Relocate two Family Group Conference Workers (funded via RIF) to the Safeguarding Team.**

<b>Section 1</b> <b>Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> and the EHRC guidance <a href="#">The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC</a></b> <b>Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.</b>			
Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics.	
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	

<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b>  <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	
<p><b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b>  <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	
<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>  <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	
<p><b>Race</b>  <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated</p>	

	impact on people with protected characteristics	impact on people with protected characteristics	
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i>	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on people with protected characteristics	







**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.


Section 2			
Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)			
The Welsh Governments <a href="#">Socio-economic Duty</a> provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.			
.Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>➢ People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>➢ Pensioners</li> <li>➢ Looked after children</li> <li>➢ Homeless people</li> <li>➢ Carers</li> <li>➢ Armed Forces Community</li> <li>➢ Students</li> <li>➢ Single adult households</li> <li>➢ People misusing substances</li> <li>➢ People who have experienced the asylum system</li> <li>➢ People of all ages leaving a care setting</li> <li>➢ People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)</li> <li>➢ People involved in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>			
Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<p><b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	

<p><b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> (<i>enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future</i>)</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	
<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> (<i>unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i>)</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> (<i>where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?</i>)</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	

<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b>  <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b>  <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	<p>Service delivery will remain the same for all who receive a service from SCT and therefore there is no anticipated impact on the public.</p>	

<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b> <i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	<b>This proposal is a creative alternative identified within the Children Social Services Department to contribute to the savings needed by the council for FY 2024/2025</b>
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	
<b>Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)</b> <i>Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)</i>	
<b>Five Ways of Working</b>	<b>How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?</b>
<p>Long Tern</p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>The work of the Supporting Change Team will continue and the deletion of the 2 posts identified for cost savings will not impact on service delivery as the senior practitioner does not work directly with the community. The work of the Education Support worker has been on hold due to sickness and therefore absorbed by the team. This will continue to be absorbed by the team going forward. Services to the public will not be affected and therefore the wellbeing of those we work with will continue to be promoted.</b></p>

<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>The ethos of the team is to work with those children on the edge of care. The plan is for this to continue and therefore work intensively with those families in need of support to prevent escalation which could result in those children becoming looked after. This service will continue.</b></p>
<p><b>Integration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p> <p><b>The SCT is already integral to the work of children's services and they work with operational teams this will continue and therefore there will be no impact.</b></p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>Any work delivered by the SCT alongside other organisations as part of a child's plan will continue therefore there will be no impact.</b></p>

<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>The team and other teams within children’s services who work alongside the SCT are aware of the proposal and this is the preferred option.</b></p>
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<p><b>How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.</b></p>	
<p>1. <b>A PROSPEROUS WALES</b> ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	
<p>Not applicable.</p>	

2. **A RESILIENT WALES ...** a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

Not applicable.

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES ...** a society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

The work of the Supporting Change team will continue to support children and their families to promote their physical and emotional wellbeing. The team has continued access to a clinical psychologist through Gwent Community Psychology.

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

5. **A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ...** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

Not applicable.

6. **A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING** ... a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

**The work of the SCT will support children and their families to enjoy family time together and promote physical well-being.**

7. **A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES** ... a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Not applicable.





**Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards**

*(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. [Welsh Language Standards](#))*

Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<p><b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i></p>	<p>The proposal has no impact in regard to the Welsh Language Standards.</p>		
<p><b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i></p>	<p>The proposal has no impact in regard to the Welsh Language Standards.</p>		
<p><b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i></p>	<p>The proposal has no impact in regard to the Welsh Language Standards.</p>		
<p><b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?</b></p>	<p>The proposal has no impact in regard to the Welsh Language Standards.</p>		

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**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<p><b>Participation</b>            (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The only impact may be capacity and timescales for work to start. The team is already operating a short waiting list and if the team is reduced by 1 support work this may cause a waiting list increase.</p>	<p>All families waiting for intervention will be prioritised according to need. Any families waiting will continue to have the full support of the social worker from the case holding team so will not go without a service.</p>

<p><b>Provision</b>          (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>The only impact may be capacity and timescales for work to start. The team is already operating a short waiting list and if the team is reduced by 1 support work this may cause a waiting list increase.</p>	
<p><b>Protection</b>          (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>The only impact may be capacity and timescales for work to start. The team is already operating a short waiting list and if the team is reduced by 1 support work this may cause a waiting list increase.</p>	

**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	There will be no impact in this area.	There will be no impact in this area.	
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the local environment</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)	There will be no impact in this area.	There will be no impact in this area.	

<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b>        (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	
<p><b>Re-offending</b>        (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	
<p><b>Serious Violence</b>        (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b>        (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	
<p><b>Community Cohesion</b>        (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	

**Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty** [AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf](#)

Impacts	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<p><b>Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> </ul>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is,</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	

<p>primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>			
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	<p>There will be no impact in this area.</p>	

<p><b>Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.</b></p>		
<p><b>Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.</b></p>	<p><b>What were the key findings?</b></p>	<p><b>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</b></p>
<p><b>Local data regarding Blaenau Gwent financial deficit for FY 2024/2025.</b></p>		



**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

**Not applicable.**

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**

Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

- 1. Who did you consult?**
- 2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**
- 3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**
- 4. What were the findings?**
- 5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

**Formal consultation was not undertaken due to the nature of the proposal. The Supporting Change Team staff and manager are aware of the proposal and accepted that savings have to be made by the Department within the context of the council's financial difficulties. They have been instrumental in offering suggestions to support this proposal.**

Section 11-Monitoring and Review	
How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?	Regular supervision of staff within the team and of the team manager. Consideration of data re waiting list times and outcomes of interventions allocated per worker and analysis of the budget.
What monitoring tools will be used?	As above.
How will the results be used for future development?	Consideration of impact on the team's capacity on a long term basis.
How and when will it be reviewed?	When appropriate and in line with budget reviews.
Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?	Service Manager for the SCT and Head of Service.

Section 12 - Decision		
<i>Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.</i>		
Continue with the proposal in its current form	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	Rachel Price
<b>Job Title:</b>	Interim Service Manager
<b>Date:</b>	31.01.24

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Job Title:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

PP896708

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

## Business Case Templates

*To support better spending and investment decisions and better procurement*

### Rationalisation / Reduction in Staffing Levels in Safeguarding Team

#### SINGLE STAGE BUSINESS CASE - LOW VALUE AND RISK (£0 TO £250K VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)

SRO:	<b>Tanya Evans</b>
Project Manager:	<b>Alison Ramshaw</b>
Organisation:	<b>SSD</b>

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Beth Thomas		22/1/2024
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	These proposals are being considered as a result of the council budget deficit and the requirement for each directorate to make significant budget savings.
2.	<b>THE CASE FOR CHANGE</b>
	<p>The proposal for children’s services is to reduce the children’s services workforce through the radical reforming of service delivery across the sector.</p> <p>An initial proposal was put forward to consider a “Restructure of the Safeguarding Team” which sought to achieve savings by outsourcing the IRO service, deleting the Children Looked After Education Mentors and transferring the Safeguarding Education Manager to the Education Directorate.</p> <p>Following consultation with politicians they have decided to take the proposal to delete the 2 education mentors off the table which totalled £68,000.</p> <p>Also following further consultation with the safeguarding team and managers an alternative to outsourcing the IRO function has been put forward which will increase the level of savings to be made.</p>
3.	<b>OPTIONS ANALYSIS</b>
3.1	<p><b><u>Restructure of the Safeguarding Team</u></b></p> <p>The Safeguarding Team currently combines safeguarding in education, safeguarding children’s statutory reviewing functions and corporate safeguarding.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Team consists of a part-time safeguarding team manager (30 hours), three full time Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)’s and one part-time IRO (18.5 hours per week).</p> <p>The Education Safeguarding Team consists of a full-time education safeguarding manager, one full time Child Looked After (CLA) education coordinator and two CLA education mentors, working 37 hours per week, term-time only (39 weeks per year).</p> <p>Proposal for the Safeguarding Education Manager post to be split funded by Social Services and Education Directorates</p> <p>The original Service Level Agreement (SLA) upon the commencement of this post indicated that costs for the post would be met by education with children’s services hosting the post, however since the development of this post, funding has been met solely by the Children’s Social Services core budget.</p> <p>The original proposal sought to achieve an approximate saving of £32, 200 through a joint funding arrangement between Education and Children’s Services. The original proposal also sought to transfer the post to the Education Directorate.</p>

Following further consultation with the Education Directorate it has been considered that the Safeguarding Education Manager post should continue to sit within the Social Services Directorate whilst assuming additional roles and responsibilities from an education perspective, to be reflective of the part funding arrangement. In essence, the role would not fundamentally change rather the role will have more defined roles and responsibilities across both directorates. The Safeguarding Education Manager has interface with both directorates to fulfil the Local Authority's statutory obligations.

Should the updated proposal be accepted it is envisaged that the Social Services contribution to this post would be approximately £41,000 per annum thus identifying an approximate saving of £32,200.

It is acknowledged that the Education directorate financial contribution to this post is being proposed within their own business case linked to the deletion of the Strategic Education Improvement Manager post and being replaced with an Education Improvement Officer post at scale 6; thus, realising a saving of £32,200. This joint proposal will therefore offer an overall cost saving to the Local Authority if accepted.

Proposal to reduce the capacity of the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) by 1 Full Time Equivalent and Undertake a Job Evaluation of the Role

The Children Act 2004 outlines that Local Authorities have a duty to appoint an IRO, in the first place to 'monitor the performance of the child's review' and, in the event of a breach of the child or young person's human rights, to refer the child's case to Cafcass Cymru. Since the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 in 2016, the duty now extends to monitoring the child's whole case, not just their review.

Blaenau Gwent currently employ 4 IRO's – 3.5 full time equivalent posts with a combined annual budget of £223, 320.

The original proposal sought to consider outsourcing the IRO function to an external provider therefore deleting the 4 permanent IRO posts from the Children's Services structure. The saving likely to be achieved via this initial proposal was approximately £50,000 - with the saving only being fully realised within the next financial year due to the need for redundancy settlements for the staff members due to accrued continuous service.

Revised Proposal for Savings

This proposal seeks to maintain the IRO service within Children's Services whilst reducing the capacity of the IRO service by 1 full time equivalent IRO post which would realise a saving of £67,500 per annum (based on 2023/2024 Budget). (This saving does not include any redundancy costs).

It is also proposed that the IRO role should be subject to a Job Evaluation to consider the associated pay grade. It is anticipated that this would result in a reduction in pay grade from a Scale 10 to a Scale 9. Should the Job Evaluation reflect this anticipated

outcome for the reduced IRO capacity of 2.5 FTE staff then there would be an approximate saving of £14, 200.

Total savings from this proposal therefore equates to £81,700 which is an increase of £31, 700 in comparison to the original IRO service proposal.

Benefits:

- Creating increased savings for the Local Authority core budget.
- Maintain a continuity of IRO for children/young people and families within their CLA reviews and throughout the Child Protection Process.
- Retain an in-house IRO service which will enable the continuation of the positive work being undertaken to ensure compliance with the IRO practice standards and good practice guide.
- Through maintaining a consistent IRO there is an improved quality of recommendations for key decisions about children's lives – such as plans for adoption, sibling separation, rehabilitation plans and care order revocation.
- Maintain compliance with timescales for Subject Access Requests (SAR).
- Maintain the responsibility of chairing stability meetings with the IRO's to reduce the likelihood of placement breakdowns (meaning improved outcomes for children and reducing need for more costly placements).
- The Local Authority will be clear on its Safeguarding Team budget expenditure year on year with this option. Whereas the initial proposal savings was calculated based on figures of CLA reviews and Child Protection Conferences from the previous year. Considering trends, we have seen an increase in the number of Child Protection Conferences being held over the past 2 consecutive years – meaning the total expenditure for outsourcing the IRO provision would not be identified until end of each financial year making budget forecasting more difficult for the LA. This proposal therefore resolves a risk identified in the original proposal whereby should CLA and child protection numbers rise in the future, expenditure via outsourced service could exceed the original costing of the IRO structure.
- This proposal would not be placing significant workload pressures on other areas of Childrens Services to complete tasks currently within the IRO portfolio inclusive of stability meetings and Subject Access Requests (SAR).

Risks:

- Care Leaver post 18 pathway plan reviews would lose an independent officer to monitor the progress of their care plan as in order to reduce IRO staffing capacity there



	<p>needs to be some reduction in workload. This will result in a reduction of 56 cases within the IRO combined caseload (as at 22/1/24).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An increase in workload for IRO's due to a reduction in posts.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigating Factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is not a statutory requirement for an IRO to chair post 18 Pathway Plan meetings however it is considered best practice. There is significant discrepancy in how and who are responsible for reviewing the required post 18 pathway plans across Wales however there are very few LA's who employ an IRO to do this task with the role of reviewing care leaver plans often being the responsibility of the Personal Advisor's (care coordinators), senior practitioners or team managers of leaving care services. This task can be absorbed elsewhere within Children's Services – primarily within the 14+ team who hold case responsibility for post 18 care leavers.</li> </ul> <p>Savings to the budget:</p> <p>Should all the proposals in this business case be agreed there would be an approximate £113,900 cost saving for the Local Authority.</p>
3.2	<b>Recommended option</b>
	<p>The benefits of this new proposal, in particular the delivery of the IRO function, far outweigh the benefits of the original proposal for the Restructure of the Safeguarding Team.</p> <p>It is considered that the additional savings identified for the LA within this proposal would support the new business case put forward regarding maintaining the Supporting Change Team. The collective impact of maintaining both the IRO service and the Supporting Change Team, whilst still achieving necessary savings for the LA, is a much more palatable option than the original business cases put forward for these respective teams.</p>
3.3	<b>Sources and assumptions</b>
	<p>The above proposals outline the savings and the potential risks to children's services however the assumption is that they can be achieved, should the council feel it necessary in order to make the budgetary savings required.</p>
4.	<b>PROCUREMENT ROUTE</b>
	N/A

5.	<b>FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY</b>														
5.1	<p>If approved the financial impact of the above options for 2024/25 will be a financial efficiency of £50,000.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Option 1</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024/2025</td> <td>£113,900</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025/2026</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026/2027</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027/2028</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028/2029</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£113,900</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Option 1	2024/2025	£113,900	2025/2026	£0	2026/2027	£0	2027/2028	£0	2028/2029	£0	Total	£113,900
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2027/2028	£0														
2028/2029	£0														
Total	£113,900														
6.	<b>DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS</b>														
	<p>If the above proposal is approved, arrangements would need to be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with staff as a matter of urgency.</li> <li>• Engage with the trade unions.</li> <li>• Engage with Organisational Development</li> <li>• Engage with Commissioning and Procurement Teams</li> </ul>														

## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.**

- Section 1-Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Section 2-Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 3-Corporate Plan
- Section 4-Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Section 6-Children’s Right “The Right Way”
- Section 7-Community Safety
- Section 8 Armed Forces
- Section 9-Data
- Section 10-Consultations Statutory Consultation Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles
- Section 11-Monitoring
- Section 12-Decision of proposal

Lead Officer	Head of Service	Service Area & Department	Date
Beth Thomas	Alison Ramshaw	Children Social Service Department	31.01.2024

Briefly outline the proposal indicating what change or decision is to be made, also provide any documentation that may be used to support this.

**What is the proposal that needs to be assessed?**

**Restructure of the Safeguarding Team**

The Safeguarding Team currently combines safeguarding in education, safeguarding children’s statutory reviewing functions and corporate safeguarding.

The Safeguarding Team currently consists of a part-time safeguarding team manager (30 hours), three full time Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)’s and one part-time IRO (18.5 hours per week). The Education Safeguarding Team consists of a full-time education safeguarding manager, one full time Child Looked After (CLA) education coordinator and two CLA education mentors, working 37 hours per week, term-time only (39 weeks per year).

Within the current context of financial difficulties for the council the following proposals have been put forward as savings to be offset against the financial deficit;

- **Entering into a joint funding arrangement with the Education Directorate to fund the Safeguarding Education Manager post** - in essence, the role would not fundamentally change rather the role will have more defined roles and responsibilities across both directorates. The Safeguarding Education Manager has interface with both directorates to fulfil the Local Authority’s statutory obligations.
- **Reducing the capacity of the Independent Reviewing Officers by 1 Full Time Equivalent**

Full details on the proposal to restructure the safeguarding team can be viewed within the associated business case.

**Section 1**  
**Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected characteristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and the EHRC guidance [The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty: EHRC](#)**  
**Briefly outline below if there will be any positive or negative impacts as a result of the proposal being considered.**

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristics?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Age</b> ( <i>people of all ages</i> )	This proposal will not impact positively nor negatively on any categories of people with protected characteristics as the Safeguarding Team will continue to offer the same services as they do currently.		
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with disabilities/ long term conditions</i> )			
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> ( <i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth</i> )			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> ( <i>people who are married or in a civil partnership</i> )			

<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i>		
<b>Race</b> <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i>		
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>		
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i>		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>		

**NOTE:** Section 2 only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

**Section 2**  
**Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)**  
*The Welsh Governments [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making.*

- .Please consider the below vulnerable groups and consider how the proposal could affect them:**
- Single parents and vulnerable families
  - People with low literacy/numeracy
  - Pensioners
  - Looked after children
  - Homeless people
  - Carers
  - Armed Forces Community
  - Students
  - Single adult households
  - People misusing substances
  - People who have experienced the asylum system
  - People of all ages leaving a care setting
  - People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)
  - People involved in the criminal justice system




Socio Economic disadvantage definitions.	Will the proposal have a positive, negative or neutral impacts on the below?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered.
<b>Low Income / Income Poverty</b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	N/A for this proposal		
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>	N/A for this proposal		
<b>Material Deprivation</b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services</i>	N/A for this proposal		



<p><i>i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>			
<p><b>Area Deprivation</b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?)</i></p>	<p><b>N/A for this proposal</b></p>		
<p><b>Socio-economic Background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>	<p><b>N/A for this proposal</b></p>		
<p><b>Socio-economic Disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>	<p><b>N/A for this proposal</b></p>		



<b>Section 3-Corporate Plan</b> <i>Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -<a href="#">BG Corporate Plan 22-27</a></i>	
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	<b>This proposal is a creative alternative identified within the Children Social Services Department to contribute to the savings needed by the council for FY 2024/2025</b>
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	

<b>Section 4-Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)</b> <i>Sustainable development principles. The WBFG Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)</i>	
<b>Five Ways of Working</b>	<b>How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?</b>

<p><b>Long Tern</b></p> 	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p><b>It is considered that with the mitigating options available to support this proposal being a viable option that the long term impact of the ability of the IRO's to fulfil their statutory obligations will be minimal.</b></p>
<p><b>Prevention</b></p> 	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>N/A</b></p>
<p><b>Intregation</b></p> 	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p> <p><b>The proposal will impact on capacity within the Safeguarding Team to provide the Independent Reviewing service as stipulated within legislation and practice guidance. The remaining IRO's will have a higher caseload of children looked and children on the child protection register to oversee, therefore other options are required to support in mitigating against this risk.</b></p>

<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p><b>The Safeguarding Team remains integral to the structure of Children Social Services Department and will continue working with other teams within the region, other operational teams within the LA, court, health partners and education.</b></p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p> 	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p><b>Social Services staff are aware of the savings that the council needs to make in the future.</b>  <b>The council have set out to undertake a range of consultation events around savings proposals by way of face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings and surveys which are available to our communities and staff alike.</b></p>

**How does your proposal link to the Welsh Governments Priorities for Wales? Please indicate below.**

- A PROSPEROUS WALES** ... an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

Not applicable

2. **A RESILIENT WALES ...** a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Think about how your activity will have regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

Not applicable

3. **A HEALTHIER WALES ...** a society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

The IRO’s primary focus will continue to be to quality assure the care planning and review process for each child and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration. The IRO’s will also continue to chair case conferences for children who are identified as being at risk of/have suffered significant harm. This will include ensuring that any matter relating to their physical and mental wellbeing is considered within these meetings and that relevant support and opportunities are available to meet these identified needs. There will be no changes to this aspect of service delivery.

4. **A MORE EQUAL WALES ...** A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

The IRO's primary focus will continue to be to quality assure the care planning and review process for each child and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration. IRO's will continue to make recommendations to the Local Authority to promote all children looked after being able to meet their potential through being afforded the support and opportunities they require to meet their individual needs/goals/ambitions. There will be no changes to this aspect of service delivery.

**5. A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ... attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.**

IRO's will continue to quality assure the care and support planning of children looked after and those children on the child protection register whereby recommendations can be made (where relevant) to ensure the children are afforded the opportunities to access their communities safely (i.e. extra curricular activities, support with access to transport to maintain important relationships).

**6. A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING ... a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.**

IRO's will continue to quality assure the care and support planning of children looked after and those children on the child protection register whereby recommendations can be made (where relevant) to ensure the children are afforded the opportunities to access their communities safely (i.e. provision of extra curricular activities, support with access to transport to maintain important relationships, engage with identified hobbies, support their cultural or religious beliefs).

**7. A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES ... a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.**

Not applicable



Section 5-Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards (The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact that any proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language. <a href="#">Welsh Language Standards</a> )			
Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts in regards to the below?	What can be done to mitigate any negative impacts?	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.</b> <i>Specifically Standards 88 - 93</i>	The proposal has no impact in regard to the Welsh Language Standards.		
<b>What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community</i>			
<b>What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language?</b> <i>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</i>			
<b>Has the Welsh Language been considered in order to treat the Welsh</b>			

language no less favourably than the English language?			
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**Section 6 – Children’s Rights Approach - [The Right Way](#)**

The Children’s Rights Approach – The Right Way is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It places the UNCRC at the core of planning and service delivery and integrates children’s rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The Right Way focuses on three main them Participation, Provision and Protection.

Protected characteristics	Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the Children’s Rights Approach?	Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.
<b>Participation</b> (child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen)	No	The proposal may have some limited impact on the Children’s Rights Approach due to limitation of capacity in the team.	We propose that in order to streamline the IRO service we seek to focus more on delivering on statutory obligations and reducing the responsibilities the IRO’s currently have which are not statutory. In the main this will relate to no longer reviewing post 18 care leaver pathway plan reviews with this responsibility being absorbed elsewhere in children’s services.
<b>Provision</b> (the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop)	No		

<b>Protection</b> (children and young people are protected against exploitation, abuse or discrimination)	<b>No</b>		
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**Section 7– Community Safety**

**Duty to Consider Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, re-offending and serious violence.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on crime and disorder?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Crime</b> (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	This proposal will not have either a positive or negative impact on crime and disorder.		
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour and behaviour adversely</b>			



<p><b>affecting the local environment</b>          (consider impact on each: victims, offenders, neighbourhoods and green spaces)</p>		
<p><b>Misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances</b>          (Think vulnerable children, adults, families and communities)</p>		
<p><b>Re-offending</b>          (Think young people and adults, victims, families, communities)</p>		
<p><b>Serious Violence</b>          (Think vulnerable young people, vulnerable adults, victims, families, communities)</p>		
<p><b>Counter Terrorism</b>          (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)</p>		

<b>Community Cohesion</b> (Asylum seekers, Migrants, Victims or Hate Crime, Community tensions)		
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<b>Section 8- Armed Forces Covenant Duty <a href="#">AFC Draft Statutory Guidance - Final.pdf</a></b>			
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any positive impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Will the proposal have any negative impacts on the armed forces community?</b>	<b>Outline how the proposal could maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impact. Please indicate any views evidence you have that supports this.</b>
<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of services</li> <li>• Planning and funding</li> <li>• Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul> <p>These healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:</p>	<p>The proposal will not have either a positive or negative impact on the armed forces community.</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.</li> <li>• NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).</li> <li>• Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Educational attainment and curriculum</li> <li>• Child wellbeing</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Additional needs support</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)</li> </ul> <p>These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is, primary, secondary, and, for England only, compulsory further education. The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings</p>		
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations policy for social housing</li> <li>• Tenancy strategies (England only)</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>		

**Section 9-Data-Please outline any data or evidence that has been used to develop the proposal, this can be previous consultations, local/national data, pilot projects, reports, feedback from clients etc.**

Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
Local data regarding Blaenau Gwent financial deficit for FY 2024/2025.		

**Are there any data or information gaps and if so what are they and how do you intend to address them?**

N/A

**Section 10-Consultation. Please provide details of consultation undertaken to support the proposal. Please consider the Gunning Principles: -**  
Principle 1: Consultation must take place when the proposals are still at a formative stage. You must not have already made up your mind.

Principle 2: Sufficient reasons must be put forward to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Have people been given the information and opportunity to influence?

Principle 3: Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. Is the consultation long enough bearing in mind the circumstances?

Principle 4: The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision

**Briefly describe any planned consultations or consultations that have been carried out to date. Please consider the above principles.**

**Please consider the following questions; -**

- 1. Who did you consult?**
- 2. When did the consultation take place and was adequate time given for a response?**
- 3. Was there enough information provided to respond effectively?**
- 4. What were the findings?**
- 5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?**

Formal consultation was not undertaken due to the nature of the proposal. The IRO's and Safeguarding Team manager are aware of the proposal and accepted that savings have to be made by the Department within the context of the council's financial difficulties.

<b>Section 11-Monitoring and Review</b>	
<b>How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?</b>	<p>Regular supervision of IRO's and of the team manager.</p> <p>Monitoring the change to post 18 review responsibilities to 14+ team through performance data and supervision of the personal advisors, senior practitioners and team manager.</p>
<b>What monitoring tools will be used?</b>	As above
<b>How will the results be used for future development?</b>	Consideration of impact on the team's capacity on a long term basis – there may be requirements for periodic additional capacity should there be unforeseen rises in CLA and CP numbers within the council which would outstrip the capacity of the IRO's.
<b>How and when will it be reviewed?</b>	This will be monitored through quarterly reports on child protection conferences completed by the Safeguarding Manager, annual IRO report completed by Safeguarding Manager and through regular performance data scrutinised by safeguarding manager, service managers and head of service.
<b>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</b>	Safeguarding and 14+ Team Service Manager and Head of Service

**Section 12 - Decision**

*Using the information you have gathered from sections 1-9 please state in the table below whether you are able to proceed with the proposal.*

Continue with the proposal in its current form	<b>Yes</b>
Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal	<b>Yes</b>

Page 736

Name of person completing the IIA	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Beth Thomas</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Service Manager</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>31.01.2024</b>

Head of Service Approval			
<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Job Title:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via [lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or [emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.scherptong@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).





Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

# Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

## **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

**2024/2025 to 2028/2029**

## Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	3
Corporate Plan	3
Revenue Settlement	4
2023/2024 Revenue Budget	5
Key Planning Assumptions	9
Medium Term Financial Forecast	12
Cost Pressures	14
Sensitivity Analysis	17
Bridging The Gap Programme	18
Medium Term Financial Plan – Schools	19
Reserves Strategy	21
Capital Programme	22
Risks	23
Appendix 2 – Cost Pressures	
Appendix 3 – Bridging The Gap	
Appendix 7 – Capital Programme	

1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council’s key financial planning document, is an integral part of the Council’s Corporate Business Planning arrangements. The Strategy is a rolling a 5 year plan and is updated, reviewed and approved annually by Council. The Strategy will change over time as new opportunities, or policy decisions affect the financial position of the Council.

1.2 The MTFS includes a forward look over the next five years to assess the spending requirements the Council is likely to face to deliver its priorities and the level of cuts i.e. reducing or stopping services that will need to be made to ensure the Council can set a balanced budget each year. It provides guidance for officers and Members on the short, medium and longer term financial challenges and enables advance financial planning to be carried out, assisting the Council to understand and meet future demands. Planning now to meet known or anticipated changes in the future provides greater opportunity to phase in the impact of the changes.

1.3 The Strategy sets out how the Council will finance its priorities, having regard for the Corporate Plan.

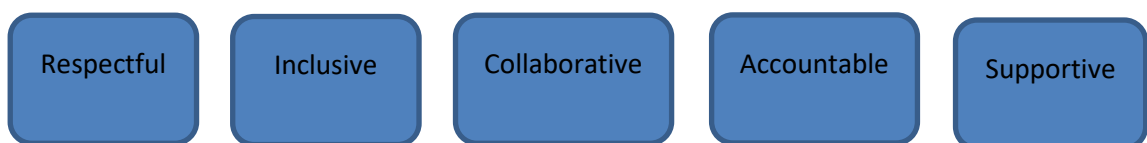
2. **Corporate Plan**

2.1 The Corporate Plan 2022/27 sets out an ambitious programme of activity for the Council to 2027. The priorities also referred to as Well-being Objectives, have been developed in order to support our communities to thrive and provide modern and high quality services which support economic growth and well-being.

**Our Vision:**

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

**Our Core Values:**



2.3 **Our Corporate Plan 2022/27 priorities are:**

- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
- Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
- An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
- Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient.

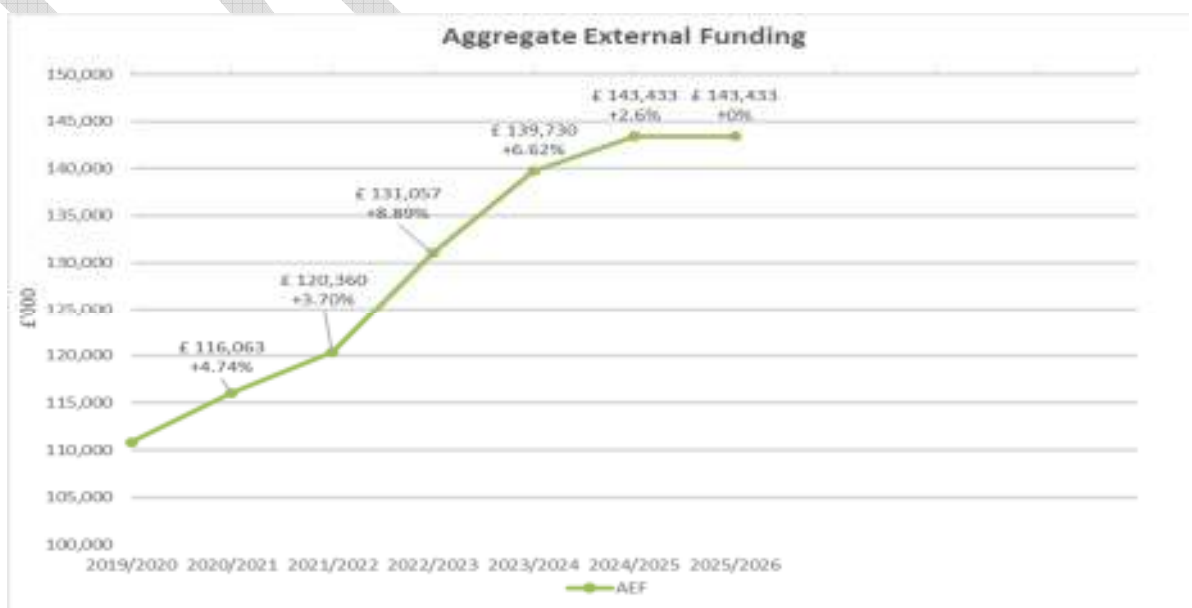
2.4 The Council has a responsibility to the people of Blaenau Gwent to help improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. By setting a small number of strategic priorities within the Corporate Plan it will allow efforts to be concentrated on delivery in these areas and ultimately, help to improve the quality of the lives of residents.

### 3. Revenue Settlement – Recent Trends

3.1 2024/2025 provisional revenue settlement was the fourth consecutive year that the Council received a positive increase in the Revenue Support Grant (before transfers in and new responsibilities) from Welsh Government.

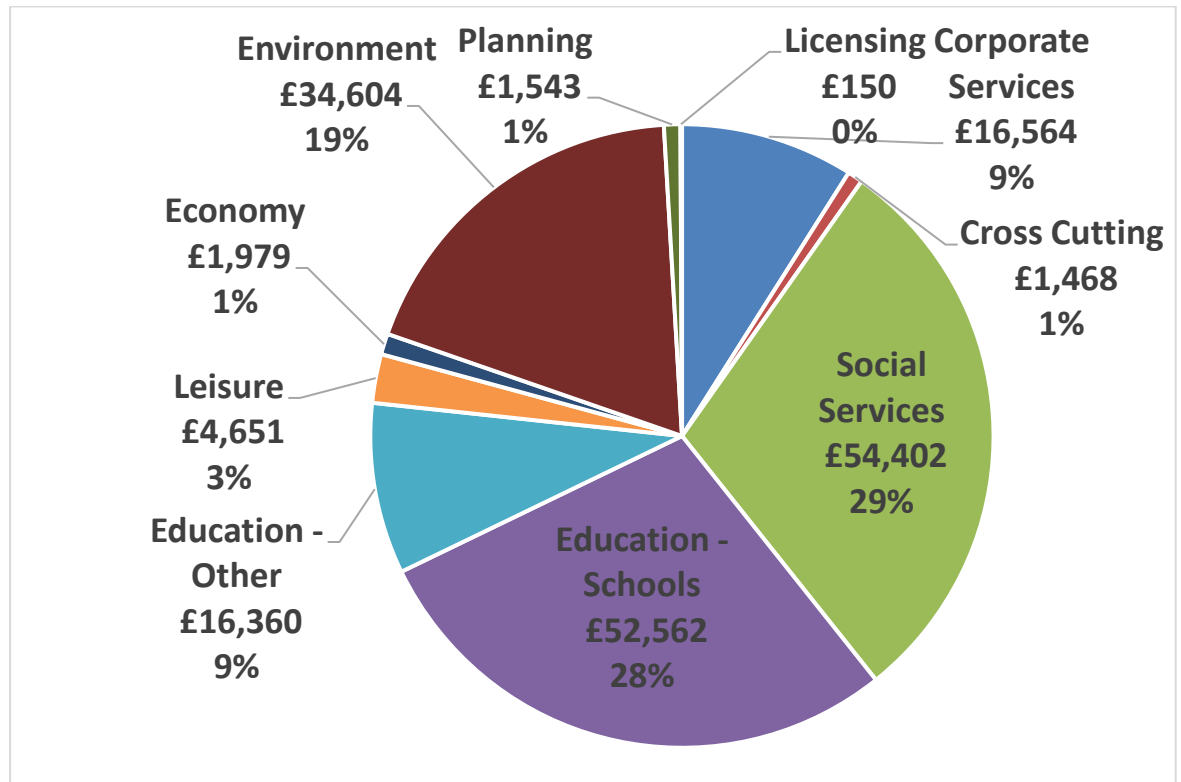
3.2 The Council’s revenue settlements for the period 2019/2020 to 2023/2024, the provisional settlement for 2024/2025 and forecast future settlement for 2025/2026 is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Trend in Aggregate External Funding (AEF)



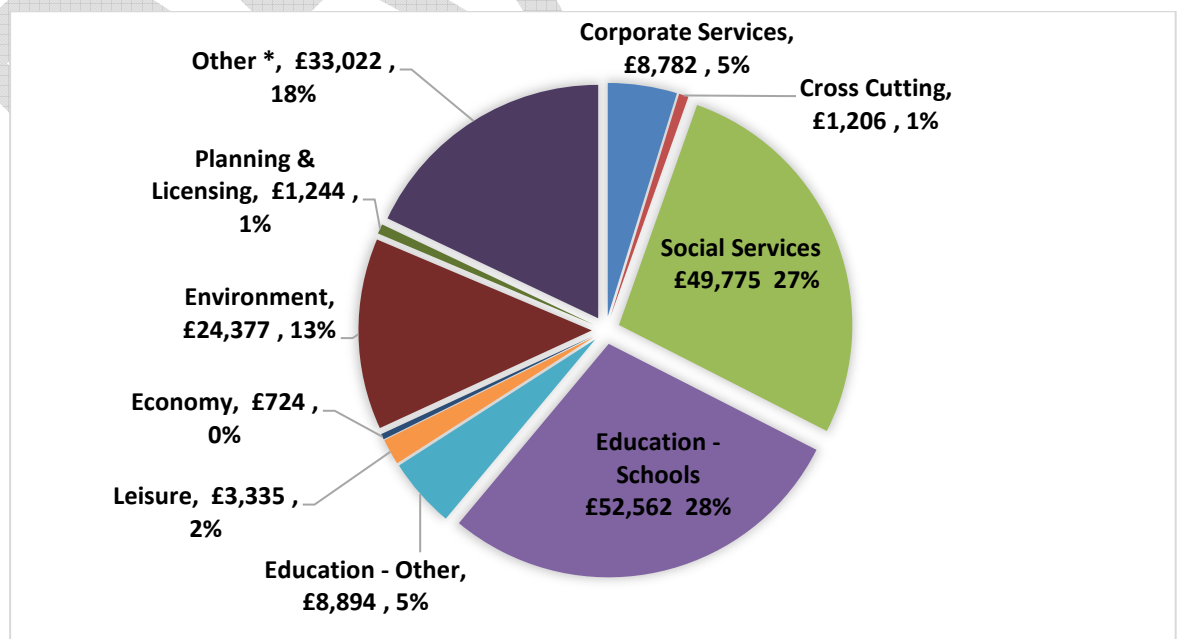
- 3.3 The graph demonstrates that funding received from Wales Government has increased year on year, with an overall increase of £33m between 2019/20 and 2024/25 (this includes grant transfers into the settlement and new responsibilities). However, this is following a number of years of austerity when local government funding was reduced, for example in 2013/2014 AEF totalled £117m and in 2019/2020 it was £110.8m.
- 3.4 This when combined with increased demand for services and increasing costs have contributed to the financial challenge the council is facing in delivering its services to the residents of Blaenau Gwent.
- 3.5 **2023/2024 Revenue Budget**
- 3.6 The baseline revenue funding the Council received in 2023/2024 from Welsh Government after allowing for transfers was £139.7m, an increase of 6.5% (£8.5m). The all Wales average increase in the Local Government Settlement was 7.9%.
- 3.7 In setting the 2023/2024 budget, the Council agreed:-
- All grants transferring into the Settlement would be transferred to the relevant service
  - Additional funding of £3.1m to be built into the budget, over and above pay and price inflation, to address existing and emerging cost pressures
  - Bridging the Gap proposals of £3m
  - Uplift of 4% to the Individual School Budget
  - A contribution from specific reserves of £4.25m
  - A Council Tax increase of 3.45%
- 3.8 As a result of these decisions, the Council agreed a net budget requirement of £178m. The budget allocation across Portfolios is shown in figure 2 below:

**Figure 2: 2023/2024 Revenue Budget per Portfolio (£'000)**



3.9 The graph shown in figure 3 shows the direct costs of delivering services across portfolios.

**Figure 3: 2023/2024 Direct Service Costs per Portfolio (£'000)**



\*Other includes:

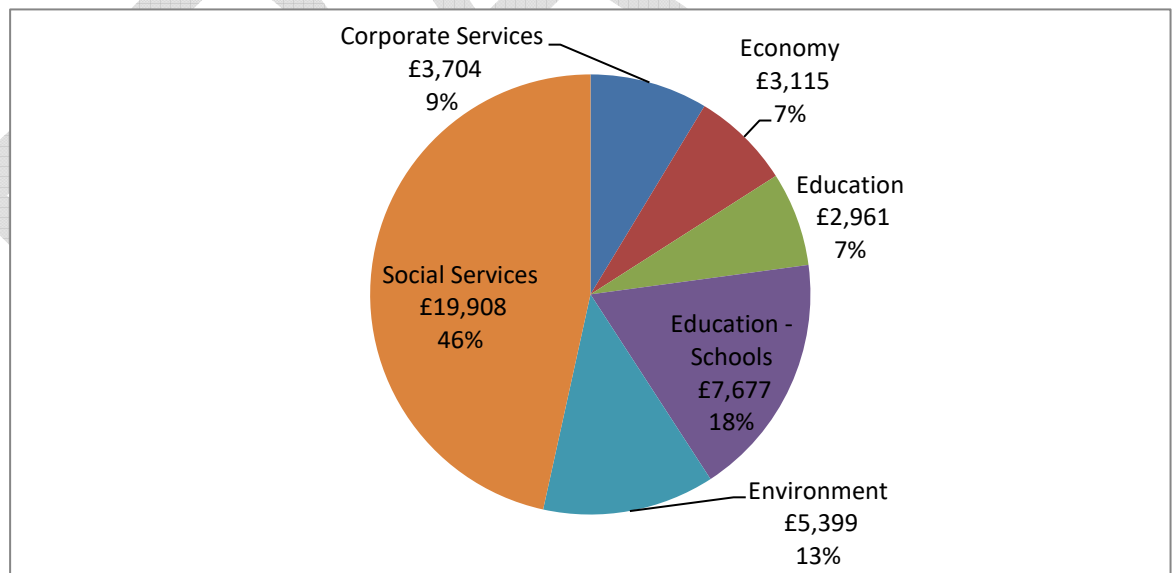
- Capital charges - £10.2m
- Fire Levy – £3.9m
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme - £10.4m
- IT, Administration Buildings & Insurance - £5.7m
- Pension Costs - £2.7m.

3.10 In addition, to the agreed net budget, the Council receives specific revenue grant and for 2022/2023 this totalled £43m, to support the delivery of services.

3.11 The assumption within the MTFs is that all grants will continue at the current level, and any reduction or termination of grant will be offset by a reduction in service expenditure. Where it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in grant with no additional revenue support and a reduction in expenditure is not possible, a cost pressure will be included in the MTFs.

3.12 Specific revenue grant allocations across Portfolios is shown in figure 4 below and is based on grants received in 2022/2023.

Figure 4: Specific Revenue Grant Funding Per Portfolio



3.13 As the graph demonstrates, Social Services has significant grant funding to support the delivery of services including early years and childcare, winter pressures funding and the regional integrated fund.

3.14 Welsh Government is reviewing the number of specific grants with a view to rationalising and reducing the administration burden on local

authorities. There is a potential that some grants will be amalgamated and / or transferred into the revenue support grant, this will become clearer in March 2024 when the final settlement is announced by Welsh Government.

3.15 The 2022/2023 outturn position was positive for the Council, allowing for an increase in the level of the Council’s reserves. This places the Council in a much better position to respond to increased levels of risk.

4. **Review and Update of the MTFS**

4.1 The MTFS must be regularly reviewed to ensure preparedness from a financial planning perspective. The review will include considering and updating assumptions used in the Strategy to reflect new / emerging information for example inflation, changing demographics, service demand and policy changes and more recently the ongoing financial impact of the cost of living crisis.

4.2 The impact of inflation, currently running at 4.2% (November 2023), together with increasing pay and increased utility costs is resulting in increased costs for the Council across all services. The assumptions used in developing the MTFS has taken this into consideration.

4.3 The table below identifies the key assumptions included in the MTFS.

Table 1: Key Financial Planning Assumptions

<b>Financial Planning Key Assumptions</b>	
Pay	<p><i>Non-Teaching staff:</i> The pay award for 2023/2024 is a flat rate of £1,925 across all pay scales which equates to £3m an average 6.4% increase on the Council’s wage bill.</p> <p>For 2024/2025 onwards - 5% pay award per annum has been assumed</p> <p><i>Teaching Staff:</i> The pay award for the academic year 2023/2024 was 5%, and 5% have been assumed per annum.</p>



	<p><i>Incremental Pay Progression</i> – the estimated cost of annual pay progression has been applied based on existing staffing.</p> <p><i>Pensions</i> – Based on the actuarial revaluation in 2019/2020 for LGPS employer pension contributions (non-teaching), a 1% per annum increase has been recommended and assumed for 2024/2025 onwards. This will be updated in line with the outcome from the actuarial revaluation carried out in the current financial year.</p> <p>Teachers’ Pension – The employer’s contribution to the teachers’ pension scheme is due to increase by 5% from April 2024. It is anticipated that the additional costs will be funded by the UK Government.</p> <p>A Vacancy Factor has been built into staffing budgets to reflect the financial impact of staff turnover (3% for Social Services, 1.5% other services).</p>
<p>Price Inflation (Non Schools)</p>	<p><b>The Consumer Price Index (CPI)</b></p> <p>CPI is falling but not as quickly as expected. CPI is 4.2% (November 23) compared to 11.1% at its peak in October 2022. The Bank of England’s current forecast is for inflation to continue to fall and reach the 2% target towards the end of 2025.</p> <p>The opening of the economy following Covid-19, exiting the EU, the war in Ukraine and the fall in the number of people available for work is having an impact on the economy with disruption to global supply chains, increasing energy costs and staff shortages and increased pay, all having an impact on consumer prices.</p> <p>For 2024/2025, an annual inflationary increase of 4% is proposed, reducing to 2% for 2025/2026 onwards (in line with the Bank of England’s target).</p> <p><b>Utilities</b> – Gas prices have reduced and there is a gradual reduction in energy prices (which is</p>

	<p>contributing to the fall in inflation). It is expected that energy costs will reduce gradually from April 2024, therefore, it is proposed to apply no uplift for 2024/2025 and increase in line with inflation thereafter.</p> <p><b>Income Inflation</b> – It is proposed to uplift income budgets by 4% for 2024/2025 and 2% thereafter in line with inflation.</p> <p><b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b> – It is proposed to apply no uplift to the budget for 2024/2025 as the current forecast is anticipating a significant underspend due to a reducing caseload:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2023 was 8,308.</li> <li>• April 2021 was 9,267 (during Covid)</li> <li>• April 2020 was 8,893 (pre Covid)</li> </ul> <p>For 2025/2026 onwards an increase of 4% in line with Council Tax assumption has been applied.</p>
<p>Schools Growth (ISB)</p>	<p>The MTFs assumes that the ISB will increase by:</p> <p>2024/2025 – 2% (based on the initial assumption for RSG prior to the provisional settlement)</p> <p>2025/2026 onwards – cash flat</p> <p>Consideration will need to be given to the level of funding provided to schools.</p> <p>Projected increases or decreases in pupil numbers will impact upon the ISB and based on September 2023 data collection , 2023/2024 age weighted pupil unit and projecting the pupils through the year groups:</p>

		Increase / (Decrease) in Pupils	Financial Impact Increase / (Decrease) in Funding (£'000)
	2024/2025	112.5	537
	2025/2026	(160)	(539)
	2026/2027	(132)	(497)
	2027/2028	(87)	(328)
	The financial impact has been included on the Cost Pressure appendix.		
Specific Grant Funding	This has been assumed to remain at 2022/2023 level of £43m and it is assumed that any reduction in funding is offset by a reduction in expenditure.		
Capital Financing	<p><b>Capital Financing</b> – Capital financing costs reflect the schemes within the current capital programme, with borrowing costs for future schemes funded from either USB (Unhypothesized Supported Borrowing) or prudential borrowing. During 2021/2022, the Council agreed a change to the MRP policy, and the capital adjustment reflects the change in Policy during the term of the MTFs.</p> <p>The Bank of England has raised interest rates over the last 2 years to try and bring inflation down and the bank base rate currently stands at 5.25%.</p> <p>Over the past few years, the Council has been successful in managing its borrowings and investments and income from investments has exceeded borrowing costs, mitigating any cost pressure for the current and next financial year.</p>		
Council Tax	<p>Council Tax increased by 3.45% for 2023/2024. For planning purposes, it has been assumed that Council Tax will increase by 4% per annum. (1% increase will generate approximately £380,000 additional funding).</p> <p>No additional income has been assumed at this stage from an increase in the Council Tax Base for</p>		

	2024/2025 onwards. This will be reflected in the Growth proposals within Bridging the Gap.
Estimated Funding reduction (Aggregate External Funding - AEF)	<p>The funding included within the provisional settlement for 2024/2025 and the further announcement of £25m additional funding as a result of consequentials from UK Government (announced February 2024), provides an uplift of 2.8%, an increase in AEF of £3.95m, an increase of 0.8% compared to the assumption included in the previous MTFS.</p> <p>No indicative funding has been provided within the provisional settlement for 2025/2026 onwards.</p> <p>The assumptions used in the MTFS are:</p> <p>2024/2025 – 2.8% 2025/2026 onwards – cash flat</p>
Reserves	The financial modelling assumes a minimum contribution to General or specific reserves of £200,000 per annum

#### 4.4 **Medium Term Financial Forecast**

4.5 The table below identifies the funding gap after applying the above assumptions to the 2023/2024 approved Estimates.

**Table 2: Assessed Budget Gap**

	<b>Medium Term Budget Gap</b>				
	<b>2024/2025 £'000</b>	<b>2025/2026 £'000</b>	<b>2026/2027 £'000</b>	<b>2027/2028 £'000</b>	<b>2028/2029 £'000</b>
<b>Draft Expenditure</b>					
Draft Estimates	188,859	194,482	194,758	196,503	197,860
Revenue Grants	43,000	43,000	43,000	43,000	43,000
Assumed Savings	0	(5,716)	(4,039)	(4,670)	(4,072)
<b>Adjusted Draft Budget</b>	<b>231,859</b>	<b>231,766</b>	<b>233,719</b>	<b>234,833</b>	<b>236,788</b>
<b>Draft Funding</b>					
AEF	143,758	143,758	143,758	143,758	143,758
Council Tax	39,585	41,169	42,816	44,528	46,309
Revenue Grants	43,000	43,000	43,000	43,000	43,000

<b>Total Draft Funding</b>	<b>226,343</b>	<b>227,927</b>	<b>229,249</b>	<b>230,961</b>	<b>232,742</b>
<b>Budget Gap</b>	<b>(5,516)</b>	<b>(3,839)</b>	<b>(4,470)</b>	<b>(3,872)</b>	<b>(4,046)</b>
Contribution to Reserves	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)
<b>Adjusted Budget Gap</b>	<b>(5,716)</b>	<b>(4,039)</b>	<b>(4,670)</b>	<b>(4,072)</b>	<b>(4,246)</b>

4.5 The Council is facing a significant financial challenge over the next 5 years with a potential funding gap of £23m, and £6m for 2024/2025, should the Council continue to deliver services in their existing form and **before** considering cost pressures above inflationary assumptions.

4.6 **Additional Costs Built into the MTFs**

4.7 The draft estimates have been prepared based on the approved 2023/2024 budget and increased in line with the assumptions included in Table 1, and these costs are detailed in the table below:

**Table 3: Estimated Additional Costs Compared to 2023/2024 Budget**

	<b>2024/2025 £'000</b>	<b>2025/2026 £'000</b>	<b>2026/2027 £'000</b>	<b>2027/2028 £'000</b>	<b>2028/2029 £'000</b>
Pay, Increments and Pension Inflation	4,235	3,785	3,956	4,135	4,323
General Inflation –					
Third party Expenditure	2,837	1,485	1,515	1,545	1,576
ISB	1,076	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	(628)	(320)	(326)	(333)	(340)
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	0	416	433	450	468
Capital /Pension Adjustment	(510)	256	739	(13)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,010</b>	<b>5,622</b>	<b>6,317</b>	<b>5,784</b>	<b>6,027</b>

4.8 **New and Emerging Cost Pressures**

4.9 New and emerging Cost Pressures and Growth items have been assumed at £2m per annum for 2025/2026 onwards based upon known pressures and recent trends. As more detail emerges on potential cost pressures during this period, the detail will be included on the cost pressures Appendix.

- 4.10 In identifying the Cost Pressures and Growth items for 2024/2025, consideration have been given to:
- Cost of living crisis and the impact on high inflation and price & wage increases
  - Cost pressures identified as part of the 2023/2024 financial reporting within overspending portfolios
  - Changes in demand for services
  - New services/ responsibilities
  - Changes in legislation/policy

4.11 **Identified Cost Pressures for 2024/2025 Onwards**

4.12 Current in year cost pressures have been reviewed to assess the likely continuation into 2024/2025. An assessment has also been undertaken to evaluate the portfolios' ability to mitigate cost pressures from within existing budgets e.g. budget realignment. The most significant cost pressures identified are:

4.13 **Education**

4.14 **Individual Schools Budget** – The pupil population data is collected at the end of September. Any change will require an adjustment in funding to the Individual School Budget. As identified in Table 1 – Key Planning Assumptions, pupil population has increased by 112.5 full time equivalent between September 2022 and September 2023, and is forecast to decrease from September 2024 and continue to decrease over the medium term.

4.15 **Home to School Transport** is a cost pressure for 2023/24 due to a need for increased transport requirements following an increase in capacity at Penycwm Special School and the new resource base at Tredegar Secondary School. A review is also being carried out on the of transport provision at the Rivercentre.

4.16 **Additional Learning Needs** - A business case has recently been approved by Council to increase the capacity for resource bases across the Council in both Primary and Secondary settings for pupils with additional learning needs. Additional funding of £178,610 and £113,000 for 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 respectively have been approved as part of the business case.

4.17 **Employers Contribution to the Teachers Pension Scheme** - The employer's contribution to the teachers' pension scheme is due to

increase by 5% from April 2024. It is anticipated that the additional costs of approximately £1m will be funded by the UK Government.

4.17 **Social Services**

4.18 **Children’s Services** – The number of Children Looked After has remained stable over the last few years with an overall decrease of 5 children at March 2023 (203) compared to March 2020 (208), and the number of children in residential care has decreased by 1 to 13 at March 2023, this is as a result of the preventative services established over the last few years including the Supporting Change Team and the My Support Team (MYST).

4.19 Residential Placements remain a significant cost pressure for the Council. It was anticipated that the introduction of MYST would reduce the numbers of children in residential care, however, whilst the team have been successful in preventing additional children entering care, placements are not expected to reduce until 2024/2025, reducing the cost pressure in future years.

4.20 The Council is currently developing a Children’s Home within Blaenau Gwent, and this will provide residential care for a maximum of 4 children, emergency short term care for up to 2 children and move on accommodation for 2 young people aged 16+ acting as a stepping stone from residential care into independence. The revenue costs will be met from within existing budgets, costs for provision with the private sector should reduce (avoided), delivering financial efficiencies over the medium term.

4.21 **Adult Services** – Demand within Adult Services has steadily declined over the last few years:

Table 4 – Adult Services Data

<b>Number of Adults:</b>	<b>@ March 2020</b>	<b>@ March 2023</b>
Care & Support Plan	1,056	800
Residential Care	171	131
Nursing Care	66	61
Respite Care	24	31
Day Care	180	71
Domiciliary Care	400	369

Receiving external Domiciliary care	315	318
External Domiciliary hours commissioned	4,745	4,482

*\*Comparison data at a point in time, does not reflect the changing activity within social care during the financial year.*

- 4.22 The fall in the number of adults accessing services can be attributed to the covid pandemic and the recruitment and retention problems that the social care sector continues to face.
- 4.23 Reducing demand is not however being reflected in the costs of providing services. The impact of increased wages, high inflation and increased utility costs are impacting on the charges incurred for external commissioned care.
- 4.24 The Chancellor recently announced that the National living wage will increase to £11.44 per hour. £11.44 per hour from £10.42 is an increase of 10%. As a consequence it is anticipated that providers will increase their charges for community care, by on average 9% an increase of approximately £2.2m.
- 4.25 For the current financial year, Adult Services is forecasting a favourable variance of £0.5m (at September 2023) and therefore maybe able to absorb part of the cost pressure for 2024/2025, assuming specific grant levels remain at the current level.
- 4.26 The cost pressures identified for 2024/2025 (over and above the 4% inflationary uplift) is attached at Appendix 2 with £2.8m proposed to be built into the MTFS for 2024/2025. The table below shows the impact the cost pressures have on the funding gap.



Table 5: Assessed Budget Gap including Cost Pressures

	<b>Medium Term Budget Gap</b>				
	<b>2024/2025 £'000</b>	<b>2025/2026 £'000</b>	<b>2026/2027 £'000</b>	<b>2027/2028 £'000</b>	<b>2028/2029 £'000</b>
Initial Budget Gap	<b>(5,716)</b>	<b>(4,039)</b>	<b>(4,670)</b>	<b>(4,072)</b>	<b>(4,246)</b>
Cost Pressures	2,820	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Adjusted Budget Gap</b>	<b>(8,536)</b>	<b>(6,039)</b>	<b>(6,670)</b>	<b>(6,072)</b>	<b>(6,246)</b>

- 4.27 The potential funding gap increases to £34m over the next 5 years with the inclusion of cost pressures and £8.5m for 2024/2025.
- 4.28 Cost pressures will be reviewed and updated to reflect new /emerging information for example the financial impact of Policy decisions and cost pressures emerging during the current financial year.
- 4.29 **Sensitivity Analysis**
- 4.30 The budget gap identified in table 5 (after allowing for cost pressures), is an indication of the financial challenge facing the Council. The assumptions used in the financial modelling are uncertain and may change over time.
- 4.31 A range of different scenarios have been modelled over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and these are shown in the table below.

Table 6: Sensitivity Analysis – 1% Change in all Assumptions

Annual Change to Assumptions					Funding Gap					
Pay	ISB	Inflation	Council Tax	AEF	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	Total
5%	2%	4%	4%	2%	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
MTFS Assumption +/- 1% £'000										
600	538	709	369	1,400	(8,536)	(6,039)	(6,670)	(6,072)	(6,246)	(33,563)
Assumption Change										
+1%	+1%	+1%	+1%	+1%	(8,614)	(6,117)	(6,748)	(6,149)	(6,325)	(33,953)
-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%	(8,458)	(5,961)	(6,592)	(5,993)	(6,169)	(33,173)
+0%	-0%	-2%	-2%	-2%	(10,656)	(8,159)	(8,790)	(8,191)	(8,367)	(44,163)

## 5. **BRIDGING THE GAP PROGRAMME**

5.1 In recognising the challenges that the Council faces in the short, medium and long term, a programme of Strategic Business Reviews has and continues to be developed to deal with identified gaps between anticipated funding and expenditure that aims to build financial resilience. Based on strategic themes our Bridging the Gap programme identifies savings opportunities, potential cost avoidance and new revenue streams. Designed to support a balanced budget it is also focussed on creating the conditions of a commercially minded council. This includes seeking new revenue streams and ensuring resources are aligned to the strategic imperatives of the council. The approach has a particular emphasis on:

- Maximising the potential of income generation by taking a commercial approach where it is appropriate to do so; this will include exploring opportunities for investment;
- Effective commissioning, procurement & contract management arrangements;
- Exploiting the opportunity that digital and service transformation can provide for customers;
- Making best use of our assets and property;

- Considering the action we can take to influence and reduce demand through our early intervention & prevention approaches;
  - Exploiting the opportunities to strengthen financial resilience by supporting growth in the borough
  - We will continue to ensure we have secured all efficiencies and are practicing robust “housekeeping” throughout;
  - We will also continue to explore the potential to work differently through partnership and collaboration and look for opportunities to support residents to do more for themselves;
- 5.2 In setting the budget for 2023/2024, £3m was identified through the strategic business reviews.
- 5.3 Business Cases will be developed for all proposals identifying the financial implications, service impact and risks for consideration and approval and presented to Members during the budget setting process.
- 5.4 The Council’s income generation ability has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and is likely to be impacted further by the Cost of Living Crisis. The Bridging the Gap proposals are being reviewed to determine current estimated achievement levels and additional proposals that will support the Council’s budget in the longer term.
- 5.5 As future opportunities are identified through these strategic business reviews the MTFS will be updated to reflect the impact on each financial year. Some of the reviews will inevitably take longer to have an impact but will potentially yield higher returns in the latter years of this MTFS.

6. **MTFS – SCHOOLS**

- 6.1 The assumption within the MTFS is that the increase in the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) will be 2% for 2024/2025 and 0% thereafter, in line with the initial assumption for Aggregate External Finance.
- 6.2 For 2023/2024, the Individual Schools Budget received an uplift of 4% (£2m). This mitigated the cost pressure relating to pay with schools required to manage cost pressures relating to utilities and inflation.

- 6.3 The table below highlights the potential cost increases in relation to school expenditure, compared to assumed funding increases over the next 5 years, based on the assumptions identified in table 1 above.

**Table 7: Potential Cost Increases for Schools**

	2024/2025 £'000	2025/2026 £'000	2026/2027 £'000	2027/2028 £'000	2028/2029 £'000
<b>ISB Assumed Uplift &amp; Cost Pressures</b>	1,617	0	0	0	0
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Pay increases	1,156	1,214	1,274	1,338	1,405
Inflation – non pay	215	110	112	114	116
Inflation – Utilities	1,335	23	24	24	25
<b>Total Expenditure Increase</b>	<b>2,706</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,476</b>	<b>1,546</b>
<b>Budget Gap - Schools</b>	<b>(1,089)</b>	<b>(1,347)</b>	<b>(1,410)</b>	<b>(1,476)</b>	<b>(1,546)</b>

- 6.4 The table indicates that schools are potentially facing financial cost increases of £7m over the next 5 years based on the assumptions within the MTFs and £1.6m in 2024/2025, the most significant being increased utility costs. It is anticipated that utility costs will reduce from April 2024, reducing the cost pressure for schools.

- 6.5 A number of cost pressures have also been identified on the Cost Pressure appendix, including:

- Increase in Pupil Demographics – £0.5m
- ALN Resource Bases – £0.18m

- 6.6 The Employers contribution to the Teachers pension fund is increasing from April 2024 by 5%, an additional cost of approximately £1m and it is assumed that this cost will be funded by UK Government.

- 6.7 School Balances are forecast to reduce year on year, with a reduction of £1.4m between 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 and a forecast reduction of £3.6m between 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. The main reason for the reduction in balances during the current financial year is the significant increase in utility costs, which have increased by £0.55m (111%)

between April and November 2023 compared to the same period last year and pay and price increases.

An analysis across sectors is shown in the table below:

Table 10 –School Balances (Surplus/ (Deficit))

<b>Phase</b>	<b>2021/2022 £'000</b>	<b>2022/ 2023 £'000 (Provisional)</b>	<b>2023/2024 £'000 (Forecast)</b>
Secondary	965	675	9
All Through	852	664	187
Primary	3,971	2,993	957
Special	440	489	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,228</b>	<b>4,821</b>	<b>1,167</b>

## 7. Reserves Strategy

- 7.1 Financial resilience is a Council priority and this includes ensuring that reserves are adequate to be able to respond to unexpected events, emerging need or unforeseen budget pressures.
- 7.2 General reserves are unallocated amounts that enable the Council to meet non-specific and/or unforeseen financial liabilities.
- 7.3 The level of the general reserve at 31 March 2023 is £13m, no change when compared to March 2022. This outturn position represents 7.7% of net revenue expenditure as reported for 2022/23.
- 7.4 Earmarked reserves are held by the Council to meet potential future expenditure on specifically identified risks, liabilities and commitments.
- 7.5 The Council has an agreed protocol for the establishment, retention, management, review and reporting of earmarked reserves. In addition to the statutory requirements to consider the adequacy of reserves when setting the budget and the extensive disclosures made in the Statement of Accounts, member scrutiny has been enhanced by the preparation of detailed quarterly monitoring reports. The Chief Officer Resources also holds regular meetings during the year to consider the ongoing requirement and value of earmarked reserves held.
- 7.6 The provisional level of earmarked reserves has increased from £32.18m at 31 March 2022 to £33.96m (an increase of £1.78m).

- 7.7 Significant elements of these earmarked sums relate to grant funding held in respect of specific projects or services that will be utilised in delivering the relevant service outcomes.
- 7.8 In setting the 2023/202 budget, an overall planned use of reserves was agreed of £4m to balance the budget.
- 7.9 It is the Council's intention to maintain the general reserves at a minimum level of 4% and increase the overall level of reserves over time to support the Council's financial resilience.
- 7.10 The continuation of the inclusion of a budget contingency within the annual budget setting process is proposed of £200,000 per annum, to allow the replenishment of the Council's useable reserves.
- 7.11 It is anticipated that earmarked reserves will reduce during the current financial year. Many of these reserves are short term in nature and will be utilised to deliver the intended outcome.

## 8. **Capital Programme**

- 8.1 The 5 year Capital Programme (2019/2020 to 2025/2026) was agreed by full Council in October 2019, with a further update being agreed in September 2023, to reflect the additional capital investment approvals agreed.
- 8.2 The current capital programme is approximately £116m and is funded by:
- Welsh Government - £82m
  - Council's own resources - £22m
  - Other grant funding - £12m
- 8.3 The Council's own resources includes £10m general capital funding to fund the approved capital programme, attached at Appendix 7, funding switches to maximise specific grant approvals from previous years and revenue contributions to capital outlay (RCCO).
- 8.4 A significant proportion of the capital programme relates to:
- Investment in Schools - £33m
  - Hi Value Engineering Centre (HIVE) - £12m
  - Railway infrastructure Programme - £37m

9. **RISKS**

9.1 The Corporate Plan, MTFs and the Bridging the Gap programme are designed to complement each other. They provide the narrative that describes the outcomes we plan to deliver, the financial envelope we intend to work within, and our approach to deliver a balance budget in 2024/2025 and beyond whilst creating the conditions for improved financial resilience.

9.2 The risks identified with the Medium Term Financial Strategy are:

9.2.1 **Recruitment & Retention**

- Staff Retention & Recruitment – Difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff within some areas are having an impact on the delivery of services and meeting demand within the community and supporting our vulnerable people as well as managing the challenge of delivering business as usual.

9.2.2 **Economy**

- Increase in Inflation – Over the last 2 years, inflation has risen significantly from 3.2% to 11.1% at its peak in October 2022. Whilst inflation is reducing (4.6% October 2023), it is not expected to reduce to the Bank of England target of 2% until the end of 2025. This is having a financial impact on the cost of goods and services procured by the council, local businesses and on the disposable income of the residents of Blaenau Gwent including food supplies, transport costs and utilities.
- Businesses – significant financial support was provided to businesses across all sectors during covid restrictions and lock down, including business grants, rate relief and furlough. As businesses have reopened, they are facing increased costs, staff shortages and an end to financial support, which could impact on the sustainability of the business and result in downsizing/closure, increasing unemployment.

9.2.4 **Uncertainty around future WG Funding levels**

The announcement of the 2024/25 provisional settlement for local government was inline with the indicative funding uplift of 3.1% announced as part of the 2023/2024 Settlement. However, no indication has been provided for future years.

The absence of any guidance on levels of likely settlement from WG in the medium to long term makes financial planning more difficult. More recently, the First Minister issued a written statement in August 2023 providing an update on WG budget and the impact inflation has had on budgets and it is extremely unlikely that additional funding will be forthcoming in the short to medium term.

#### 9.2.5 MTFS Assumptions

The budget gap is based on a number of assumptions and any changes may have a significant impact on the funding gap.

The assumptions are reviewed and any potential changes monitored. Section 4.29 above models the impact on the funding gap for a range of scenarios.

#### 9.2.6 Achievement of Bridging the Gap proposals

The level of budget cuts required to balance the budget over the term of the MTFS is significant and will require business cases proposing significant cuts to services / staffing levels / service transformation to deliver a balanced budget. There is a risk that the business cases will not be approved, or implementation delayed due to timescales.

The achievement of planned budget cuts is monitored as part of the budget monitoring & reporting process. Corrective action is taken where adverse variances are identified.

Should Business Cases not be approved, reserves will be required to fund the remaining budget gap, this will only be an option in the short term.

#### 9.2.7 Grant Funding

The MTFS assumes that grant funding remains constant. Any decrease in funding or the termination of grant programmes could have a significant impact for the Council, particularly for those grants that are supporting service provision such as Families First, Flying Start, and ICF etc.

The Society of Welsh Treasurers works closely with the WLGA and Welsh Government to ensure that grants are maintained or transferred into the settlement.



Where grants are reduced, Services will need to ensure that expenditure is reduced in line with the grant.

#### 9.2.8 Volume of Demand

Increased demand for services poses significant risks to planning and this will be monitored.

#### 9.2.9 Use of Reserves

Insufficient Bridging the Gap proposals developed/approved to mitigate the funding gap requiring a use of reserves to balance the budget for the second year.

The use of reserves to balance the budget only provides one-off funding and increases the funding gap in future years. Continued use of reserves and balances diminishes the financial resilience of the Council and its ability to meet future unforeseen cost pressures.

Continued use of reserves and diminishing financial stability will lead to the Chief Finance Officer issuing a Section 114 letter as the Council's planned expenditure exceeds funds available.

The Council will be required to put emergency measures in place to reduce expenditure including a freeze on recruitment and essential expenditure.

<b>Document History</b>			
<b>Author</b>	<b>Version</b>		<b>Date</b>
G. Taylor	Draft v1		October 2023
G Taylor	Draft v2		February 2024

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# ***Council Budget 2024/25***



## **Summary Report**

# **Public Engagement Programme**

# Public Engagement Report

## Summary

*February 2024*

*SUMMARY REPORT*

**Policy, Partnerships and Engagement**

Corporate Services and Strategy  
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
The General Offices  
Steelworks Road  
Ebbw Vale  
Blaenau Gwent  
NP23 6DN  
Email: [pps@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:pps@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/council/22197.asp>

# Introduction

As a Council, like the public at home, we have been experiencing soaring inflation, high energy prices and high fuel costs, as well as higher than budgeted pay award pressures, all of which are increasing the costs of providing services.

At the same time, the cost-of-living crisis means we are seeing increased demand for support and services, from additional learning needs provision in our schools, to homelessness, to social services and to some of the frontline services that our communities depend on every day.

Over the 10 years of austerity, the Covid pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis Blaenau Gwent has seen its budget reduce by around £40million, with a further £10 million required next year even after an uplift of around 2.6% in our funding from Welsh Government. Also, we are predicting an additional £25m savings are required to be found over the next 4 years.

To meet these challenges, we must think about the way we provide services to make savings, and how we can generate income. This may mean us having to reduce, change or stop some services or look at alternative delivery models.

Our engagement programme gave people the opportunity to share their views to help us plan our budget and services from April 2024 until March 2025. The programme consisted of a number of public events, surveys and other ways to engage people to help shape decision making processes.

## **What is the challenge we have been set?**

As a Council we look to plan our spending over a number of years. This involves forecasting expenditure, income and funding from Welsh Government. Welsh Government funding for councils across Wales from April 2024 is an average increase of 3.1%. Welsh Government funding is increasing by 2.6% for Blaenau Gwent (which is the 15<sup>th</sup> lowest in Wales). Despite this funding increase, there is still a **funding gap of £10m for 2024/5**.

### **Overview of engagement programme activity**

The programme operated in early 2024 (closing on 8 February 2024) following the announcement of the Local Government Settlement in mid-December 2023 by Welsh Government. Due to the tight timeframes following the announcement, an engagement programme was developed to look to best provide people the opportunity to participate.

The programme included indoor events for people to attend to find out more information, via information boards (see below), and if they wanted to, they could speak to elected members (local councillors) and/or senior managers. These events were held across our four well-being areas e.g. Sirhowy Valley which covers the Tredegar area, Ebbw Fawr Valley which covers the Ebbw Vale area, Upper Ebbw Fach Valley which covers the Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina, and Lower Ebbw Fach Valley which covers the Abertillery and Llanhilleth area.

These events were held at different times during the day e.g. morning (10am to 12pm), afternoon (2pm to 4pm) and evening (6pm to 8pm).

As well as the face-to-face public events held, the engagement programme included an evening session online via the Microsoft Teams platform. People were asked to register their interest through Ticket Tailor. People were able to ask questions at the event.

All those attending events were encouraged to participate in a survey which was also shared extensively on the Council's social media channels.

The intention of all of this was to get as many people as possible participating and sharing their views on prioritising council services, setting council tax, and potential saving proposals.

Information Provided on Display Boards (available bilingually Welsh & English, and via Council's Website)

### COUNCIL BUDGET 2024-25






As a Council, like the public at home, we have been experiencing soaring inflation, high energy prices and high fuel costs, as well as higher than budgeted pay award pressures, all of which are increasing the costs of providing services.

At the same time, the cost-of-living crisis means we are seeing increased demand for support and services, from additional learning needs provision in our schools, to homelessness, to social services and to some of the frontline services that our communities depend on every day.

Over the 10 years of austerity, the Covid pandemic and now the cost of living crisis Blaenau Gwent has seen its budget reduce by around £40million, with a further £10 million required next year even after an uplift of around 2.6% in our funding from Welsh Government. Also, we are predicting an additional £25m savings are required to be found over the next 4 years.

To meet these challenges, we must think about the way we provide services to make cuts, and how we generate more income. This will mean us having to reduce, change or stop some services or look at alternative delivery models.

**Extra Info:** Some services provided are statutory, which means we have to provide them by law. We cannot stop these services, but under certain conditions we can change the level and way they are provided. Other services are non-statutory, which means that we can decide whether we provide them or not, and to what level.

1

### HOW THE COUNCIL PLANS THE BUDGET

As a Council we look to plan our spending over a number of years. This involves forecasting expenditure, income and funding from Welsh Government.







Welsh Government funding for Welsh councils from April 2024 will increase on average by 3.1%.

However, the funding for Blaenau Gwent will only increase by 2.6% - the 15<sup>th</sup> lowest in Wales.

This increase is not enough to cover the increasing costs of delivering services from high inflation, energy, pay costs and increasing demand. The Budget gap for 2024-2025 is £10m, and is currently assessed at £34m over the next 5 years.

As part of setting our budget, we are running engagement events to inform people and get them involved.

The information we present will help raise awareness of what we may have to do to set a balanced budget for April 2024, and provide the opportunity for feedback on key issues to help decision-making.

2

### THE COUNCIL'S OVERALL BUDGET

For 2024/2025 the Council's Revenue Funding is:

## £ 183 million

This money comes from:

**Local Government Settlement: £143 million**  
This makes up almost three-quarters of our budget. It is provided to the Council from Welsh Government through a Revenue Support Grant and the Redistributed National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).




**Council Tax Income: £39.5 million**  
This makes up around one-fifth of our budget. It is paid by householders living within the area. Every 1% increase in Council Tax - which is about 26p a week per household - generates approximately £380,000 which otherwise has to be found from other ways of saving money.

In addition the Council generates:

**Income from charges: £14 million**  
This is paid by residents for specific council services, where charging policies are in place e.g. payment for licensing, planning applications, permits etc. Even so, by trying to keep charges down for residents in the past, this means that some of these council services are being subsidised and we do not recover full cost.

**Extra Info:** We also receive grants or receive funding for specific projects or initiatives. This money can only be used for specific things outlined in a contract. If we do not follow the contract, we would have to give the money back. A good example of this is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme where all the money has to be used to improve existing or build new schools.

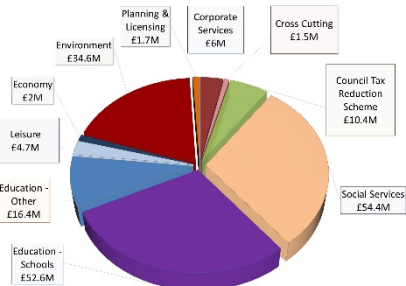


3


### HOW THE COUNCIL SPENDS ITS BUDGET

The pie chart below shows how our budget is currently divided between different service areas:



Figures are rounded to the nearest £ 100,000

**Our Question to you?**  
You can see how the Council's budget is allocated, which two services would be your top priorities in the budget setting process?



4

### KEY FACTS ON YOUR COUNCIL TAX

Council Tax in our area currently makes up just over 22% of our budget, which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in Wales.

Council Tax bands range from 'A to I' and are based on property values. 'Band D' is commonly used as the standard for comparing levels between areas in Wales.

This can give a misleading picture, as we have the lowest proportion of houses in Band D, and the highest proportion of houses within A and B bands (83%).

This means that in real terms e.g. how much money people actually pay, Blaenau Gwent residents pay one of the lowest average amounts of Council Tax in Wales.







Also, the Council **does not** get all the money. It gets around 80%. The remaining money goes to the Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, and your local Town/Community Councils.

Councils around Wales are considering significant increases in Council Tax as part of their budget setting. The Council's current proposal for Blaenau Gwent is a 5% increase which would be one of the lowest increases in Wales. This would mean the following:

- £1.17p a week increase for a Band A
- £1.37p a week increase for a Band B
- £1.56p a week increase for a Band C
- £1.76p a week increase for a Band D

This covers 96% of all households in Blaenau Gwent

**Our Question to you?**  
What do you think of an increase of 5% Council Tax for 2024/25 to help protect services?

5

### OUR SAVING PROPOSALS FOR 2024/25

We want to do all we can to protect those services which are important. However, the challenges we face are going to be here for many years.

Therefore, we have put together a set of proposals (including cuts, cost savings, budget reductions through controlling spend and contract management, and income generation) to try and address this year's budget gap. They cover the following areas:

**Budget Management** – These proposals include budget cuts of between £3.2m and £4.2m across all services. This will require financial efficiencies to be delivered through better budget and contract management, delaying recruitment and prioritising budgets on essential expenditure required to deliver services.



**Staff Reductions** – These proposals total £1m and include the review of staffing structures and vacant posts across the Council to reduce staffing costs with minimal impact on service delivery. Where feasible we will try and make any job losses through voluntary schemes agreed with staff at risk.

**Service Change / Collaboration** – These proposals total between £0.2m and £0.6m and include reviewing services for example operating hours for the Household Waste Recycling Centres, and changes to how services are delivered for example Community Options (day care services).

**Income Generation** – These proposals include maximising grant funding and increasing our discretionary fees and charges by a minimum of 5% moving towards recovering the full cost in delivering the service.

**School Budgets** – This proposal is to provide either a cash flat budget (no increase) or to cut the schools budget by 1 or 2% to deliver between £1m and £3m towards the budget gap. This will require schools to reduce expenditure.

**Our Question to you?**  
Please consider all our proposals and tell us whether you think they are acceptable or unacceptable to you.

6

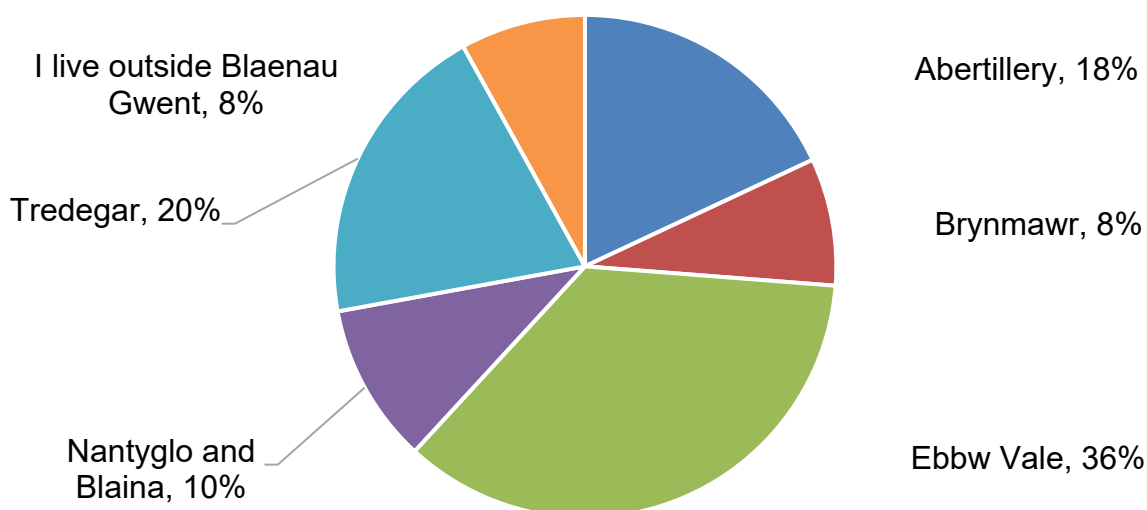
## Overall Response

A total of 680 questionnaires were returned to the council, which equates to around 1% of the area's population.

This response rate is a drop from last year when over 3,700 responses were received. This does however fall more in-line with expected responses rates for budget engagement processes from previous years and is the second highest response rate for budget engagement carried out by the Council.

The vast majority of respondents outlined that they were residents of Blaenau Gwent (89%). Over half of respondents (51%) worked in the area, whilst 3% studied in the area. 1% said they were a visitor to the area.

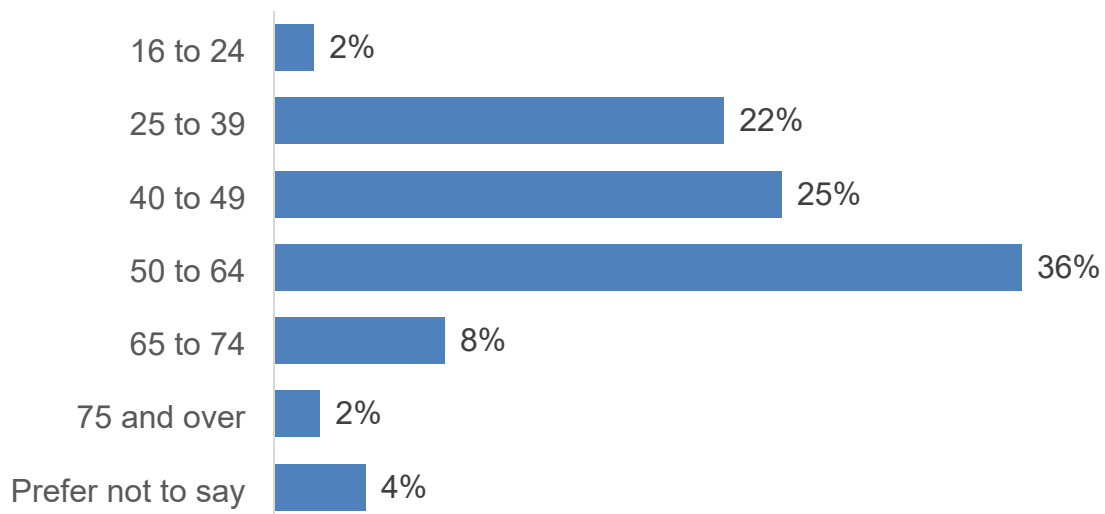
Of those that resided in the area, response shows similar patterns to that of the general population with response from the Ebbw Vale area being the most at 35%, followed closely by Tredegar (20%) and Abertillery (18%). Nantyglo and Blaina (10%) was next followed by Brynmawr (8%). Furthermore, 8% of responses were received from people living outside Blaenau Gwent.





Significantly more females (64%) than males (31%) participated in the process – as in previous years. This shows a gender bias in favour of females, given the Blaenau Gwent average is 51%:49% split female to male. 4% of respondents outlined they would prefer not to outline their sex or gender.

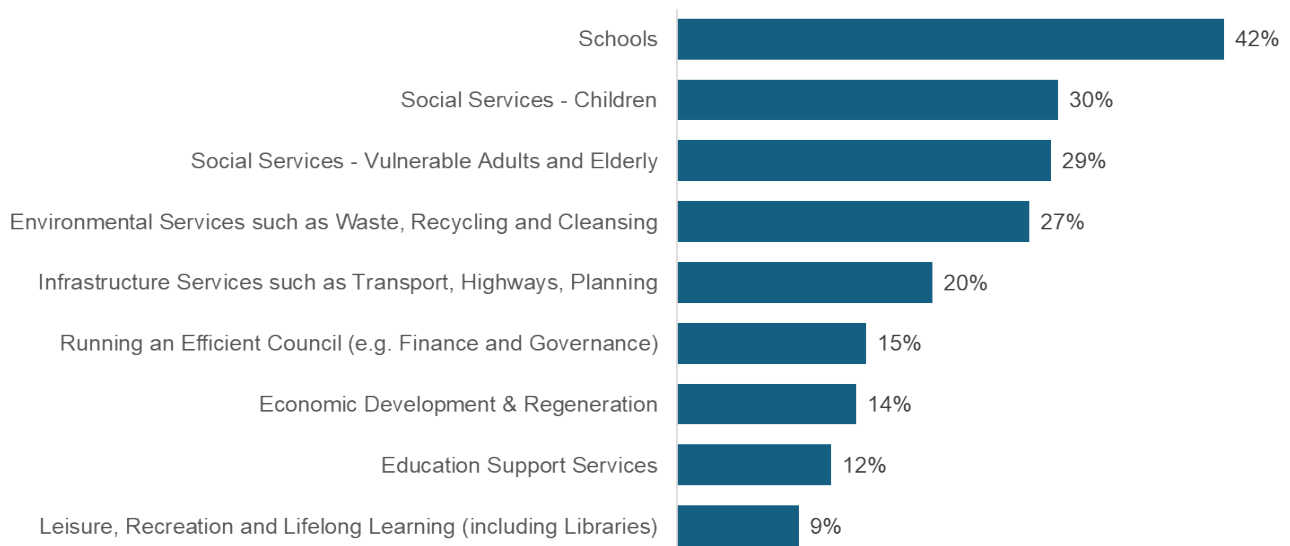
Response by age showed representation from across the main age groups for people aged 16 and over. Even so, as with last year, there was under representation from people aged 65 and over (8% compared to 23% of the adult population generally in Blaenau Gwent), and those aged between 16 to 24.



## Prioritising Services

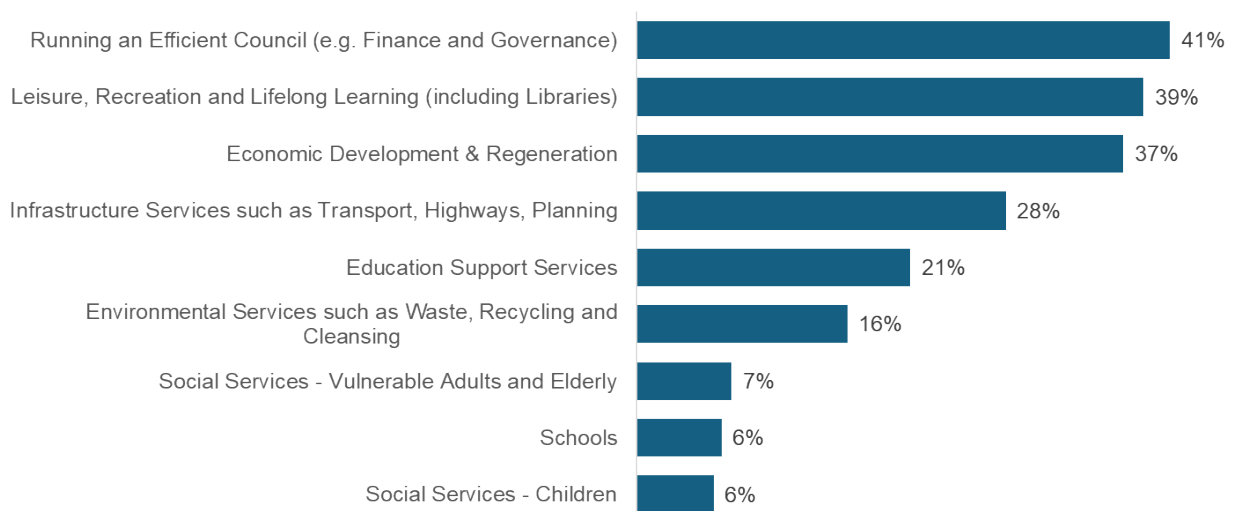
Respondents were asked to consider a broad list of service areas and outline their top two priorities for budget setting. Two responses were set to prevent respondents selected all services. As can be seen below, there was clear stand out priority for schools (42%).

The second most prioritised services were social services for children (30%) and social services for vulnerable adults and the elderly (29%). These were closely followed by Environmental Services such as waste, recycling and cleansing (27%).



For the time when engaging on the budget, respondents were also asked to consider the same broad list of service areas and outline their bottom two priorities for budget setting. As with the previous question, two choices were set to prevent respondents selected all services.

As can be seen below, the service deemed the least important by respondents when considering a budget setting process would be Running an Efficient Council (41%), followed by Leisure, Recreation and Lifelong Learning (39%), and Economic Development and Regeneration (37%).

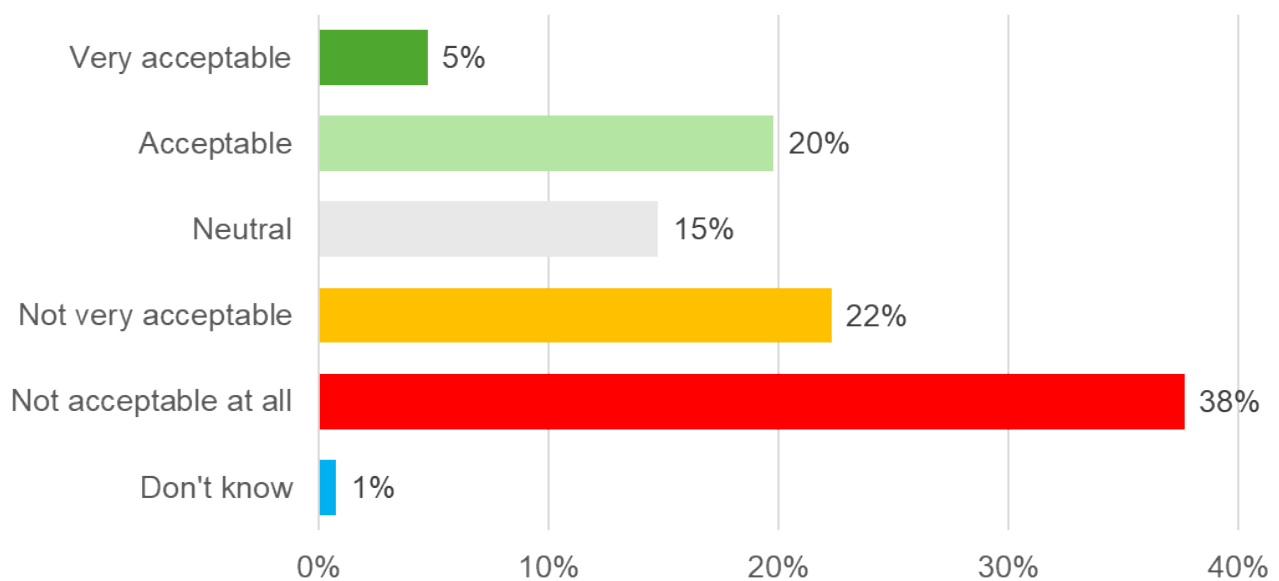


## Setting Council Tax

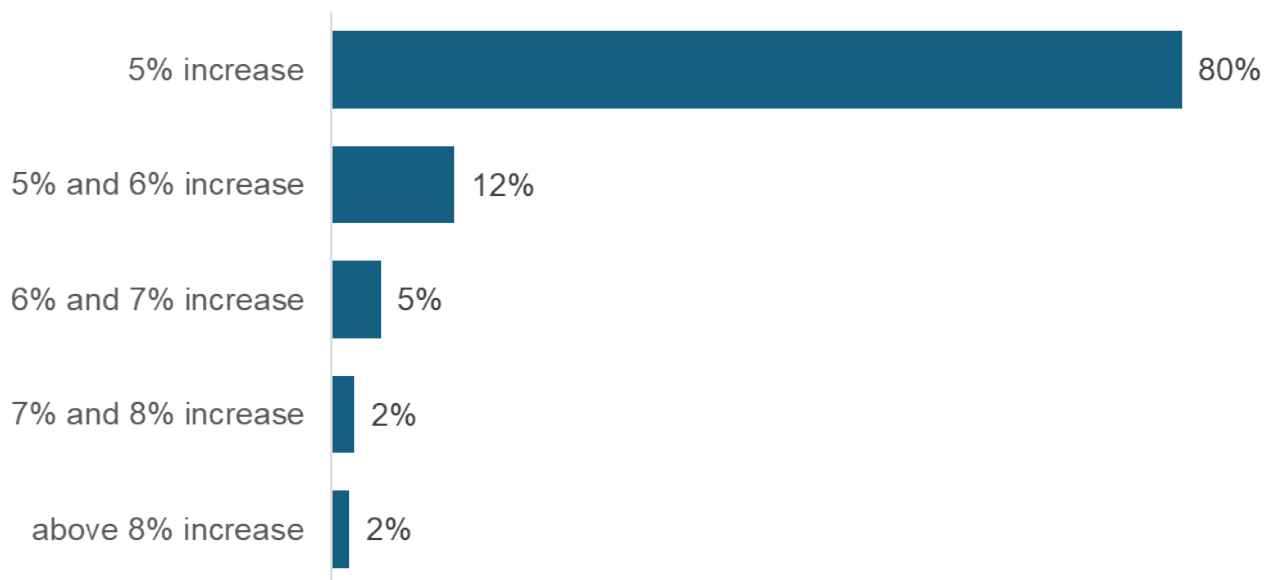
Respondents were asked to consider how acceptable an increase in Council Tax would be to help protect services.

As in previous years, three out of every five respondents generally considered any increase in Council Tax either not very acceptable or not acceptable all (60%).

One-quarter of respondents felt it was either acceptable (20%) or very acceptable (5%) to increase Council Tax to protect services. 15% of respondents had neutral views on the increase, and a small proportion of respondents (under 1%) outlined that they did not know.



Respondents were also asked to think about a Council Tax increase and outline what they felt would be appropriate as an increase. Of the options provided (ranging from 5% up to above an 8% increase), the vast majority of respondents (80%) felt that the lowest amount provided, 5%, would be about right.



## **Saving Proposals 2024/25**

Overall, the Council presented 25 proposals for consideration to respondents, under five broad categories, which were: Budget Management (6 proposals); Staffing Reductions (5 proposals); Service Change/Collaboration (7 proposals); Income Generation (4 proposals); and School Budgets (3 proposals).

Respondents were asked to consider each proposal and outline how acceptable they were on a five-point scale. The scale covered 'very acceptable', 'acceptable', 'neutral', 'not very acceptable' and 'not acceptable at all'. Respondents could also indicate if they 'did not know' or choose not to answer the question (no response).

The following presents a series of graphs summarising response by category as well as two graphs outlining all proposals, one sorted by 'acceptable' and one sorted by 'not acceptable'.

## Category A: Budget Management

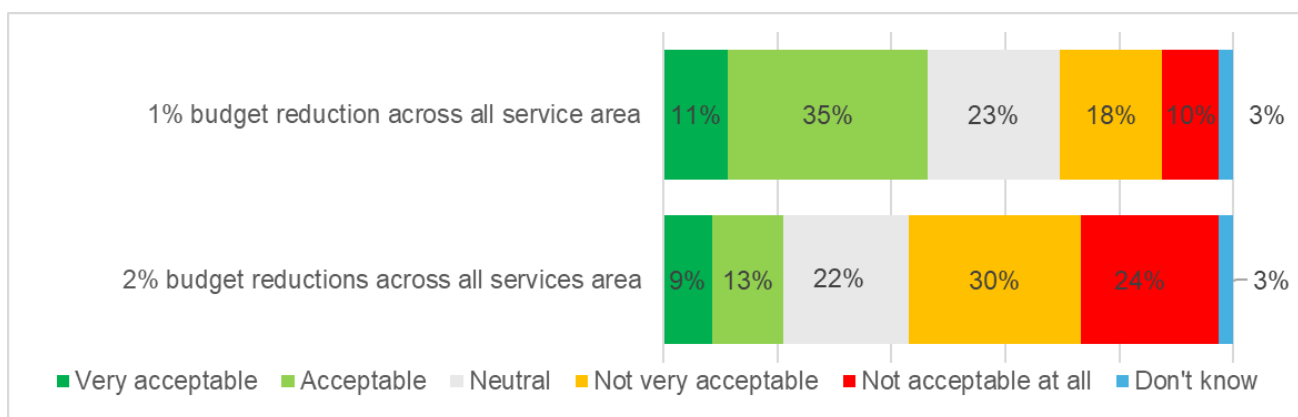
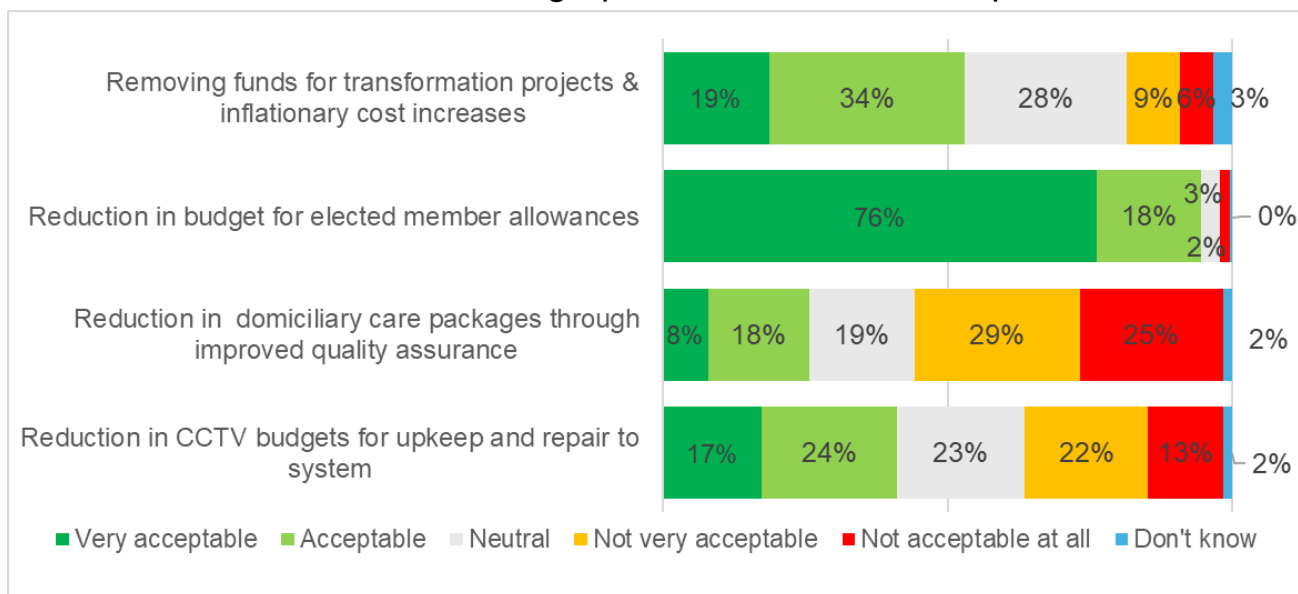
These proposals include budget cuts of between **£3.2m and £4.2m** across all services. This will require financial efficiencies to be delivered through better budget and contract management, delaying recruitment and prioritising budgets on essential expenditure required to deliver services. The following savings proposals were categorised as 'Budget Management:

Budget cuts by removing funds for transformation projects and inflationary cost increases <b>Saving: £1,846,000</b>
Reduction in budget for elected member allowances <b>Saving: £30,500</b>
Reduction in Social Services domiciliary care packages through improved quality assurance measures <b>Saving: £250,000</b>
Reduction in CCTV budgets for upkeep and repair to system <b>Saving: £20,000</b>

As well as the proposals above, there is a proposal to cut all budgets across each service area by either 1% or 2%.

1% budget reduction across all service area <b>Saving: £1,000,000</b>
2% budget reduction across all service area <b>Saving: £2,000,000</b>

Respondents were asked to indicate how acceptable they found each proposal on a five-point scale. A 'don't know' option was also provided. Non response has been removed in all cases. The graph below shows the response.



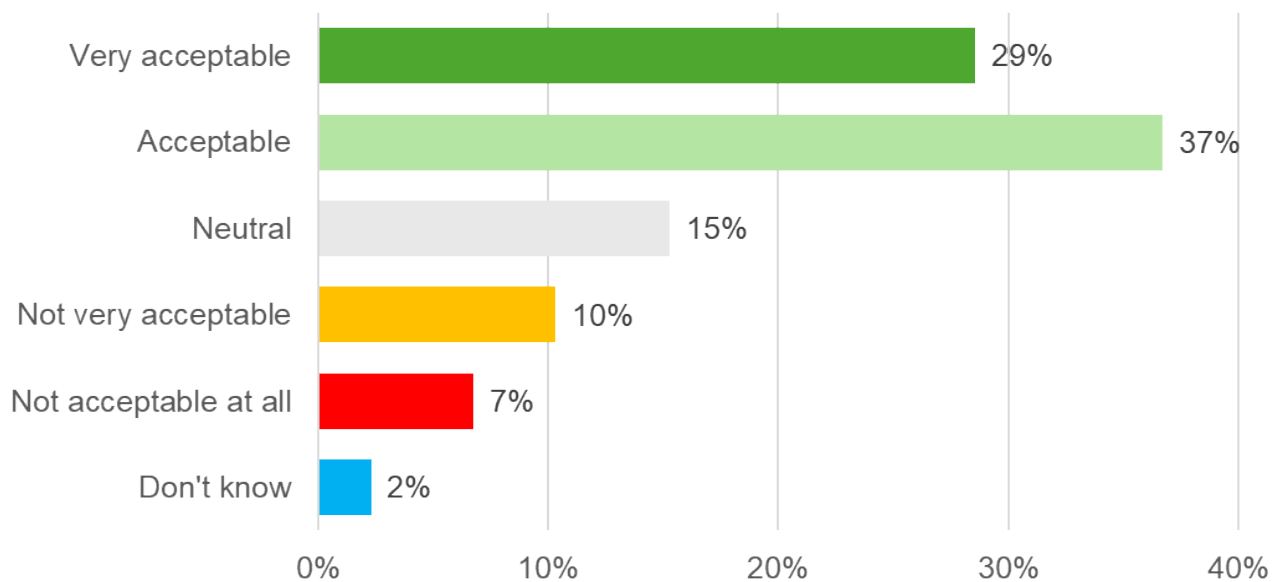


## Category B: Staffing Reductions

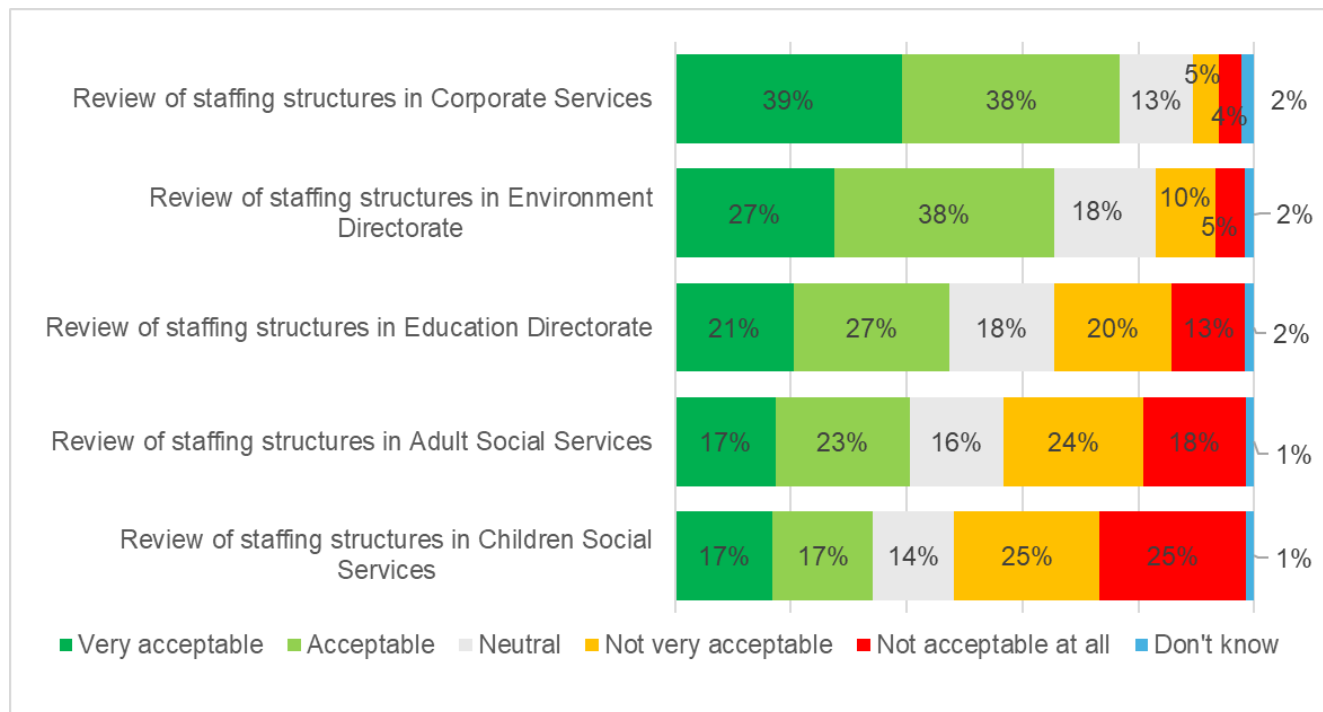
These proposals total in excess of £1m and include the review of staffing structures and vacant posts across the Council to reduce staffing costs with minimal impact on service delivery. Where feasible we will try and make any job losses through voluntary schemes agreed with staff at risk.

Review of staffing structures in Corporate Services	<b>Saving: £545,000</b>
Review of staffing structures in Environment Directorate	<b>Saving: £210,000</b>
Review of staffing structures in Education Directorate	<b>Saving: £107,000</b>
Review of staffing structures in Adult Social Services	<b>Saving: £280,000</b>
Review of staffing structures in Children Social Services	<b>Saving: £320,000</b>

Respondents were asked to how acceptable they thought it would be to reduce costs of existing staffing structures and current vacant positions across the Council. As can be seen from the graph below, two-thirds of respondents thought that this was acceptable.



Respondents were asked to indicate how acceptable they found each proposal on a five-point scale. A 'don't know' option was also provided. No response has been removed in all cases. The graph below shows the response.

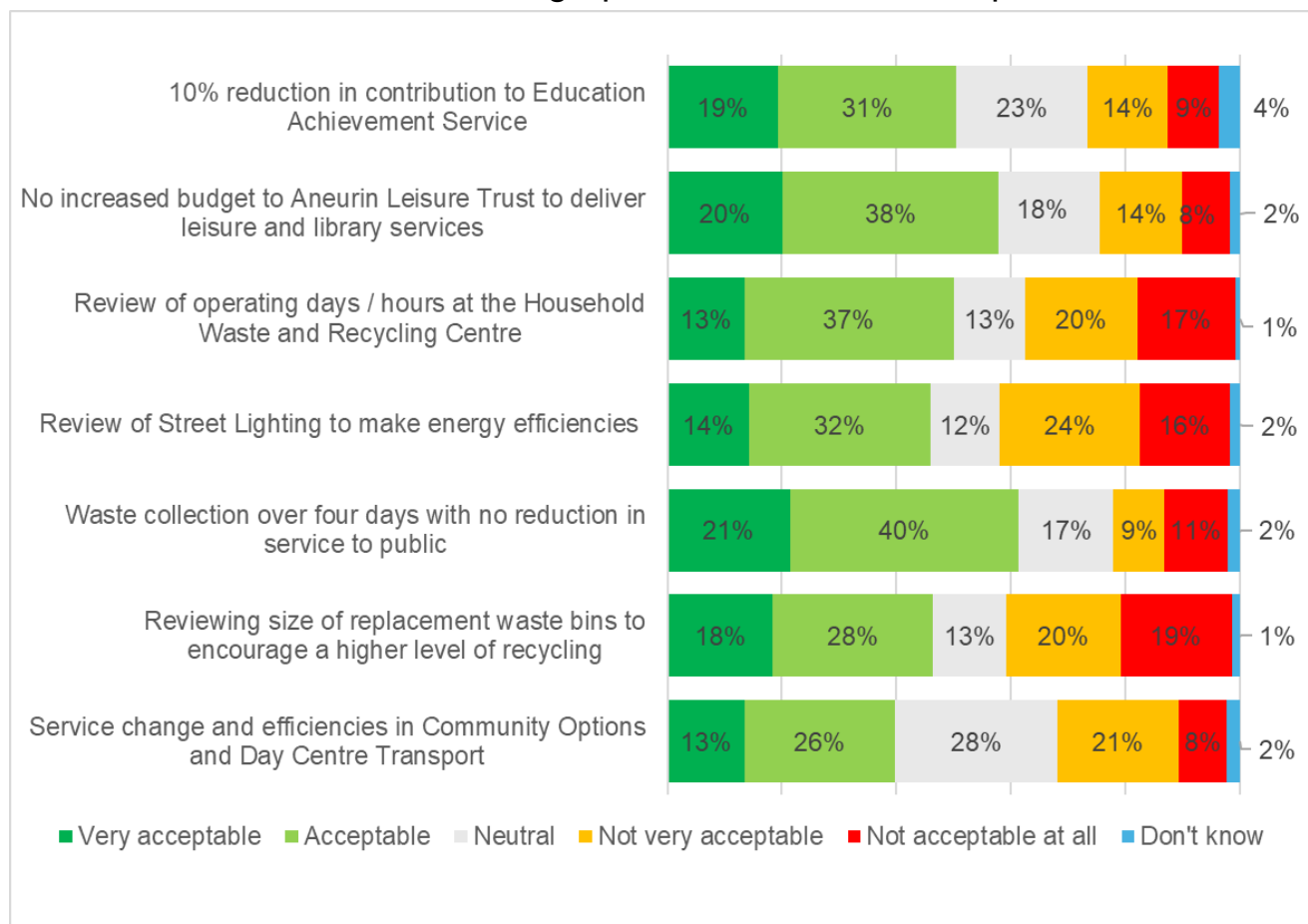


## Category C: Service Change / Collaboration

These proposals total between £0.2m and £0.6m and include reviewing services for example operating hours for the Household Waste Recycling Centres, and changes to how services are delivered for example Community Options (day care services).

10% reduction in contribution to the regional Education Achievement Service in-line with all other Gwent Councils	<b>Saving: £34,000</b>
No increased budget to Aneurin Leisure Trust to deliver leisure and library services	<b>Saving: £135,000</b>
Review of operating days / hours at the Household Waste and Recycling Centre	<b>Saving: £34,000 to £110,000</b>
Reviewing of Street Lights to make energy savings including considering timing, dimming and switching off in stages	<b>Saving: currently being calculated</b>
Waste collection over four days with no reduction in service to public	<b>Saving: currently being calculated</b>
Reviewing the size of replacement waste bins to encourage a higher level of recycling	<b>Saving: £18,000 to £118,000</b>
Service change and efficiencies in Community Options and Day Centre Transport	<b>Saving: £154,000</b>

Respondents were asked to indicate how acceptable they found each proposal on a five-point scale. A 'don't know' option was also provided. No response has been removed in all cases. The graph below shows the response.

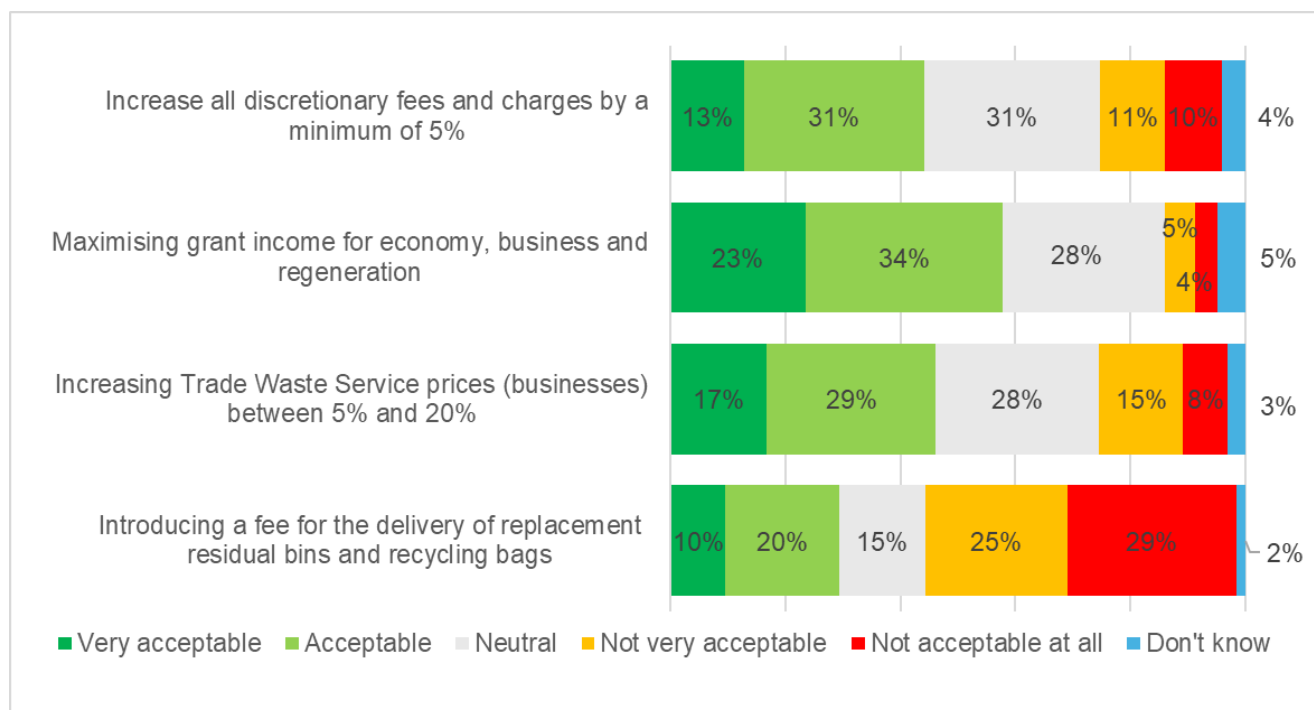


## Category D: Income Generation

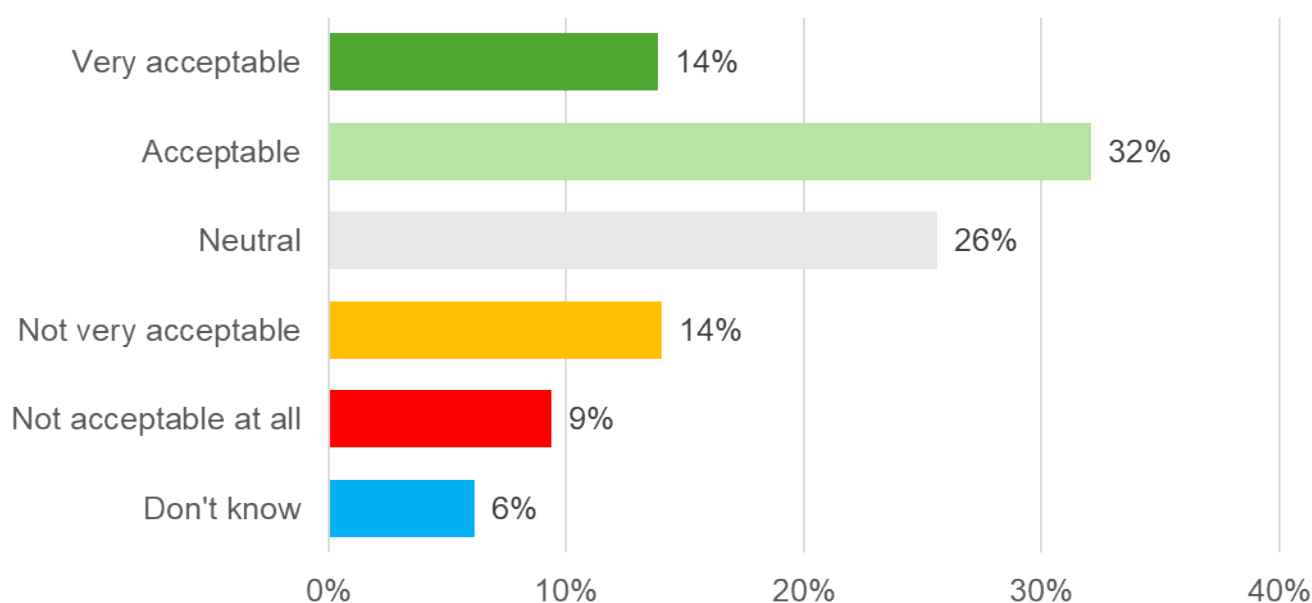
These proposals include maximising grant funding and increasing our discretionary fees and charges by a minimum of 5% moving towards recovering the full cost in delivering the service.

Increase all discretionary fees and charges by a minimum of 5%	<b>Estimated Income: £100,000</b>
Maximising grant income for economy, business and regeneration	<b>Estimated Income: £17,000</b>
Increasing Trade Waste Service prices (businesses) between 5% and 20%	<b>Estimated Income: £2,000 to £55,000</b>
Introducing a fee for the delivery of replacement residual bins and recycling bags (demand led)	<b>Estimated Income: £4,000 to £27,000</b>

Respondents were asked to indicate how acceptable they found each proposal on a five-point scale. A 'don't know' option was also provided. No response has been removed in all cases. The graph below shows the response.



Respondents were also asked how acceptable the Council's policy of full cost recovery is for services that we can provide but do not have to.



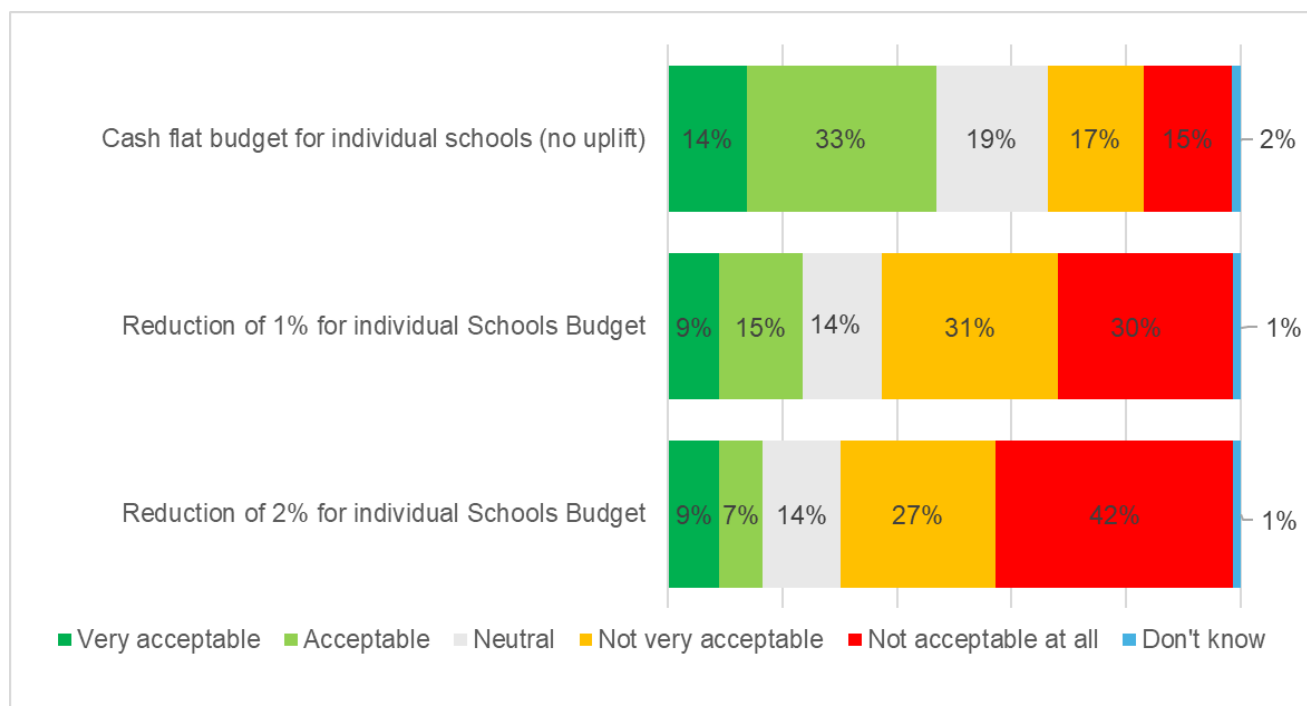
### Category E: School Budgets

The proposal for school budgets is to provide either a cash flat budget with no increase or to cut the schools budget by either 1 or 2%. These different options on the budget for schools will deliver between £1m and £3m towards the budget gap. This will require each school to consider their spending and reduce expenditure.

Cash flat budget for individual schools (no uplift)	<b>Saving: £1,000,000</b>
Reduction of 1% for individual Schools Budget	<b>Saving: £2,000,000</b>
Reduction of 2% for individual Schools Budget	<b>Saving: £3,000,000</b>

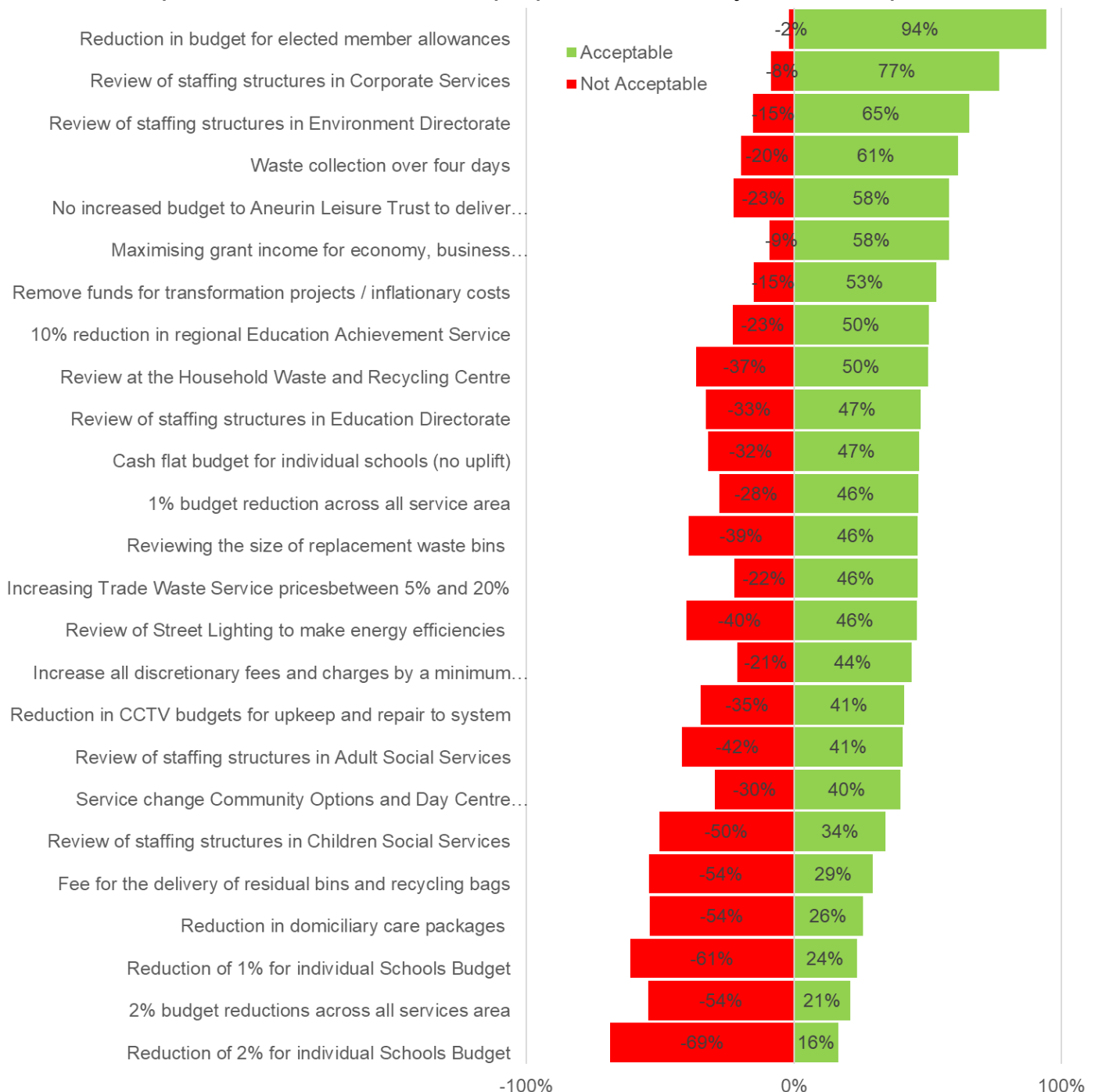


Respondents were asked to indicate how acceptable they found each proposal on a five-point scale. A 'don't know' option was also provided. No response has been removed in all cases. The graph below shows the response.



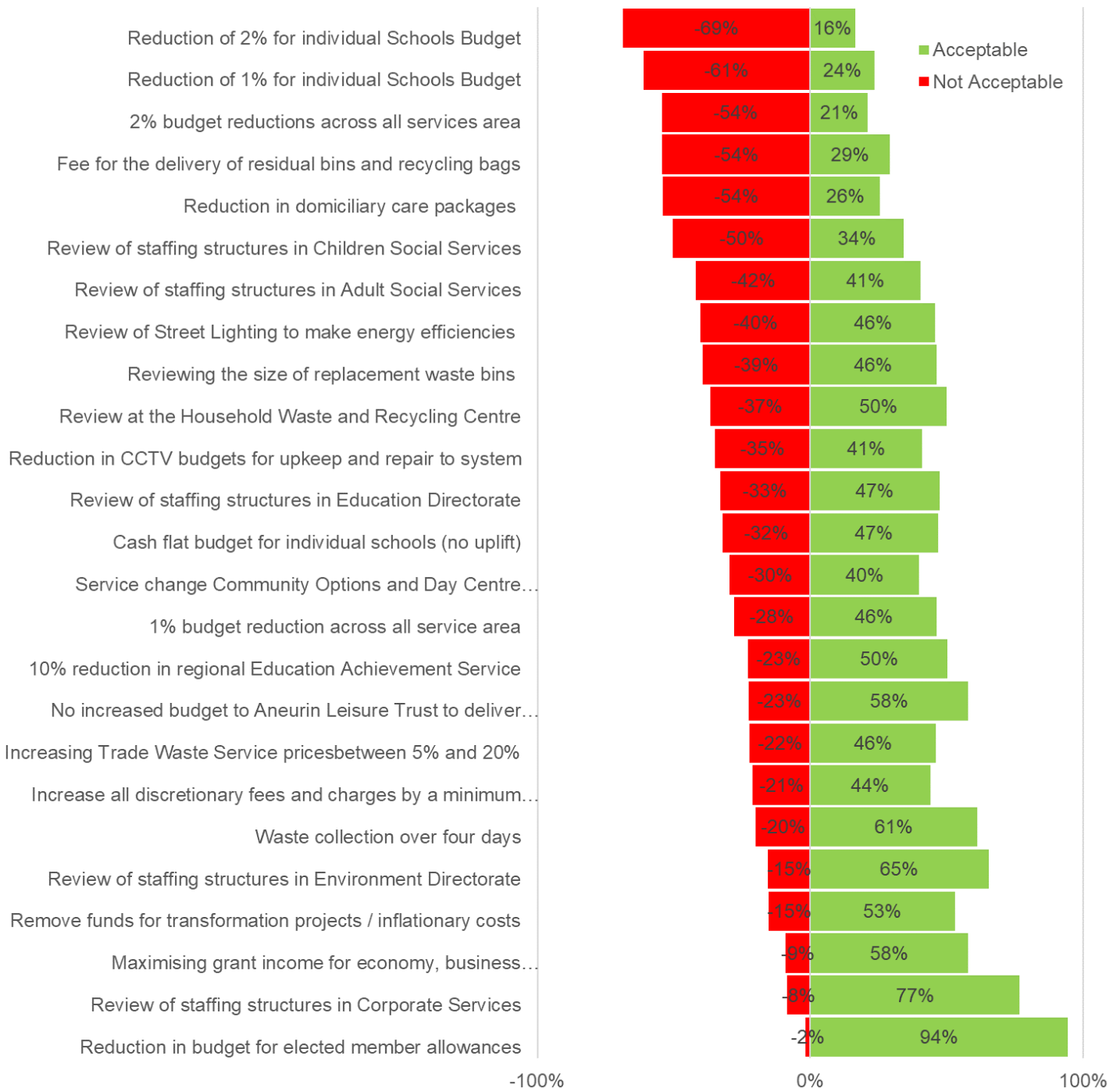
### All proposals – ‘Acceptable’ to ‘Not acceptable’ (sorted by acceptable)

The chart below ‘Acceptable’ includes *Very Acceptable* and *Acceptable* aggregated together, whilst ‘Not Acceptable’ includes *Not Very Acceptable* and *Not Acceptable at All*. It shows all proposals sorted by most acceptable.



**All proposals – ‘Not acceptable’ to ‘Acceptable’ (sorted by not acceptable)**

In the chart below ‘Not Acceptable’ includes *Not Very Acceptable* and *Not Acceptable at All*, whilst ‘Acceptable’ includes *Very Acceptable* and *Acceptable* aggregated together. It shows all proposals sorted by least acceptable.



## Summary of Comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to make comments about specific proposals, and also took the opportunity to make broader comments about the budget and council services. Below is a summary of the comments.

**Council Tax** - Some respondents agreed to accept a council tax increase, but only if it was reasonable and justified by the improvement of services. They said that they understood the financial pressure that the council was under and that they were willing to pay more for better services. Others rejected any increase, pointing out that they already pay too much for poor services and that they cannot afford more due to the cost-of-living crisis. They said that the council should find other ways to balance the budget and that they should not pass the burden to the residents.

**Budget Cut Consequences** - A common theme in the responses was the concern about the negative consequences of budget cuts on the quality and availability of essential services, such as waste and recycling, social services, education, and CCTV. Many respondents noted that these services are already under pressure and that further reductions would harm the residents and the environment. They cited examples of fly tipping, school closures, staff redundancies, increased risks to children and families, and reduced security and safety.

**Public Perception on Alternatives** - Some respondents suggested alternative ways to save money, such as reducing the number of councillors and senior officers, closing some council buildings, outsourcing some services, merging with other councils, developing innovative ways to raise funds, and reclaiming money from failed projects. They claimed that these measures would have a greater impact on the budget than cutting front-line services and staff.

**Staffing Reduction Proposals** - Many respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the proposed staffing reductions in social services, especially for children and vulnerable adults. They argued that the cuts would put people at risk of harm, increase the workload and stress of the remaining staff, and damage the reputation of the council.

Some respondents suggested that the council should look for other ways to save money, such as reducing the number of managers, councillors, and high-paid staff, reviewing the efficiency and performance of existing staff, and collaborating with other local authorities or partners. They also pointed out some areas where they perceived the council to be overstaffed, wasteful, or unnecessary.

**Support for review of staffing structures** - A few respondents agreed that the council should review its staffing structures to ensure that they are efficient, effective, and fit for purpose. They also acknowledged the financial challenges that the council faces and the need to make savings. Some of them suggested that the review should take a "top down approach" and focus on the higher grades and salaries, rather than the lower paid and frontline staff. Others said that the review should look at each role and member of staff individually and assess their value for money.

**Waste and recycling services:** There was specific feedback from residents on the proposed changes to waste and recycling services, such as reducing the operating hours of the recycling centres, reviewing the size of waste bins, and altering the waste collection schedule. Respondents express their concerns that reducing the access to recycling centres or waste collection would lead to more fly tipping and littering, which would have a negative impact on the environment and the community. They point out that fly tipping is

already a considerable problem and blight on the area, and that reducing the services would only worsen the situation and increase the costs elsewhere.

Some residents offer suggestions for improving recycling such as providing better recycling boxes or bags, collecting more types of materials at kerbside, and enforcing stricter measures for non-recyclers. They argue that these suggestions would encourage more people to recycle, reduce the amount of waste, and make the recycling process easier and more convenient.

**Street lighting and energy saving:** Some responses support the proposals as a good idea, while others oppose as a safety risk or a waste of money. Those who support the proposal think that it would save the council money and reduce the carbon footprint, while those who oppose it think that it would increase the incidents of crime, vandalism, and accidents.

**Charging for replacement bins and recycling bags:** Some respondents agree that the council should charge for replacement bins and recycling bags, saying that it would encourage people to take care of them and reduce waste. However, others disagree or are neutral, saying that the bins and bags are often damaged, lost or stolen or other factors, such as the weather, animals, or thieves. They also say that charging for them would discourage recycling and encourage fly-tipping, which would have a negative environmental and financial impact.

**Education budget cuts:** The majority of the respondents strongly oppose any cuts to the schools budget and argue that it would have detrimental effects on the quality of education and care for children, especially those with additional learning needs. They also warn that reducing the schools budget would harm the staff morale and well-being, as well as the future prospects and economic development of the community.

Some respondents point out the high levels of deprivation and poverty in Blaenau Gwent and the correlation between deprivation and poor education outcomes. They stress the need for more resources and funding to support disadvantaged children and help them achieve their potential. They also suggest that schools should be allocated funding according to the level of need and challenge they face.

A few respondents propose that the schools budget should be managed more efficiently and effectively, with cuts to management costs, middle management, supply teaching, and excess spending. They also question the performance and outcomes of schools in Blaenau Gwent, given the high spend per pupil. They recommend that the council should review the budget allocation and spending of schools and look for ways to improve collaboration and savings.

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**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 to 2025/26 (APPROVED MARCH 2021)**

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Social Services</b>							
Community Equipment & Adaptations	279,000	279,000	279,000	285,000	285,000	285,000	285,000
Minor Works/Health & Safety	60,000						
	<b>339,000</b>	<b>279,000</b>	<b>279,000</b>	<b>285,000</b>	<b>285,000</b>	<b>285,000</b>	<b>285,000</b>
<b>Environment</b>							
Disabled Facilities Grants & Living Independently HRG	475,000	420,000	469,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Corporate Landlord/ Minor Works /DDA		320,000	320,000	280,000	280,000	300,000	300,000
Tredegar Townscape Heritage Initiative	125,000						
European Structural Fund Capital Match Fund	520,200						
Tredegar Company Shop	200,000						
Tech Valley Initiative	500,000	0					
Data Centre Move	240,000	152,000					
Constrained Units/ Industrial Units Improvement Programme	0	0	0			300,000	300,000
Abertillery Sports Centre demolition							
Big Arch	241,800	640,000					
Cemeteries	210,000	250,000	250,000	300,000			
	<b>2,512,000</b>	<b>1,782,000</b>	<b>1,039,000</b>	<b>780,000</b>	<b>480,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>800,000</b>
<b>Education</b>							
Band B Welsh Medium Remodelling	280,000						
Band B Secondary School Remodelling			70,000	280,000	1,510,000	750,000	750,000
New 420 place primary in Ebbw Fawr valley		2,100,000	945,000	105,000	0		
Band B Welsh Medium Seedling Provision		350,000	0	0	0		
Minor Works	150,000						
<b>Total 21st Century Schools</b>	<b>430,000</b>	<b>2,450,000</b>	<b>1,015,000</b>	<b>385,000</b>	<b>1,510,000</b>	<b>750,000</b>	<b>750,000</b>

<b>Other</b>							
Equipment Replacement	0		0	61,000	61,000	61,000	61,000
Civic Centre Demolition	0	650,000				0	0
General Offices and Community Hubs		180,000					
Disabled Discrimination Act Compliance	45,000			0	0		
City Deal Commitments		194,000	1,220,900	2,441,800			
Staff Support Recharges	<b>524,000</b>	524,000	524,000	524,000	474,000	400,000	400,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,850,000</b>	<b>6,059,000</b>	<b>4,077,900</b>	<b>4,476,800</b>	<b>2,810,000</b>	<b>2,296,000</b>	<b>2,296,000</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>							
<b>Capital Programme Funding</b>							
USB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	1,973,000	1,932,000	1,905,000	1,905,000	1,905,000	1,905,000	1,905,000
General Capital Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	1,868,000	1,938,000	1,911,000	1,201,000	1,201,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
<b>Useable Capital Receipts Capital Programme</b>	<b>-400,000</b>	<b>-650,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-327,000</b>	<b>-327,000</b>
<b>Useable Capital Receipts - Separate Projects</b>	<b>-260,000</b>						
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>4,501,000</b>	<b>4,520,000</b>	<b>3,816,000</b>	<b>3,106,000</b>	<b>3,106,000</b>	<b>3,432,000</b>	<b>3,432,000</b>

# Agenda Item 13

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 06.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

Report Subject: **Overview Position of Blaenau Gwent Town Centre CCTV Zones 2023/24**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Helen Cunningham, Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member Environment**

Report Submitted by: **Andrew Parker, Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships**

**Kristian Herridge: Policy Officer: CCTV**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	21 Dec 23	07.02.24			16 Jan 23	21.02.24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

To provide an overview position on the CCTV for overt surveillance within town centres zones for 2023/24 covering:

- The compliance journey with the relevant legislation and guidance.
- Summary of operating arrangements via the 23/24 Service Level Agreement with Caerphilly Council.
- An overview of performance for CCTV incidents and requests for the first six months of the financial year 2023/24.

This report does not include how the council uses CCTV in other areas i.e. individual buildings/premises, CCTV cameras for services e.g. deployable units, in-vehicle etc.

## 2. Scope and Background

### Our Compliance Journey

- 2.1 In response to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and its amending legislation, the Council is a lead responsible authority for Community Safety. As such we are required to work in partnership with other key public services to do all we reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment.
- 2.2 The provision and use of CCTV is not a statutory service provision but does support us in meeting our role as a responsible authority. In Blaenau Gwent, the Council became the 'system owner' of CCTV in the early 2000's.
- 2.3 The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (POFA) introduced the regulation of public space surveillance cameras, and a commissioner was appointed. The Council must have due regard to the 'Surveillance Camera Code of Practice', developed with the Information Commissioner's Office, which aims to balance the need for cameras in public places with individual's right to privacy.
- 2.4 To help us in doing this, we operate our own local area focused Code of Practice, [Appendix 1]. This has been updated for 2023/24 taking into

consideration relevant changes as we have moved into a new operating arrangement with Caerphilly Council via a Service Level Agreement (SLA). It also reflects our related requirements of the Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulation Act 2018.

- 2.5 To support these overarching requirements, we also carry out an annual Data Protection Impact Assessment Process (DPIA), whereby consideration is given to the pressing need for the use of CCTV. This process considers our existing infrastructure, and in 2023/24 has been further strengthened to engage key stakeholders i.e. elected members (sessions held on 30 Nov 2023) and local policing colleagues (6 Dec 2023).
- 2.6 The findings of the DPIA process are captured in six zone DPIAs documents, which are considered and agreed, and where appropriate actioned, via the CCTV SIRO quarterly meeting, which is chaired by the Chief Officer Resources, as the Senior Information Risk Owner. This process is typically concluded in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of a financial year with any action taken thereafter, should any changes or improvements be identified.

### **Summary of operating arrangements for CCTV**

- 2.7 Since the summer of 2023 the Council's day-to-day operating arrangements for CCTV has moved to Caerphilly Council via a two-year Service Level Agreement [Appendix 2].
- 2.8 To support the successful implementation of this agreement, there was also substantial improvement to the internet communication from 10mb to 100mb PSBA connections for transferring images from each of the six CCTV zones in the area to the CCTV Control Room in Tir-y-berth, Caerphilly.
- 2.9 The system operates 55 fixed cameras at six CCTVs zones:
- **Sirhowy:** 12 cameras Tredegar Town Centre Zone (recorder at library)
  - **Ebbw Fawr:** 13 cameras Ebbw Vale Town Centre Zone (recorder at library) and 3 cameras Cwm village centre Zone (recorder at library)
  - **Ebbw Fach North:** 6 cameras Brynmawr Town Centre Zone (recorder at library) and 2 cameras Blaina Town Centre Zone (recorder at library)
  - **Ebbw Fach South:** 19 cameras Abertillery Town Centre Zone (recorder at Anvil Court).
- 2.10 The new operating arrangements also brings daily remote maintenance checks for identifying faults and issues. When any are found they are reported immediately to our CCTV maintenance contractor, IDS. Our contract with IDS has also been strengthened for 2023/24 (at an additional costs) to facilitate engineer availability 24/7, 365 days of the year, four planned maintenance visits, and free call outs for faults and issues - with only replacement parts chargeable.
- 2.11 The arrangement also covers:
- Caerphilly Council providing information in response to retrospective requests from Gwent Police and us as responsible authorities, and also non-direct provisions e.g. request via Freedom of Information, Insurers, Subject Access Requests (facilitated via our Policy Team to Caerphilly).

- The digital uploading of evidence from our system by Caerphilly Council to an online portal for viewing by Gwent Police for CCTV requests. \*
  - Facilitating 'live' CCTV feeds to Gwent Police to enable real-time collaboration with our system to respond to incidents. \*
  - Provision of operational data and information to support statutory/ non-statutory performance monitoring and reporting, i.e. Annual Reporting.
- \* Operated via a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Gwent Police, Caerphilly Council and Blaenau Gwent Council [Appendix 3].
- 2.12 The Policy and Partnerships Team, via the Service Manager and the Policy Officer: CCTV continue to oversee the wider CCTV portfolio which includes:
- All statutory policy development and implementation requirements.
  - Corporate reporting for professional and democratic processes.
  - Financial and budget monitoring and oversight.
  - Contract management for the SLA with Caerphilly Council (quarterly) and CCTV maintenance agreement with IDS (monthly).
  - Oversight of council owned CCTV infrastructure and responsibility for supporting infrastructure (e.g. power, columns, buildings).
  - Forward planning, and sustainability assessments.
  - Liaison internally with Council officers, elected members and partnership interaction externally on related issues.
  - Project management of improvements to infrastructure/system.
- 2.13 **Reporting on performance 2023/24**
- Generally, performance reporting is carried out via a CCTV Annual Report. The intention is for our Blaenau Gwent Annual Report from 23/24 to fall into the same cycle as our SLA partner, Caerphilly Council, which will see the report covering a financial year period (April 2023 to March 2024). The report will be produced and available for consideration by the end of the first quarter of the next financial year (end of June 2024) allowing data to be available.
- 2.14 Even so, provided in Section 6 of this report, under the Supporting Evidence section, is a summary of performance covering the initial six-month period of this year (April 2023 to September 2023).

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

- 3.1 The Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the report on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and supported Recommendation 1 – Option 1 and Recommendations 2 and 3.

There are three recommendations for Cabinet to consider:

#### **Recommendation 1:**

**Option 1:** That Cabinet consider and endorse the updated Codes of Practice for 2023/24;

**Option 2:** That Cabinet considers the updated Codes of Practice for 2023/24 and makes specific recommendations prior to endorsement;

**Recommendation 2:**

That Cabinet considers the current operating practices and arrangements with Caerphilly Council and IDS; and

**Recommendation 3:**

Agree to consider the Annual Report 2023/24 as part of the committees forward work programme for 2024/25.

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

The provision of a CCTV service is non-statutory function and not required under legislation, however the CCTV system is an important tool used with our partners to tackle crime and disorder, in-line with the Community Safety requirements.

Utilising CCTV to help tackle crime and disorder contributes to the Gwent Well-being Plan step to '*enable and support people, neighbourhoods, and communities to be resilient, connected, thriving and safe*', and our Corporate Plan 2022/27 objective for '*empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient*'.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are no direct implications on budget for this report. For context the overall budget for CCTV for 2023/24 is £208,680. Below is a broad overview of how the budget is used to fund key activities, with figures estimated using projections for annual spend from six monthly budget reporting:

Service Level Agreement with Caerphilly Council	= £66,000
<i>Estimated Costs for requests outside agreement</i>	= £5,500
BT costs for PSBA Internet Communication	= £18,500
Power Costs (recharged internally to street lighting)	= £ 32,200
BGCBC internal Staffing Costs	= £47,500
CCTV Maintenance Contract	= £16,000
On-going Maintenance/System Costs	= £5,000

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There are no notable risks associated to this report, other than those associated with non-compliance of good practice guidance provided by the Surveillance Commissioners and GDPR requirements. This risk is mitigated by the appropriate agreements and policies being in place, such as Service Level Agreements, Codes of Practice, DPIAs etc.

5.3 ***Legal***

See overview provided within the background to this report which outlines a summary of the legislative position associated to operating overt CCTV public space surveillance.

#### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no human resource implications or risks associated to this report. In 2023/24 the Policy Team is effectively resourced to operate the existing system and associated implications, and supporting staffing provision is covered through the relevant agreements and contracts.

#### 5.5 **Health and Safety**

There are no Health and Safety implications associated to this report.

### 6. **Supporting Evidence**

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

Below is a summary of performance reporting covering the initial six-month period of this year (April 2023 to September 2023). Please note that the operating arrangements for CCTV changed during this financial year, whereby from August 2023 we entered the SLA with Caerphilly Council.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 (four-month period), there were 14 Actioned Request to Gwent Police from the Policy Team\*:

- Abertillery, 5 actioned requests
- Blaina, 1 actioned request
- Brynmawr, 0 actioned requests
- Cwm, 0 actioned requests
- Ebbw Vale, 3 actioned requests
- Tredegar, 5 actioned requests.

*\* CCTV not live monitored requests considered and where footage available provision downloaded to disc and collected by Gwent Police Officers.*

Between 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (two-month period), following change of operating arrangements to Caerphilly Council:

August Summary 2023. Overall, 11 combined incidents:

- 2 incidents monitored by CCT not requiring contact with Gwent Police (1 Tredegar & 1 Brynmawr)
- 4 requests from Gwent Police with help in incidents, not always requiring police attendance (2 Tredegar 1 Abertillery & 1 Brynmawr)
- 5 requested for footage, viewed, not reported or monitored live.

Furthermore, CCTV supplied to Police via Nice Portal (Digital Transfer) 7 incidents.

September Summary 2023. Overall, 26 combined incidents:

- 4 incidents monitored by CCT not requiring contact with Gwent Police (2 Ebbw Vale, 1 Tredegar & 1 Brynmawr)

- 7 requests from Gwent Police with help in incidents, not always requiring police attendance (1 Ebbw Vale, 2 Tredegar, 3 Abertillery & 1 Brynmawr)
- 15 requested for footage, viewed, not reported or monitored live.

Furthermore, CCTV supplied to Police via Nice Portal (Digital Transfer) 10 incidents, and CCTV supplied via DVD (large volume of data) 6 incidents.

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

The provision of CCTV is in place to assist with the prevention and detection of crime and disorder. The DPIA process described above ensures that appropriate consideration is given to the pressing need for surveillance to ensure that we lawfully breaching people's rights under relevant legislation such as human rights and data protection.

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

The annual DPIA process provides involvement opportunities for key stakeholders to help consider the pressing need for operating the CCTV.

There has been an elected member briefing on CCTV in September 2023, which provided an update position on the CCTV arrangements for Blaenau Gwent, as well as outlining the next steps on our compliance journey with the relevant legislation and guidance.

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

The CCTV system utilises up-to-date hi-tech equipment and software which will provide a long-term CCTV solution, if there is appropriate investment in the running, upkeep and maintenance of the overall system. The annual review process will support this process and allow for forward planning and technological advancement to be regularly considered.

#### 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The CCTV system is focused on reactively providing evidence to police in relation to crime and disorder which will have already occurred.

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

Partnership working is key to the delivery of the CCTV portfolio, with regular interactions with appropriate partners, particularly Gwent Police.

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

There is regular engagement with data controllers from other CCTV providers across service areas, this includes the Policy Team providing advice and guidance on compliance. Furthermore, where service areas are defined as responsible authorities CCTV requests can be legitimately facilitated via the Policy Team to Caerphilly Council.

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

There are no climate change considerations associated to this report.

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

There is no requirement to carry out an Integrated Impact Assessment in relation to this report.

### 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**



- 7.1 Monitoring is carried out via the quarterly CCTV SIRO meeting, and there is regular monitoring arrangements agreed with Caerphilly Council to oversee the SLA (quarterly) and also the CCTV maintenance contract (monthly).

Furthermore, annual reporting is recommended to be taken through democratic processes for 2023/24.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- *Appendix 1: Public Space CCTV System: Code of Practice 23/24*
- *Appendix 2: Service Level Agreement CCBC & BGCBC*
- *Appendix 3: Memorandum of Understanding - Access to the CCBC Control Room at Tir-y-berth and Images recorded by Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Councils Public Open Space CCTV Systems.*

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**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

# **Public Space CCTV System**

## **Code of Practice**

**<2023/24 Working Draft>**

To be considered for review: April 2025

## **Section 1 Introduction & Objectives**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council operates a Public Space Closed Circuit Television System (hereafter called the PS CCTV System). The CCTV System comprises of a number of cameras installed at strategic locations within the County Borough.

All the cameras are fixed cameras with no facility to pan, zoom or tilt. The system is currently 'record-only' with no 'live' monitoring taking place, unless specifically requested by Gwent police for a serious, ongoing incident, or a pre-planned policing operation. The CCTV footage is accessed via the CCTV Control Room within Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (Data Controller) has recently entered into a Service Level Agreement (hereafter SLA) with Caerphilly County Borough Council for them to act as CCTV Data Processor on behalf of Blaenau Gwent's overt public space CCTV operations.

For the purposes of this document, the PS CCTV System is owned and managed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. The responsibility for the overall ownership/management of the PS CCTV System lies with Blaenau Gwent Council's Nominated Chief Officer (SIRO). Caerphilly County Borough Council's Control Room Manager oversees the effective day-to-day management of the Control Room and Blaenau Gwent's PS CCTV System.

For the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 the 'Data Controller' is Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) under registration reference Z6623658.

Details of the telephone numbers of the owners of the PS CCTV System, together with their respective responsibilities, are shown at Appendix A to this Code.

#### **Statement in respect of The Human Rights Act 1998**

The Council recognises that Public Authorities and those organisations carrying out the functions of a public service are required to observe the obligations imposed by the Human Rights Act 1998. The Council considers that the use of CCTV in Blaenau Gwent is a necessary, proportionate, and appropriate measure to help reduce crime, deter anti-social behaviour and to improve public safety.

Section 163 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 creates the power for local authorities to provide closed circuit television coverage of any land within their area for the purposes of crime prevention or victim welfare. Closed circuit television is also considered a necessary initiative by the Council under their duty to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

It is recognised that the operation of the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council PS CCTV System may infringe on the privacy of individuals. The Council recognises that it

is their responsibility to ensure that the PS CCTV System should always comply with all relevant legislation, to ensure its legality and legitimacy.

The PS CCTV System will only be used as a proportionate response to identified problems and be used only insofar as it is necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, public safety, the economic wellbeing of the area, for the prevention and detection of crime or disorder, for the protection of health and morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Observance of this Code shall ensure that evidence is secured, retained, and made available as required with due regard to the rights of the individual.

The Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council PS CCTV System shall be operated with respect for all individuals, recognising the individual right to be free from inhuman or degrading treatment and avoiding any form of discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

### **Objectives of the System**

The objectives of the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council PS CCTV System, which form the lawful basis for the processing of data, are:

- Assisting in the detection and prevention of crime.
- Provide evidential material to assist Police investigations.
- Deter those having criminal intent.
- Reduce the fear of crime and give confidence to the public that they are in a secure environment.
- Provide safer communities.
- Reduce acts of vandalism
- Assist in the prevention and detection of anti-social behaviour.
- Assist with traffic management in our towns.

### **Public Space CCTV Procedure Manual**

This Code of Practice will be supplemented by separate CCTV Procedures (operated by Caerphilly County Borough Council via the SLA), which will provide guidelines on all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the PS CCTV System (not public documents).

## **Section 2 Statement of Purpose and Principles**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to state the intention of the PS CCTV System owners and managers, as far as is reasonably practicable to support the objectives of the Blaenau-Gwent County Borough Council PS CCTV System and to outline how it intends to do so.

### **The General Principles of Operation**

The PS CCTV System will be operated in accordance with the principles and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

The operation of the PS CCTV System will also recognise the need for formal authorisation of any covert 'directed surveillance', as required by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000.

The PS CCTV System will be operated with due regard to the relevant definitions, rules and procedures in the Home Office Code of Practice "Covert Surveillance and Property Interference" including updates published from time to time.

Covert surveillance conducted by the Council is outside the scope of this Code and is dealt with by a separate policy statement.

The PS CCTV System will be operated in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. (POFA).

The PS CCTV System will be operated fairly and within the law. It will only be used for the purposes for which it was established, and which are identified within the Code of Practice, or which may subsequently be agreed in accordance with the Code of Practice

The PS CCTV System will be operated with due regard to the principle that everyone has the right to respect for his or her private and family life and home.

The public interest in the operation of the PS CCTV System will be recognised by ensuring the security and integrity of operational procedures.

Throughout this Code of Practice, it is intended, as far as reasonably possible, to balance the objectives of the PS CCTV System with the need to safeguard the rights of the individual. The owners of the PS CCTV System operate a corporate complaint procedure and have in place the appropriate checks and balances with clear lines of accountability for the PS CCTV System.

Involvement with the PS CCTV System by any organisation, individual or authority assumes an agreement by all such participants to comply fully with this Code of Practice and to be accountable under the Code of Practice.

## **The Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice**

As per Section 30 (1) (a) of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, the PS CCTV System owners and operators must follow a duty to have regard to the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice and the 12 guiding principles contained within:

1. Use of a surveillance camera system must always be for a specified purpose which is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and necessary to meet an identified pressing need.
2. The use of a surveillance camera system must take into account its effect on individuals and their privacy, with regular reviews to ensure its use remains justified.
3. There must be as much transparency in the use of a surveillance camera system as possible, including a published contact point for access to information and complaints.
4. There must be clear responsibility and accountability for all surveillance camera system activities including images and information collected, held and used.
5. Clear rules, policies and procedures must be in place before a surveillance camera system is used, and these must be communicated to all who need to comply with them.
6. No more images and information should be stored than that which is strictly required for the stated purpose of a surveillance camera system, and such images and information should be deleted once their purposes have been discharged.
7. Access to retained images and information should be restricted and there must be clearly defined rules on who can gain access and for what purpose such access is granted; the disclosure of images and information should only take place when it is necessary for such a purpose or for law enforcement purposes.
8. Surveillance camera system operators should consider any approved operational, technical and competency standards relevant to a system and its purpose and work to meet and maintain those standards.
9. Surveillance camera system images and information should be subject to appropriate security measures to safeguard against unauthorised access and use.
10. There should be effective review and audit mechanisms to ensure legal requirements, policies and standards are complied with in practice, and regular reports should be published.
11. When the use of a surveillance camera system is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, and there is a pressing need for its use, it should then be used in the most effective way to support public safety and law enforcement with the aim of processing images and information of evidential value.
12. Any information used to support a surveillance camera system which compares against a reference database for matching purposes should be accurate and kept up to date.

### **Copyright and Data Controller**

Copyright and ownership of all material recorded by virtue of the PS CCTV System will remain with the Data Controller – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

The PS CCTV System owner (the Council) is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation. Once recorded data has been disclosed to another party, such as the Police, they may then become a ‘controller in common’ for the processing of that data independently of the CCTV System owner. Both parties should exercise all due diligence in ensuring compliance with the Data Protection legislation.

### **Cameras and Area Coverage**

The areas covered by PS CCTV to which this Code of Practice refers are the public areas within Blaenau Gwent County Borough. The System is currently divided into six distinct town centre zones - Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Brynmawr, Abertillery, Blaina, and Cwm. The System may be expanded to cover any area within the boundaries of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Deployable or mobile cameras may be temporarily sited within Blaenau Gwent. The use of such cameras, and the data produced by virtue of their use, will always accord with the objectives of the System and is governed by this PS CCTV System Code of Practice.

All of the PS CCTV System cameras offer a full colour and fixed view capability, using a variety of ‘bullet’ cameras, 180° Panoramic, Turret and 4G cameras some of which may automatically switch to monochrome in low light conditions.

None of the cameras forming part of the PS CCTV System will be installed in a covert manner. Some cameras may be enclosed within ‘all weather domes’, for aesthetic or operational reasons, with appropriate signage present for cameras.

The locations of all cameras within the PS CCTV System will be published on the Blaenau Gwent Council website at [www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

### **Monitoring and Recording Facilities**

The CCTV footage can be directly accessed by authorised personnel, such as police officers for a legitimate/lawful purpose via the Caerphilly CCTV Control Room. CCTV requests from Gwent Police can be sent via NICE Investigate (Police licensed digital data transfer system) to the Caerphilly Control Room and CCTV data sent back to the police, remotely, via authorised/fully trained control room staff, via a digital evidence locker and accessed/opened from a police issued laptop or computer. It can also be accessed remotely in other extenuating circumstances or for technical and maintenance purposes.

The PS CCTV System equipment has the capability of recording all cameras simultaneously throughout every 24-hour period.

PS CCTV System operators are able to record images from selected cameras, produce hard copies and digital copies of recorded images, replay or copy any pre-recorded data at their discretion and in accordance with the Caerphilly’s CCTV Code of Practice. Only trained and authorised users shall operate viewing, recording equipment and handle any downloaded data.



### **CCTV Control Room**

CCTV is monitored and controlled from a dedicated CCTV Control Room which complies with the constructional requirements of **BS 7958** and is so constructed so that it can be secured from outside if necessary in case of emergency.

The Control Room has direct radio and telephone communications with police, in order that immediate contact can be made in emergency situations or to assist with incident management.

Access to the CCTV Control Room is strictly controlled to persons with identified need to enter in the course of their duties. All other visitors and contractors accessing the Control Room should obtain consent from the Scheme Manager at Caerphilly Council and will sign an Access Control Log book, which in turn constituted an undertaking of confidentiality.

In the normal course of events Police Officers are granted the right to enter the CCTV Control Room at any time whilst on duty, after signature of the Access Control Log book, for liaison and security purposes. This right of access is agreed by a Memorandum of Understanding between the relevant partners. This agreement is subject to annual verification during the annual review.

Ergonomics and the Health & Safety of all staff employed within the Control Room environment are subject to constant review. Health & Safety surveys and risk assessments are conducted bi-annually and copies of the most recent surveys are retained within the Control Room. All Operators are afforded the opportunity to take regular breaks away from their workstations.

All staff employed in the CCTV environment will be subject to the Caerphilly County Borough Council relevant Code of Conduct for Employee's and the Policies and Procedures. All staff have, access to the required Policies and Procedures via Human Resources Department or the CCBC internal network. The relevant manager will review the Health & Safety Policy on an annual basis, with advice from the Caerphilly County Borough Council Health & Safety Directorate.

### **Human Resources**

All Designated PS CCTV System Operators shall receive relevant training and should have requisite knowledge in the requirements of the:

- Human Rights Act 1998,
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016,
- Data Protection Act 2018,
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000,
- Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice, and this
- Code of Practice

### **Processing and Handling of Recorded Material**

All recorded material will be recorded in digital format and will be processed and handled strictly in accordance with the Caerphilly County Borough Council's operating practices.

**CCTV Operators' Instructions**

Technical instructions on the use of equipment housed within the PS CCTV Control Room are contained in a separate manual provided by the equipment suppliers.

**Changes to the Code of Practice or the Procedure Manual**

Any major changes to this Code of Practice or the PS CCTV System Procedure Manual, i.e. changes that have a significant impact upon the Code of Practice or upon the operation of the PS CCTV System, will be considered and authorised by a review process.

Minor changes, may be required for clarification and which will not have a significant impact, will be included in this Code of Practice requiring higher authorisation.

## **Section 3 Privacy and Data Protection**

### **Public Concern**

Although members of the public have become accustomed to being observed, those who do express concern do so mainly over matters relating to the processing of the information, or data, i.e. what happens to information that is obtained?

Note: 'Processing' means any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction of the information or data.

All personal data obtained by virtue of the PS CCTV System shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall only be processed in the exercise of achieving the stated objectives of the PS CCTV System. When processing personal data, the individual right to privacy in their private and family life and home will be respected. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's lawful basis for processing data is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest.

Data will be stored securely in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Data Protection Impact Assessments will be completed for the respective PS CCTV zones, and will be reviewed annually to ensure that privacy and data protection concerns are appropriately addressed.

Cameras will not be used to look into private residential property. 'Privacy zones' are programmed into the PS CCTV System which prevent the cameras from looking in private residence. In addition, all operators will be specifically trained on issues in relation to privacy.

A member of the public wishing to register a complaint about any aspect of the PS CCTV System may do so by contacting Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. All complaints shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. Any disciplinary issue identified will be considered under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

All contracted or directly employed PS CCTV System staff are contractually bound by regulations governing confidentiality and discipline.

### **Data Protection Legislation**

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 the 'Data Controller' is the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

All personal data will be processed in accordance with the six principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016, which must be:

- 1) All personal data will be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
- 2) Personal data will be held only for purposes specified.

- 3) Personal data held will be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which the data is processed.
- 4) Steps will be taken to ensure that personal data is accurate and where necessary, kept up to date.
- 5) Personal data will be held for no longer than is necessary.
- 6) Personal data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the individual data subject.

In addition – appropriate measures will be taken to ensure against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to personal data.

Personal data will not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area unless there is an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedom of data subjects in place in the intended destination.

### **Disclosing personal information – exemptions under the Data Protection legislation**

Certain exemptions allow for the disclosure of personal data in situations where there would otherwise be a breach of the Data Protection legislation or allow information to be withheld from Data Protection legislation or allow information to be withheld from data subjects in circumstances in which it would otherwise need to be disclosed.

The more commonly deployed exemptions are:

- 1) the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.
- 2) the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of maintaining effective immigration control, or the investigation or detection of activities that would undermine the maintenance of effective immigration control.
- 3) the disclosure is required by an enactment, rule of law or court/tribunal order;
- 4) the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of actual or prospective legal proceedings, or obtaining of legal advice or establishing, exercising or defending of legal rights.

Processing personal data is exempt from the subject access provisions to the extent to which the application of those provisions to the data would be likely to prejudice any of the purposes referred to above.

### **Disclosure to the Police**

The disclosure of recorded data will be on the authority of the Nominated Chief Officer and dealt with in accordance with appropriate procedures, the terms of the SLA between Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Council's, and our joint memorandum of understanding between both local authorities and Gwent Police.

Disclosure will be in accordance with existing arrangements with Gwent Police, and will cite a specified, explicit, and legitimate purpose for the disclosure/sharing of data. This means that the reason(s) for each instance of a disclosure (including viewing)/sharing of data must be set out clearly by the Police, including their reliance on any Data Protection legislation exemptions and justification for reliance on the exemptions.

Once an image or images has been disclosed to a partner agency such as the Police, then they become the Data Controller for the copy of that image(s). It is then the responsibility of that partner to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to any further disclosures.

## **Information Sharing**

Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gives the power to share information, where it is necessary or expedient for the purposes of any provision of the Act, to relevant authorities. Relevant authorities for the purposes of the Act include:

- The Chief Officer of Police
- A Local Authority

The relevant authorities are signatories to the Gwent Partnership Information Sharing Agreement made under Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act.

## **Storage and Request for Images**

Images recorded by PS CCTV cameras are retained for a period of 31 days in digital format.

Images may be requested by Gwent Police Officers in pursuance of the registered purposes, the scheme objectives, or any other provision under the 1998 Act.

Images required will be stored in the 'Digital Evidence Locker' following request. Images will be retained in this location until a NICE (Digital evidence management system) request is received and images will be uploaded digitally as required. Requests for large amounts of footage may still be supplied via DVD-R/ hard drive which is produced in a format suitable for court purposes or ongoing investigation.

Preservation of footage to the point of release to a Gwent Police Officer will be secured by CCTV Control Room Operators. Control Room Operators providing or producing footage to Gwent Police Officers will evidence the secure systems and procedures used to provide that evidence.

Images within the 'Digital Evidence Locker' will be retained for a finite period. Where possible, the requesting Police Officer will be contacted prior to destruction. However, in accordance with data protection principles, retained footage will be periodically cleared down. No images will be retained in the Digital Evidence Locker for longer than 6 months from date of request.

## **Reviewing and Securing Images**

Images may be reviewed by Gwent Police Officers to determine the evidential value of information retained within the Control Room systems. CCTV Control Room Operators will afford any possible assistance to Gwent Police Officers in achieving this task, including the production of NICE digital upload / DVD-R/hard drive format evidence when requested.

A review suite exists at the CCTV Control Room to assist Gwent Police Officers if required.

## **Access to Images**

The CCTV Control Room operates on a 24/7 basis. The shift system in operation defines that the greatest resource in terms of staffing is in the afternoons, evenings and at weekends. If Gwent Police Officers need to attend the control room in person, they should if possible, ring in advance using the dedicated police line to make arrangements.

### **Real time requests for response/access by Gwent Police**

Gwent Police may contact the Caerphilly CCTV Control room 24/7 via a dedicated Police line. Officers may request operators to monitor specific areas/cameras in response to live events. Operators can also submit live footage one camera at a time to Gwent Police HQ via a dedicated line.

### **Directed Surveillance**

The PS CCTV systems may be used for directed surveillance under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Requests for use of the system for directed surveillance must be accompanied by an appropriate Authorisation made under the 2000 Act (redacted as necessary to prevent disclosure of sensitive information) and to ensure CCTV equipment is used in accordance with the authorisation. Contact details for the Authorising Officer and Police RIPA Bureau should also be provided. Authorisations will be retained by the CCTV Control Room in order to satisfy inspections by the relevant Commissioner. Additional summary documents may also be provided for use by the CCTV operatives.

### **Urgent Oral Applications**

The CCTV system may also be used in response to urgent oral authorisations from Gwent Police. In such incidences the Authority should be provided with details (including contact information) of the Authorising Officer, the start and expiry date and time and a written summary of what has been authorised.

Any pre planned operations requiring the use of the CCTV systems which would constitute directed surveillance must be covered by an appropriate authorisation under the 2000 Act.

Once an image or images has been disclosed to a partner agency such as the Police, then they become the Data Controller for the copy of that image(s). It is then the responsibility of that partner to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to any further disclosures.

### **Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA)**

The Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996 introduced a statutory framework for the disclosure to defendants of material that the prosecution would not intend to use in the presentation of its own case.

### **Disclosure to Insurance Companies**

The disclosure of recorded data will be on the authority of the PS CCTV Supervisor and dealt with in accordance with the PS CCTV Procedure Manual.

A request can be made by emailing [cctv@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:cctv@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk). The relevant form will be forwarded, and the request will be dealt with. All information regarding the footage will be logged in the PS CCTV Control Room Data log.

### **Disclosure to the Media**

The Data Protection legislation exemption (Schedule 2, part 5, para 26(3) of the Data Protection Act 2018) applies to journalism but this should not be construed as an automatic blanket exemption from the Data Protection legislation -the media must still ensure they give consideration to the data protection rights of individuals.

The CCTV System Owner must be satisfied that the disclosure is lawful, sufficiently justified in the public interest and would be fair and meet the 'legitimate interests' condition. If the information in question is sensitive personal data (someone's health, sex life or allegations of criminal activity), there is a specific Data Protection legislation condition to allow a public interest disclosure to journalists if it is related to wrongdoing or incompetence, but otherwise, the CCTV System Owner will need to be satisfied that one of the conditions for processing sensitive data applies. The key is proportionality. It is a balancing act – if there is a serious privacy intrusion or risk of harm, the media will need to demonstrate/establish a significant public interest to justify the disclosure.

The Data Protection legislation does not oblige the CCTV System Owner to disclose information to the media, if it disagrees with the media's view of the public interest, or if the CCTV System Owner has other overriding legal, professional or reputational reasons to refuse to disclose the information.

*Before disclosing information to the media, the CCTV System Owner must ensure that the request cites an appropriate public interest justification.*

### **Request for information (Subject Access Requests)**

Personal data includes CCTV images of an individual, or images, which gives away information about an individual, such as their car number plate.

An individual is only entitled to their own data, and not to information relating to other people, (unless the information is also about them, or they are acting on behalf of someone). Therefore, it is important that the PS CCTV System owner establishes whether the information requested falls within the definition of personal data. For further information about the definition of personal data please see the ICO Right of Access Guidance on what is personal data.

The Data Protection legislation does not prevent an individual making a subject access request via a third party such as a solicitor. In these cases, the PS CCTV System owner will need to satisfy itself that the third party making the request is entitled to act on behalf of the individual, but it is the third party's responsibility to provide evidence of this entitlement. This might be a written authority to make the request, or it might be a more general power of attorney.

A child can also request access to information held and shared. Even if a child is too young to understand the implications of subject access rights, it still has the right rather than anyone else such as parent or guardian. So, it is the child who has a right of access to the information held about them, even though in the case of young children, these rights are likely to be exercised by those with parental responsibility for them.

Responding to a subject access request may involve providing information that relates both to the individual making the request and to another individual (perhaps a perpetrator).

The PS CCTV System owner can refuse to comply with the request if it would mean disclosing information about another individual who can be identified from that information, except if:

- a) the other individual has consented to the disclosure, or

b) it is reasonable to comply with the request without that individual's consent.

In determining whether it is reasonable to disclose the information, the PS CCTV System owner must consider all the relevant circumstances including:

- the type of information that it would disclose.
- any duty of confidentiality owed to the other individual.
- any steps taken to seek consent from the other individual.
- whether the other individual is capable of giving consent and
- any express refusal of consent by the other individual.

This means that although the PS CCTV System owner may sometimes be able to disclose information relating to a third party, it needs to decide whether it is appropriate to do so in each case. The decision will involve balancing the data subject's rights of access against the other individual's rights. If the other person consents to the disclosure of information about them, then it would be unreasonable not to do so. However, if there is no such consent, the PS CCTV System owner must decide whether to disclose the information anyway.

Under Data Protection legislation, it is an offence to make any amendment with the intention of preventing its disclosure.

Any personal access request from an individual for the disclosure of their personal data, which they believe is recorded by virtue of the PS CCTV System, will be directed in the first instance to the Nominated Chief Officer and dealt with by an appropriate Designated CCTV Officer, in accordance with the Data Protection legislation.

In supplying the footage, care must be taken not to disclose any personal data of another individual. This may involve 'blurring' or 'pixilating' parts of the footage such as figures or licence plates.

The information will be provided free of charge. However, a reasonable fee based on the administrative cost of providing the information may be charged when a request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, particularly if it is repetitive. A reasonable fee may also be charged to comply with requests for further copies of the same information.

Any person making a subject access request must be able to prove their identity and provide sufficient information to enable the data to be located.

When responding to a subject access request, the Council cannot apply a policy of blanket non-disclosure. There must be a selected and targeted approach to non-disclosure based on the circumstances of the particular case.

The rights of data subjects are qualified rights and are not absolute. The Data Protection legislation recognises that in some circumstances, the Council might have a legitimate reason for not complying with a subject access request, so it provides a number of exemptions & restrictions from the duty to do so.

The most commonly deployed exemptions are:

- Where the information is subject to legal or litigation privilege.
- Where the information contains the personal data of a third party;



- Where the information is of the type, which would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders if disclosed.

Where an exemption or restriction applies to the facts of a particular request, the Council may refuse to provide all or some of the information requested, depending on the circumstances. The application of exemptions/restrictions must be undertaken in consultation with Legal Services.

Requests by third parties for disclosure of personal data third may include, but are not limited to:

- Police (civil police, British Transport Police, Ministry of Defence Police, or Military Police)
- Statutory authorities/bodies with powers to prosecute, (e.g. H.M Customs and Excise, Trading Standards etc.)
- Solicitors
- Insurance agencies

Requests by third parties are dealt with in accordance with Section 9 and Appendix C of this Code.

### **Requests by Council employees and members of the public – alleged incidences on PS CCTV System Owner’s premises**

Requests may be made by the PS CCTV System Owner’s employees and members of the public for CCTV footage of activity in/on the PS CCTV System Owner’s premises e.g. car parks where criminal damage to vehicles is being alleged.

The ICO advises that consideration should be given to whether the request is genuine and whether there is any risk to the safety of the other people involved.

The Council is in no position to accurately assess the risk posed to individuals when PS CCTV footage is requested by a private person or group. Routinely the council will only disclose to approved and authorised third parties such as Police and Insurance Companies and will only consider requests by other parties in rare circumstances where it is clear there is no risk to others. This has no effect on the policy in regard to Data Subject Access Requests.

Vehicle crime should be reported by the individual to Gwent Police and/or to their insurance agency.

Any request from an individual for confirmation as to whether or not personal data concerning them is being processed and, where that is the case, access to the personal data will be directed in the first instance to the Data Protection Officer. Each request will be assessed on its own merits.

The principles of Sections 45 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 Article 15 (Rights of Data Subjects and others) shall be followed in respect of every request.

Any person making a request must be able to prove his identity and provide sufficient information to enable the data to be located. For further information on Subject Access Requests please see [here](#).

## **Section 4 Accountability and Public Information**

### **The Public**

Public access to the PS CCTV Control Room will be prohibited.

### **Public Space CCTV System Owner**

The CCTV System owner is Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

### **The Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO)**

The Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) will perform the role of Senior Responsible Officer (SRO).

The SIRO is responsible for authorising overt surveillance utilising the PS CCTV System. They are also responsible for authorising any changes to the PS CCTV System affecting the views or scope of the PS CCTV System via the submission of a Data Protection Impact Assessment.

The SIRO is responsible for agreeing any significant changes to this Code of Practice.

### **Data Controller**

The Data Controller means a person who (either alone or jointly or in common with other persons) determines the purposes for which and the manner in which any personal data are, or are to be processed.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Data Controller.

### **Nominated Chief Officer (CCTV)**

The Nominated Chief Officer is the nominated representative on behalf of the Owner whose role will include responsibility to:

- receive reports at agreed periods.
- Liaise with the SIRO to consult regarding changes to any of its aspects of the CCTV System, including this Code of Practice.
- Ensure that statistical and other relevant information, including any complaints made, will be included in the Annual Report of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, and will be made available to the public, Elected Members and other relevant stakeholders.

### **CCTV System Manager**

The Nominated Chief Officer will identify a CCTV System Manager. The System Manager will have delegated authority for data control on behalf of the Data Controller, who will:

- Maintain day to day management of the system.
- Accept overall responsibility for the system and for ensuring that the Code is complied with.
- Ensure that every complaint is dealt with in-line with the Corporate Complaints Policy.

**Designated CCTV Officers**

The designated CCTV Officers will have day-to-day access to the PS CCTV System. They will consist of suitably trained staff as identified by the Nominated Chief Officer.

**Public Information**

This Code of Practice - A copy shall be published on the Council's website and will be made available to anyone on request.

Annual Report - A copy of the Annual Report shall be published on the Council's website and will be made available to anyone requesting it.

Signs – Bilingual (Welsh and English) signs will be placed in the locality of the cameras and at main entrance points to the relevant areas, e.g. pedestrian precincts. The signs will indicate:

- The presence of CCTV recording.
- The 'owners' of the CCTV System.
- The contact telephone number.
- The purpose of the CCTV System.

## **Section 5: Assessment of the Public Space CCTV System and Code of Practice**

### **Evaluation**

The PS CCTV System will be evaluated periodically to establish whether the objectives of the PS CCTV System are being met. The evaluation will normally include, but not be limited to the following:

- An assessment of the impact upon crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.
- An assessment of the incidents recorded by the system, to include where possible an assessment of the value of evidence provided, and the outcomes of investigations.
- An assessment of the impact on town centre businesses.
- An assessment of neighbouring areas without PS CCTV.
- A review of the Code of Practice.
- A review of the continuing relevancy of the objectives of the PS CCTV System; and
- Any other factors - such as PS CCTV System security checks.

The results of any evaluation will be published as part of the Annual Report and will be used to review, develop, and make any alterations to the specified purposes and objectives of the scheme as well as the functioning, management and operation of the System.

### **Monitoring**

The Nominated Chief Officer will be responsible for the operation and evaluation of the PS CCTV System, and the implementation of this Code of Practice.

The Designated Officers shall be responsible for maintaining full management information of incidents dealt with by the PS CCTV Control Room, for use in managing the PS CCTV System and in future evaluations. These and any other issues with the PS CCTV System will be logged and reported to the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).

### **Audit**

Blaenau Gwent Council's Audit Managers, or nominated deputies, who are not Designated Officers, will be given full access to the system when requested.

## **Section 6: Human Resources**

### **The Public Space CCTV Control Room and those responsible for the operation of the System**

Only authorised personnel who have been trained to use the PS CCTV System's equipment and in the PS CCTV Control Room procedures will operate the PS CCTV System.

Every person involved in the management and operation of the PS CCTV System will be personally issued with a copy of both the Code of Practice. They will be required to sign to confirm understanding of and adherence to the obligations that these documents place upon them and that any breach will be considered a disciplinary offence contrary to the Code of Conduct. He or she will be fully conversant with the contents of both documents, which may be updated from time to time. They will comply with both documents as far as is reasonably practicable.

All persons involved with the PS CCTV System shall receive training in respect of the PS CCTV Code of Practice, and legislation relevant to their role. Such training will be updated as and when necessary.

All control room CCTV operatives responsible for viewing/downloading Blaenau Gwent PS CCTV data/images have successfully passed the SIA (Security Industry Authority) level 2 CCTV operator's course.

The Processors Public Open Space CCTV policy manual details the technical and organisational data security measures physical and system controls on data protection and confidentiality and can be found at

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Emergencies-and-crime-prevention/CCTV/CCTV-Policy-summary>

The Processors CCTV Control room is accredited by NSI (Silver Guarding Award) and the Surveillance Camera Commissioner. The service is audited by each organisation annually for :

(1) Management and operation of a Closed CCTV System

(2) Step 2 certification of Surveillance Camera Commissioners Code of Practice

#### **Discipline**

Each individual having responsibility under the terms of the Code of Practice, who has any involvement with the PS CCTV System to which it refers, will be subject to the Authority's Disciplinary Code. Any breach of the Code of Practice, or of any aspect of confidentiality, will be dealt with in accordance with that Authority's Disciplinary Code.

The Designated Officers will have primary responsibility for ensuring that there is no breach of security and that the Code of Practice is complied with. The Designated Officers will have day-to-day responsibility for the PS CCTV Control Room and for adhering to the Code of Practice. Non-compliance with the Code of Practice by any

person will be considered a breach of conduct and will be dealt with accordingly, including, if appropriate, by criminal proceedings.

CCTV Operators are made aware through training, that misuse of the cameras for purposes other than those for which they are intended will bring the Scheme into disrepute and could result in disciplinary, if not criminal proceedings

CCTV Operators are aware that stored data is subject to routine and regular audit in order to confirm that any data captured has been captured in accordance with the Scheme objectives and is lawfully held. Any Operator may be called upon at any time to justify their decision to capture and store data specific to any individual or incident.

Each recording medium will have a unique reference number and tracking record appropriate to the nature of the recording medium, which will be retained for at least seven years after the destruction of that recording medium.

### **System access controls**

The Public Sector Broadband Aggregation (PSBA) network is an all-Wales Wide Area Network (WAN) used by public Service bodies across Wales. PSBA provides a mixture of secured private connections and public services shared connections across the WAN. Security is ensured using a combination of (Virtual Routing and Forwarding (VRF)), access lists and firewall technologies.

The system is located in a secure Control room with controlled access to the control room. Synetics operating system is also password controlled. Operators have no facility to remove any CCTV footage from the system.

Data access controls. It is of paramount importance that every recording medium and recorded image is treated strictly in accordance with the Processors CCTV Scheme Policy and Procedural Manual from the moment it is delivered to the monitoring room until its final destruction. Therefore, every movement and usage will be meticulously recorded. Access to, and the use of, recorded material will be strictly for the purposes defined in this Code of Practice. Recorded material will not be copied, sold, otherwise released or used for commercial purposes or for the provision of entertainment.

Hard copy prints will be regarded with the same level of security as any other stored data. Copies will not be routinely made or distributed. The same criteria for release will apply as to other forms of data and both the maker and recipient of a hard copy print will be accountable for its existence, use and ultimate destruction.

Data segregation. Each recording medium will have a unique reference number and tracking record appropriate to the nature of the recording medium, which will be retained for at least seven years after the destruction of that recording medium. Subject to the equipment functioning correctly, images from every camera will be recorded directly onto a secure hard drive. Images from all cameras will be recorded in real time.

**Declaration of Confidentiality**

Every individual with responsibility under the terms of this Code of Practice, who has any involvement with the PS CCTV System to which it refers, will be required to sign a separate declaration of confidentiality.

Police Officers visiting the PS CCTV Control Room for operational purposes must agree to the declaration of confidentiality by completing and signing the Visitor Logbook.

## **Section 7: Control and Operation of Public Space CCTV System**

### **Guiding Principles**

- (1) All persons operating the PS CCTV System must always act with the utmost probity and integrity.
- (2) Only persons, who have been trained in their use and the legislative implications of such use, will operate the cameras and the recording and reviewing equipment.
- (3) Every use of the cameras will accord with the purposes and key objectives of the PS CCTV System and shall be in compliance with this Code of Practice.
- (4) Cameras will not be used to look into private residential properties. 'Privacy zones' have been programmed into the PS CCTV System, whenever practically possible, in order to ensure that any interior of any private residential property is not surveyed by the cameras.
- (5) The PS CCTV System has been set up on a 'record only' basis with no 'live-monitoring' taking place, however the PS CCTV System has the facility to 'live-monitor' all cameras, but this function will only be used in the event of a serious ongoing police incident, or in exceptional and emergency circumstances.
- (6) Temporary 'Live- monitoring' may take place and be unavoidable when conducting essential maintenance or testing of the PS CCTV System.
- (7) In the event of any 'live monitoring' having to taking place camera operators will have no ability to pan, zoom or tilt any cameras on the System. All cameras have a fixed view which cannot be moved by the operator.
- (8) Camera operators must always be mindful of exercising prejudices, which may lead to complaints of the PS CCTV System being used for purposes other than those for which it is intended. The operators may be required to justify their interest in, or recording of, any particular individual or group of individuals or property.

### **Operation of the Public Space CCTV System by the Police**

Under some circumstances the Police may make a request to assume direction of the PS CCTV System to which this Code of Practice applies. Any requests must be made in writing by a police officer not below the rank of Superintendent. Any such request will only be allowed on the written authority of the Chief Officer, or the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).

In the event of such a request being allowed, the PS CCTV Control Room will be operated by those personnel who are authorised to do so and who fall within the terms of Sections 6 and 7 of this Code of Practice. They will then operate under the direction of the Police Officer designated in the written authority.

In extreme circumstances a request may be made by the Police to take total control of the PS CCTV System, including the staffing of the PS CCTV Control Room and control of all associated equipment, to the exclusion of all representatives of the PS CCTV System owners. Any such request must be made to the Designated Officers in the first instance, who will consult personally with the Nominated Chief Officer and SIRO. A request for total exclusive control must be made in writing by a Police Officer not below the rank of Superintendent or person of equal standing. A member of the PS CCTV team will be present at all times during the takeover of the facility.



## **Maintenance of the PS CCTV System**

To ensure compliance with the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice and to ensure that images recorded continue to be of an appropriate evidential quality, the PS CCTV System shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements under a maintenance contract.

The maintenance contract will make provision for regular or periodic service checks on the equipment. This will include cleaning of any all-weather domes or housings, checks on the functioning of the equipment, and any minor adjustments that need to be made to the equipment settings to maintain picture quality.

The maintenance contract will also include provision for regular periodic review and overhaul of all the equipment and replacement of equipment, which is reaching the end of its serviceable life.

The maintenance contract will also provide for 'emergency' attendance on site by a specialist CCTV engineer to rectify any loss or severe degradation of image or camera control.

As part of the PS CCTV SLA between Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (Customer) and Caerphilly County Borough Council (Processor) via the Caerphilly CCTV control room staff will carry out Pro-active remote maintenance checks across the Customer's CCTV Zones for identifying faults and issues and reporting accordingly (through established points of contact) for investigation, maintenance and action by Blaenau Gwent (Customers) CCTV maintenance Contractor.

The maintenance contract will define the appropriate periods of time permitted for attendance by the engineer and for rectification of the problem, depending upon the severity of the event, and the operational requirements of that element of the PS CCTV System.

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Chief Officer to ensure appropriate records are maintained in respect of the functioning of the cameras and the response of the contracted maintenance organisation.

## **Section 8: Management of Recorded Material**

### **Guiding Principles**

For the purposes of this Code of Practice 'recorded material' means any material recorded by, or as the result of, technical equipment, which forms part of the PS CCTV System. This specifically includes images recorded digitally or by way of data copying, including still prints.

Every video or digital recording obtained using the PS CCTV System has the potential of containing material that can be admitted in evidence in proceedings in the Criminal Justice System.

Members of the community must have complete confidence that information about their ordinary, everyday activities recorded on the PS CCTV System, will be treated with due regard to their individual right to respect for their private and family life.

It is of the utmost importance that, irrespective of the means or format of the images obtained from the PS CCTV System, e.g. Paper Copy, Hard Copy Disc Drive, DVD, CD or any form of electronic/digital processing and storage is treated strictly in accordance with the PS CCTV Code of Practice and the PS CCTV Procedure Manual. This applies from the moment they are recorded until their final destruction. Every movement and usage will be recorded.

Recorded material will not be copied, sold, otherwise released, or used for commercial purposes of any kind other than for legitimate third party/insurance requests.

### **Disclosure of Data to a Third Party**

Every request for the release of personal data generated by the PS CCTV System will be channelled through the CCTV System Manager.

The disclosure of personal data for commercial or entertainment purposes is specifically prohibited.

In complying with the National Standard for the Release of Data to Third Parties, it is intended, as far as is reasonably practicable, to safeguard the rights of the individual to privacy and to give effect to the following principles:

- Recorded material shall be processed lawfully and fairly and be used only for the purposes defined in this Code of Practice.
- Access to recorded material will only take place in accordance with the outlined standards: and
- The release or disclosure of Personal Data for commercial or entertainment purposes is specifically prohibited.

Members of the Police Service or other Law Enforcement Agency having a statutory authority to investigate and/or prosecute offences may, release details of recorded information to the media in an effort to identify alleged offenders or potential witnesses. Under such circumstances, full details will be recorded in accordance with appropriate procedures.

**Note:** The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984, covers release to the media of recorded information, in any format, which may be part of a current investigation. Any such disclosure should only be made after due consideration of the likely impact on a criminal trial. Full details of any media coverage must be recorded and brought to the attention of both the prosecutor and the defence.

It may be beneficial to make use of 'real time' video footage for the training and education of those involved in the operation and management of PS CCTV systems, and for those involved in the investigation, prevention, and detection of crime. Any material recorded by virtue of the PS CCTV System may be used for such bona fide training and education purposes.

### **Digital System- Provision & Quality**

To ensure the quality of footage, and that recorded information meets the criteria outlined by current Home Office guidelines, only media of good quality are used on the PS CCTV System.

### **Information – Retention**

Recorded media which has been preserved after a lawful request will be retained for a maximum period of 6 months for collection, or to establish if "non-evidential" or similar. Deletion or destruction will take place in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements and full details of all material deleted or destroyed will be logged.

### **Recording Policy**

Subject to the equipment functioning correctly, images from most cameras will be recorded throughout every 24-hour period for a period of 31 days after which the data is automatically overwritten unless requested and preserved for a lawful purpose.

### **Evidence Provision**

In the event of images being required for evidential purposes the procedures outlined in the PS CCTV Procedure Manual will be strictly complied with.

## **Section 10: Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)**

### **Guiding Principles**

The Public Space CCTV System Owner has adopted a Policy Statement in relation to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. This Policy Statement complies with the Home Office Covert Surveillance Codes of Practice and is periodically audited by the IPCO (Investigatory Powers Commissioner). An annual report on the use of RIPA is submitted by the Council to the IPCO.

The PS CCTV System Owner does not currently have a joint working protocol in place with Gwent Police with regard to the use of the Public Space CCTV Systems for surveillance authorised by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

## Appendix A

### System Owner

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is the 'System Owner' of the Public Space CCTV system.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council,  
General offices, Steelworks Road,  
Ebbw Vale,  
NP23 8UW.

Telephone: 01495 311556

### Nominated Chief Officer

The Nominated Chief Officer is the nominated representative on behalf of the 'System Owner'; this role is performed by the Head of Governance and Partnerships.

The nominated chief officer role will include responsibility to

- 1) Ensure the provision and maintenance of all equipment forming part of the PS CCTV System in accordance with contractual arrangements, which the owners may from time to time, enter.
- 2) Maintain close liaison with the CCTV System Manager.
- 3) Ensure the interests of the 'System Owners' and other organisations are upheld in accordance with the terms of this Code of Practice.
- 4) Agree to any proposed alterations and additions to the system, this Code of Practice and/or the Public Space CCTV Procedural Manual.

### Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) - Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO)

The role of (SIRO) is performed by the Chief Officer Resources.

The Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) will perform the role of Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), and will be responsible to:

- 1) Complete the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Self-Assessment Toolkit. Through the questionnaire they should identify any changes to the system, whether the system remains fit for purpose and whether a maintenance contract is still in place for the system.
- 2) Authorise overt surveillance utilising the PS CCTV System.
- 3) Authorise any changes to the PS CCTV System
- 4) Agree any significant changes to this Code of Practice.

### CCTV System Manager

The CCTV System Manager is the Service Manager: Policy and Partnerships of the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council PS CCTV System. They have delegated authority for data control on behalf of the 'data controller'.

The CCTV System Manager is responsible for the integrity, security, procedural efficiency and methods of operation of the System, including the gathering, retention and release of CCTV data. Their role also includes responsibility to:

- 1) Accept overall responsibility for the system and for ensuring that this Code of Practice;
- 2) Provide supervision and training to relevant officers authorised to assist in the operation of the system; and
- 3) To maintain direct liaison with partners.

**Designated CCTV Operators**

The Nominated Chief Officer and SIRO will identify Designated CCTV Operators to support the CCTV System Manager. The relevant officers will be appropriately trained and will be responsible for the integrity, security, procedural efficiency and methods of operation of the System.

**DATED**

**2023/24**

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**CCTV SERVICES AGREEMENT**

between

**CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

and

**BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CONTENTS**

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**CLAUSE**

1. Interpretation 3

2. Commencement and Duration .....5

3. Supplier's Responsibilities .....6

4. Customer's obligations .....6

5. Staff and TUPE .....7

6. Non-Solicitation .....8

7. Change Control .....8

8. Charges and Payment .....9

9. Intellectual Property Rights .....10

10. Data Protection .....11

11. Freedom of Information .....11

12. Limitation of liability .....11

13. Termination .....13

14. Obligations on Termination and Survival .....14

15. Force majeure .....15

16. Variation .....16

17. Waiver .....16

18. Rights and remedies .....16

19. Severance .....16

20. Entire agreement .....17

21. No partnership or agency .....17

22. Third party rights .....17

23. Notices .....17

24. Counterparts .....18

25. Governing law .....18

26. Jurisdiction .....19



## **SCHEDULE**

Schedule 1 Services Details. Included

Schedule 2 Charges, costs and payment - not included

1. TUPE on entry

2. List of Employees

Schedule 3 Processing, Personal Data and Data Subjects - not included

1

*Schedule 4* List of BC CCBC Public Open Space Cameras and locations. - *not included*

Schedule 5 Memorandum of Understanding between BGCBC (Customer ), CCBC (Supplier) and Gwent Police. (separate appendices)

Schedule 6 -Contract management -*not included*

This agreement is dated

## Parties

- (1) CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL whose registered office is at Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG (**Supplier**)
- (2) BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL whose registered office is at The General Offices, Steelworks Road, Ebbw Vale, NP23 6DN (**Customer**)

## BACKGROUND

- (A) The Supplier is a local authority and operates a CCTV monitoring system for the towns in its county borough;
- (B) The Supplier and the Customer have agreed that the Supplier will provide CCTV monitoring and other services as detailed in Schedule 1 for various locations in the Customer's county borough as listed in Schedule 4; and
- (C) The Customer agrees to obtain and the Supplier agrees to provide the Services on the terms set out in this agreement.

## Agreed terms

### 1. Interpretation

The following definitions and rules of interpretation apply in this agreement.

#### 1.1 Definitions

**Applicable Laws:** all applicable laws, statutes, regulations and codes from time to time in force.

**Business Day:** a day, other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday in England and Wales, when banks in London are open for business.

**Business Hours:** the period from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm on any Business Day.

**Change Order:** has the meaning given in clause 7.1.

**Charges:** the sums payable for the Services, as set out in Schedule 2.

**Control:** has the meaning given in section 1124 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010, and the expression **change of Control** shall be construed accordingly.

**Customer's Equipment:** any equipment, including tools, systems, cabling or facilities, provided by the Customer, its agents, subcontractors or consultants which is used directly or indirectly in the supply of the Services including any such items specified in Schedule 1

**Customer Materials:** all documents, information, items and materials in any form, whether owned by the Customer or a third party, which are provided by the Customer to the Supplier in connection with the Services, including the items provided pursuant to clause 4.1(d).

**Customer Personal Data:** any personal data which the Supplier processes in connection with this agreement including in the delivery of the Services, in the capacity of a processor on behalf of the Customer.

**Data Processor Agreement:** the agreement entitled “Data Processor Agreement” in Schedule 3 entered into between the Parties on the same date as this Agreement.

**Deliverables:** any output of the Services to be provided by the Supplier to the Customer as specified in Schedule 1 and any other documents, products and materials provided by the Supplier to the Customer in relation to the Services (excluding the Supplier's Equipment).

**Intellectual Property Rights:** patents, rights to inventions, copyright and neighbouring and related rights, moral rights, trade marks and service marks, business names and domain names, rights in get-up and trade dress, goodwill and the right to sue for passing off or unfair competition, rights in designs, rights in computer software, database rights, rights to use, and protect the confidentiality of, confidential information (including know-how and trade secrets) and all other intellectual property rights, in each case whether registered or unregistered and including all applications and rights to apply for and be granted, renewals or extensions of, and rights to claim priority from, such rights and all similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection which subsist or will subsist now or in the future in any part of the world.

**Services:** the services as set out in Schedule 1, including services which are incidental or ancillary to such services.

**Supplier's Equipment:** any equipment, including tools, systems, cabling or facilities, provided by the Supplier to the Customer and used directly or indirectly in the supply of the Services including any such items specified in Schedule 1 but excluding any such items which are the subject of a separate agreement between the parties under which title passes to the Customer.

**Supplier Personal Data:** any personal data which the Supplier processes in connection with this agreement, in the capacity of a controller.

**VAT:** value added tax or any equivalent tax chargeable in the UK.

- 1.2 Clause, Schedule and paragraph headings shall not affect the interpretation of this agreement.
- 1.3 A **person** includes a natural person, corporate or unincorporated body (whether or not having separate legal personality).
- 1.4 The Schedules form part of this agreement and shall have effect as if set out in full in the body of this agreement. Any reference to this agreement includes the Schedules.

- 1.5 A reference to a **company** shall include any company, corporation or other body corporate, wherever and however incorporated or established.
- 1.6 Unless the context otherwise requires, words in the singular shall include the plural and in the plural shall include the singular.
- 1.7 Unless the context otherwise requires, a reference to one gender shall include a reference to the other genders.
- 1.8 A reference to legislation or a legislative provision is a reference to it as amended, extended or re-enacted from time to time.
- 1.9 A reference to legislation or a legislative provision shall include all subordinate legislation made from time to time under that legislation or legislative provision.
- 1.10 A reference to **writing** or **written** includes email but not fax.
- 1.11 Any obligation on a party not to do something includes an obligation not to allow that thing to be done.
- 1.12 A reference to **this agreement** or to any other agreement or document referred to in this agreement is a reference of this agreement or such other agreement or document, in each case as varied from time to time.
- 1.13 References to clauses and Schedules are to the clauses and Schedules of this agreement and references to paragraphs are to paragraphs of the relevant Schedule.
- 1.14 Any words following the terms **including, include, in particular, for example** or any similar expression shall be construed as illustrative and shall not limit the sense of the words, description, definition, phrase or term preceding those terms.

## 2. Commencement and Duration

- 2.1 This agreement shall commence on the date when it has been signed by all of the parties and shall continue until such time as it may be terminated by either party in accordance with clause 13 (Termination),
- 2.2 The Supplier shall provide the Services to the Customer in accordance with this agreement from /4/2023.

### 3. Supplier's Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Supplier shall use reasonable endeavours to supply the Services in accordance with this agreement in all material respects.
- 3.2 The Supplier shall appoint a manager for the Services. That person shall have authority to contractually bind the Supplier on all matters relating to the Services (including by signing Change Orders). The Supplier may replace that person from time to time where reasonably necessary in the interests of the Supplier's business. Upon the appointment of a manager under this clause 3.2 the Supplier shall without delay provide to the Customer the contact details of that manager, including telephone number and e-mail address.

### 4. Customer's obligations

- 4.1 The Customer shall:
- (a) co-operate with the Supplier in all matters relating to the Services;
  - (b) appoint a manager for the Services, namely its Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships. That person shall have the authority to contractually bind the Customer on matters relating to the Services (including by signing Change Orders);
  - (c) provide, for the Supplier, its agents, subcontractors, consultants and employees, in a timely manner and at no charge, access to the Customer's premises, office accommodation, equipment, data and other facilities as reasonably required by the Supplier including any such access as is specified in Schedule 1;
  - (d) provide to the Supplier in a timely manner all documents, information, items and materials in any form (whether owned by the Customer or third party) required under Schedule 1 or otherwise reasonably required by the Supplier in connection with the Services and ensure that they are accurate and complete;
  - (e) ensure that all the Customer's Equipment is in good working order and suitable for the purposes for which it is used in relation to the Services and conforms to all relevant United Kingdom standards or requirements; and
  - (f) obtain and maintain all necessary licences and consents, or where applicable pay any costs incurred by the Supplier in so doing, and comply with all relevant legislation as required to enable the Supplier to provide the Services including in relation to the installation of the Supplier's Equipment, the use of the Customer's Equipment insofar as such licences, consents and legislation relate to the Customer's business, premises, staff and equipment, in all cases before the date on which the Services are to start.
- 4.2 If the Supplier's performance of its obligations under this agreement is prevented or delayed by any act or omission of the Customer, its agents, subcontractors, consultants or employees, then, without prejudice to any other right or remedy it may have, the

Supplier shall be allowed an extension of time to perform its obligations equal to the delay caused by the Customer.

## 5. Staff and TUPE

5.1 The Customer acknowledges that the Supplier shall, from time to time, employ persons for the purposes of providing the Services.

5.2 Employees employed pursuant to clause 5.1 shall:

- (a) be recruited in accordance with such recruitment policies and procedures of the Supplier as shall subsist from time to time; and
- (b) be subject to such terms and conditions as pertain to employees of the Supplier in comparable roles;

Provided that nothing in this clause 5.2 shall prevent the Supplier from engaging such employees on fixed-term contracts of a length that the Supplier in its sole discretion shall deem to be appropriate.

5.3 The Supplier shall use reasonable endeavours to ensure that the number of employees engaged pursuant to clause 5.1 is consistent with the staffing level indicated in Schedule 2, provided that nothing in this clause 5.3 shall prevent the Supplier from:

- (a) recruiting additional employees; and/or
- (b) assigning members of its own staff

on a temporary basis for the purpose of delivering the Services in addition to those staff referred to in clause 5.1 above if, in the sole discretion of the Supplier, such are required as a result of unforeseen circumstances and the costs of such appointment or redeployment shall form part of the Charges.

5.4 Where it becomes reasonably apparent to the Supplier that the staffing levels identified in Schedule 2 are persistently either excessive or insufficient for the purpose of delivering the Services, the Supplier shall notify the Customer of such change in requirement at the earliest opportunity outlining the extent of any temporary arrangements and anticipated charges.

5.5 Upon the Supplier making a notification to the Customer in accordance with clause 5.4 above, the Supplier and the Customer shall cooperate with each other in order to agree upon a Change Order for such amendments to Schedule 2 as are necessary.

5.6 The Customer shall indemnify the Supplier fully and hold it harmless at all times from and against all actions, proceedings, claims, expenses, awards, costs and all

other liabilities howsoever in any way connected with or arising from claims by its employees or former employees employed by the Supplier pursuant to clause 5.1 above and affected by, or claiming to be affected by, TUPE.

## 6. Non-Solicitation

Except in respect of any transfer of employees of the Supplier to the Customer pursuant to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (*SI 2006/246*), the Customer shall not, without the prior written consent of the Supplier, at any time from the date of this agreement to the expiry of 12 months after the termination of this agreement, solicit or entice away from the Supplier or employ or attempt to employ any person who is, or has been, engaged as an employee, consultant or subcontractor of the Supplier in the provision of the Services.

## 7. Change Control

7.1 Either party may propose changes to the scope or execution of the Services but no proposed changes shall come into effect until a **Change Order** has been signed by both parties. A Change Order shall be a document setting out the proposed changes and the effect that those changes will have on:

- (a) the Services;
- (b) the Supplier's existing charges;
- (c) the timetable of the Services; and
- (d) any of the terms of this agreement.

7.2 If the Supplier wishes to make a change to the Services it shall provide a draft Change Order to the Customer at the earliest opportunity detailing the proposed changes and timing of proposed changes.

7.3 If the Customer wishes to make a change to the Services:

- (a) it shall notify the Supplier and provide as much detail as the Supplier reasonably requires of the proposed changes, including the timing of the proposed changes; and
- (b) the Supplier shall, as soon as reasonably practicable after receiving the information at clause 7.3(a), provide a draft Change Order to the Customer.

7.4 If the parties agree to a Change Order, they shall sign it and that Change Order shall amend this agreement; or

7.5 The Supplier may charge for the time it spends on preparing and negotiating Change Orders which implement fundamental changes beyond the scope of

existing agreements proposed by the Customer pursuant to clause 7.3 on the basis of time spent by officers of the Supplier in dealing with such preparation and negotiation.

## **8. Charges and Payment**

- 8.1 In consideration of the provision of the Services by the Supplier, the Customer shall pay the Charges.
- 8.2 The Supplier may increase the Charges from time to time by notice to the Customer provided that such increase shall be restricted to that which is equal to any increased cost to the Supplier of providing the Services, including any increase in the cost of labour, services or materials.
- 8.3 The Supplier shall invoice the Customer for the Charges at 3-monthly intervals the month after each interval.
- 8.4 The Customer shall pay each invoice submitted to it by the Supplier within 28 days of receipt to a bank account nominated in writing by the Supplier from time to time.
- 8.5 Without prejudice to any other right or remedy that it may have, if the Customer fails to pay the Supplier any sum due under this agreement on the due date:
- (a) the Customer shall pay interest on the overdue sum from the due date until payment of the overdue sum, whether before or after judgment. Interest under this clause 8.5(a) will accrue each day at 4% a year above the Bank of England's base rate from time to time, but at 4% a year for any period when that base rate is below 0%;
  - (b) the Supplier may suspend all or part of the Services until payment has been made in full.
- 8.6 All sums payable to the Supplier under this agreement:
- (a) are exclusive of VAT, and the Customer shall in addition pay an amount equal to any VAT chargeable on those sums on delivery of a VAT invoice; and
  - (b) shall be paid in full without any set-off, counterclaim, deduction or withholding (other than any deduction or withholding of tax as required by law).

## **9. Intellectual Property Rights**

- 9.1 In relation to the Deliverables:
- (a) the Supplier and its licensors shall retain ownership of all Intellectual Property Rights in the Deliverables, excluding the Customer Materials;
  - (b) the Supplier grants the Customer, or shall procure the direct grant to the Customer of, a fully paid-up, worldwide, non-exclusive, royalty-free licence during the term of this



agreement to copy and modify the Deliverables (excluding the Customer Materials) for the purpose of receiving and using the Services and the Deliverables in its business; and

- (c) the Customer shall not sub-license, assign or otherwise transfer the rights granted in clause 9.1(b).

9.2 In relation to the Customer Materials, the Customer:

- (a) and its licensors shall retain ownership of all Intellectual Property Rights in the Customer Materials; and
- (b) grants the Supplier a fully paid-up, non-exclusive, royalty-free, non-transferable licence to copy and modify the Customer Materials for the term of this agreement for the purpose of providing the Services to the Customer.

9.3 The Customer:

- (a) warrants that the receipt and use of the Customer Materials in the performance of this agreement by the Supplier, its agents, subcontractors or consultants shall not infringe the rights, including any Intellectual Property Rights, of any third party; and
- (b) shall indemnify the Supplier in full against all liabilities, costs, expenses, damages and losses (including any direct, indirect or consequential losses, loss of profit, loss of reputation and all interest, penalties and legal costs (calculated on a full indemnity basis) and all other professional costs and expenses) suffered or incurred by the Supplier arising out of or in connection with any claim brought against the Supplier, its agents, subcontractors or consultants for actual or alleged infringement of a third party's Intellectual Property Rights, to the extent that the infringement or alleged infringement results from copying, arising out of, or in connection with, the receipt or use in the performance of this agreement of the Customer Materials.

9.4 If either party (the **Indemnifying Party**) is required to indemnify the other party (the **Indemnified Party**) under this clause 9, the Indemnified Party shall:

- (a) notify the Indemnifying Party in writing of any claim against it in respect of which it wishes to rely on the indemnity at 9.3(b) or clause 9.4(b) (as applicable) (**IPRs Claim**);
- (b) allow the Indemnifying Party, at its own cost, to conduct all negotiations and proceedings and to settle the IPR's Claim, always provided that the Indemnifying Party shall obtain the Indemnified Party's prior approval of any settlement terms, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld;
- (c) provide the Indemnifying Party with such reasonable assistance regarding the IPR's Claim as is required by the Indemnifying Party, subject to reimbursement by the Indemnifying Party of the Indemnified Party's costs so incurred; and
- (d) not, without prior consultation with the Indemnifying Party, make any admission relating to the IPR's Claim or attempt to settle it, provided that the Indemnifying Party

considers and defends any IPR's Claim diligently, using competent counsel and in such a way as not to bring the reputation of the Indemnified Party into disrepute.

## **10. Data Protection**

10.1 The parties agree to be bound by the terms of Schedule 3 (Data Protection)

## **11. Freedom of Information**

11.1 The parties acknowledge their respective obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Protection Regulations 2004 and agree to cooperate with the other party to such extent as the other party may reasonably require in order to respond to a request for information under the foregoing legislation provided that where such assistance is or is likely to be required the party receiving the request for information shall inform the other party of the request as soon as is reasonably practicable.

## **12. Limitation of liability**

12.1 The Supplier has obtained insurance cover in respect of its own legal liability for individual claims not exceeding £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS) per claim. The limits and exclusions in this clause reflect the insurance cover the Supplier has been able to arrange, and the Customer is responsible for making its own arrangements for the insurance of any excess loss.

12.2 References to liability in this clause **12** include every kind of liability arising under or in connection with this agreement including but not limited to liability in contract, tort (including negligence), misrepresentation, restitution or otherwise.

12.3 Neither party may benefit from the limitations nor exclusions set out in this clause in respect of any liability arising from its deliberate default.

12.4 Nothing in this this clause **12** shall limit the Customer's payment obligations under this agreement.

12.5 Nothing in this agreement shall limit the Customer's liability under the clause 9,3 (IPR indemnities).

12.6 Nothing in this agreement limits any liability which cannot legally be limited, including but not limited to liability for:

- (a) death or personal injury caused by negligence;
- (b) fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation; and
- (c) breach of the terms implied by section 2 of the Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982 (title and quiet possession).

12.7 Subject to clause 12.3 (no limitations in respect of deliberate default) and clause 12.6 (liabilities which cannot legally be limited), the Supplier's total liability to the Customer:

- (a) for damage to property caused by the negligence of its employees and agents in connection with this agreement shall not exceed £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS) for any one event or series of connected events;
- (b) for loss arising from the Supplier's failure to comply with its data processing obligations under clause 10 (Data protection) shall not exceed £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS); and
- (c) for all other loss or damage which does not fall within sub clause (a) or (b) shall not exceed £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS);

12.8 Subject to clause 12.3 (no limitations in respect of deliberate default), clause 12.5 (liability under identified clauses) and clause 12.6 (liabilities which cannot legally be limited), the Customer's total liability to the Supplier:

- (a) for damage to property caused by the negligence of its employees and agents in connection with this agreement shall not exceed £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS) for any one event or series of connected events;
- (b) for loss arising from the Supplier's failure to comply with its data processing obligations under clause 10 (Data protection) shall not exceed £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS); and
- (c) for all other loss or damage which does not fall within sub clause (a) or (b) shall not exceed £7,500,000 (SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS)

12.9 The caps on the Customer's liabilities shall not be reduced by:

- (a) amounts awarded or agreed to be paid under clause 9 (IPR indemnities); and
- (b) amounts awarded by a court or arbitrator, using their procedural or statutory powers in respect of costs of proceedings or interest for late payment.

12.10 Subject to clause 12.3 (No limitations in respect of deliberate default), clause 12.4 (No limitation on the customer's payment obligations), clause 12.5 (liability under identified clauses) and clause 12.6 (Liabilities which cannot legally be limited), this clause 12.10 specifies the types of losses that are excluded:

- (a) loss of agreements or contracts;
- (b) loss of anticipated savings;
- (c) loss of use or corruption of software, data or information;
- (d) loss of or damage to goodwill; and
- (e) indirect or consequential loss.

- 12.11 The Supplier has given commitments as to compliance of the Services with relevant specifications in clause 3 (Supplier's responsibilities). In view of these commitments, the terms implied by sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982 are, to the fullest extent permitted by law, excluded from this agreement.
- 12.12 Unless the Customer notifies the Supplier that it intends to make a claim in respect of an event within the notice period, the Supplier shall have no liability for that event. The notice period for an event shall start on the day on which the Customer became, or ought reasonably to have become, aware of its having grounds to make a claim in respect of the event and shall expire 2 months from that date. The notice must be in writing and must identify the event and the grounds for the claim in reasonable detail.

### 13. Termination

- 13.1 Either party may terminate this agreement by giving at least 6 months' notice to the other.
- 13.2 Without affecting any other right or remedy available to it, either party may terminate this agreement with immediate effect by giving written notice to the other party if:
- (a) the other party commits a material breach of any other term of this agreement and (if such breach is remediable) fails to remedy that breach within a period of 14 days after being notified in writing to do so; or
  - (b) the other party repeatedly breaches any of the terms of this agreement in such a manner as to reasonably justify the opinion that its conduct is inconsistent with it having the intention or ability to give effect to the terms of this agreement.
- 13.3 For the purposes of clause 13.2(a), a **material breach** means a breach (including an anticipatory breach) that is serious in the widest sense of having a serious effect on the benefit which the terminating party would otherwise derive from a substantial portion of this agreement over 3-month period during the term of this agreement. In deciding whether any breach is material no regard shall be had to whether it occurs by some accident, mishap, mistake or misunderstanding.
- 13.4 Without affecting any other right or remedy available to it, the Supplier may terminate this agreement with immediate effect by giving written notice to the Customer if the Customer fails to pay any amount due under this agreement on the due date for payment and remains in default not less than 14 days after being notified in writing to make such payment.

## 14. Obligations on Termination and Survival

### 14.1 Obligations on Termination or Expiry

On termination or expiry of this agreement:

- (a) the Customer shall immediately pay to the Supplier all of the Supplier's outstanding unpaid invoices and interest and, in respect of the Services supplied but for which no invoice has been submitted, the Supplier may submit an invoice, which shall be payable immediately on receipt;
- (b) the Customer shall, return all of the Supplier's Equipment. If the Customer fails to do so, then the Supplier may enter the Customer's premises and take possession of the Supplier's Equipment. Until they have been returned or repossessed, the Customer shall be solely responsible for their safe keeping; and
- (c) the Supplier shall on request return any of the Customer Materials not used up in the provision of the Services.

### 14.2 Survival

- (a) On termination or expiry of this agreement, the following clauses shall continue in force: clause 1 (Interpretation), clause 6 (Non-solicitation), clause 9 (Intellectual property rights), clause 10 (Data Protection) clause 12 (Limitation of liability), clause 14 (Obligations on Termination or Expiry), clause 17 (Waiver), clause 19 (Severance), clause 25 (Governing law) and clause 26 (Jurisdiction).
- (b) Termination or expiry of this agreement shall not affect any rights, remedies, obligations or liabilities of the parties that have accrued up to the date of termination or expiry, including the right to claim damages in respect of any breach of the agreement which existed at or before the date of termination or expiry.

## 15. Force Majeure

15.1 **Force Majeure Event** means any circumstance not within a party's reasonable control including, without limitation:

- (a) acts of God, flood, drought, earthquake or other natural disaster;
- (b) epidemic or pandemic;
- (c) terrorist attack, civil war, civil commotion or riots, war, threat of or preparation for war, armed conflict, imposition of sanctions, embargo, or breaking off of diplomatic relations;
- (d) nuclear, chemical or biological contamination or sonic boom;
- (e) any law or any action taken by a government or public authority, including imposing an export or import restriction, quota or prohibition, or failing to grant a necessary licence or consent;

- (f) collapse of buildings, fire, explosion or accident;
- (g) any labour or trade dispute, strikes, industrial action or lockouts; and
- (h) interruption or failure of utility service.

15.2 Provided it has complied with clause 15.4, if a party is prevented, hindered or delayed in or from performing any of its obligations under this agreement by a Force Majeure Event (**Affected Party**), the Affected Party shall not be in breach of this agreement or otherwise liable for any such failure or delay in the performance of such obligations. The time for performance of such obligations shall be extended accordingly.

15.3 The corresponding obligations of the other party will be suspended, and its time for performance of such obligations extended, to the same extent as those of the Affected Party.

15.4 The Affected Party shall:

- (a) as soon as reasonably practicable after the start of the Force Majeure Event but no later than 7 days from its start, notify the other party in writing of the Force Majeure Event, the date on which it started, its likely or potential duration, and the effect of the Force Majeure Event on its ability to perform any of its obligations under the agreement; and
- (b) use all reasonable endeavours to mitigate the effect of the Force Majeure Event on the performance of its obligations.

15.5 If the Force Majeure Event prevents, hinders or delays the Affected Party's performance of its obligations for a continuous period of more than 2 months, the party not affected by the Force Majeure Event may terminate this agreement by giving 1 month's written notice to the Affected Party.

## 16. **Variation**

Subject to clause 7 (Change control), no variation of this agreement shall be effective unless it is in writing and signed by the parties (or their authorised representatives).

## 17. **Waiver**

17.1 A waiver of any right or remedy under this agreement or by law is only effective if given in writing and shall not be deemed a waiver of any subsequent right or remedy.

17.2 A failure or delay by a party to exercise any right or remedy provided under this agreement or by law shall not constitute a waiver of that or any other right or remedy, nor shall it prevent or restrict any further exercise of that or any other right

or remedy. No single or partial exercise of any right or remedy provided under this agreement or by law shall prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy.

- 17.3 A party that waives a right or remedy provided under this agreement or by law in relation to one party, or takes or fails to take any action against that party, does not affect its rights in relation to any other party.

**18. Rights and remedies**

The rights and remedies provided under this agreement are in addition to, and not exclusive of, any rights or remedies provided by law.

**19. Severance**

- 19.1 If any provision or part-provision of this agreement is or becomes invalid, illegal or unenforceable, it shall be deemed deleted, but that shall not affect the validity and enforceability of the rest of this agreement.
- 19.2 If any provision or part-provision of this agreement is deemed deleted under clause 19.1 the parties shall negotiate in good faith to agree a replacement provision that, to the greatest extent possible, achieves the intended commercial result of the original provision.

**20. Entire agreement**

- 20.1 This agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes and extinguishes all previous agreements, promises, assurances, warranties, representations and understandings between them, whether written or oral, relating to its subject matter provided that nothing in this clause 20 shall prejudice the operation of clause 10 (Data Protection).
- 20.2 Each party agrees that it shall have no remedies in respect of any statement, representation, assurance or warranty (whether made innocently or negligently) that is not set out in this agreement. Each party agrees that it shall have no claim for innocent or negligent misrepresentation or negligent misstatement based on any statement in this agreement.

**21. No partnership or agency**

- 21.1 Nothing in this agreement is intended to, or shall be deemed to, establish any partnership or joint venture between any of the parties, constitute any party the agent of another party, or authorise any party to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of any other party.

21.2 Each party confirms it is acting on its own behalf and not for the benefit of any other person.

**22. Third party rights**

22.1 Unless it expressly states otherwise, this agreement does not give rise to any rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any term of this agreement.

22.2 The rights of the parties to rescind or vary this agreement are not subject to the consent of any other person.

**23. Notices**

23.1 Any notice or other communication given to a party under or in connection with this agreement shall be in writing and shall be:

- (a) delivered by hand or by pre-paid first-class post or other next working day delivery service at its registered office (if a company) or its principal place of business (in any other case); or
- (b) sent by e-mail to the other party's nominated manager for the Services as specified in accordance with clause 5.1 to the e-mail address specified in accordance with clause 4.2.

23.2 Any notice or communication shall be deemed to have been received:

- (a) if delivered by hand, at the time the notice is left at the proper address;
- (b) if sent by pre-paid first-class post or other next working day delivery service, at 9.00 am on the second Business Day after posting; or
- (c) if sent by email, at the time of transmission, or, if this time falls outside business hours in the place of receipt, when business hours resume. In this clause 23.2(c), business hours means 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday on a day that is not a public holiday in the place of receipt.

23.3 This clause does not apply to the service of any proceedings or any documents in any legal action or, where applicable, any arbitration or other method of dispute resolution.

**24. Counterparts**

24.1 This agreement may be signed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall constitute a duplicate original, but all the counterparts shall together constitute the one agreement.



24.2 Transmission of a signed counterpart of this agreement (but for the avoidance of doubt not just a signature page) by email (in PDF, JPEG or other agreed format) shall take effect as the transmission of a signed "wet-ink" counterpart of this agreement. If this method of transmission is adopted, without prejudice to the validity of the agreement thus made, each party shall on request provide the other with the "wet-ink" hard copy original of their counterpart.

24.3 No counterpart shall be effective until each party has signed at least one counterpart.

25. **Governing law**

This agreement and any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with it or its subject matter or formation shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

26. **Jurisdiction**

Each party irrevocably agrees that the courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with this agreement or its subject matter or formation.

This agreement has been entered into on the date stated at the beginning of it.

## **Schedule 1: The Services**

Caerphilly County Borough Council, as the Supplier, operates a CCTV Control Room which runs for 24 hours (through three shift patterns) on 7 days of the week every day of any given year.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, as the Customer, will enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Supplier to provide:

- Pro-active remote maintenance checks across the Customer's CCTV Zones for identifying faults and issues, and reporting accordingly (through established points of contact) for investigation, maintenance and action;
- Information in response to retrospective requests from Gwent Police (and other Police Services) as a responsible authority, in-line with the Supplier's operating timeframe and practices for their Control Room.
- Information in response to retrospective requests from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council as a responsible authority.
- Information in response to non-direct retrospective requests from other responsible authorities and relevant third parties for activities such as Freedom of Information requests, Subject Access Requests and Insurance investigations at the request of the Customer.
- Where reasonably practicable, the digital uploading of evidence to an online portal for viewing by Gwent Police, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding entered between the parties and Gwent Police at Schedule 5.
- Where reasonably practicable, live CCTV feeds to Gwent Police to enable real time collaboration between the Police and the Customer to respond to incidents, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Operational data and information to support statutory and non-statutory performance monitoring and reporting.

With regard to any personal data created in the delivery of the Services, the Supplier will act as the Data Processor and will support the Customer, as the Data Controller in complying with the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice issued by the Home Office and any other legislation or code of practice which may amend or supersede the same.

## **The Implementation and Facilitation of the Service**

To be able to effectively deliver a service on behalf of the Customer, the Supplier will have the need for the following requirements to support the implementation and on-going operation of the service:

- Technical and Infrastructure Requirements
- Licensing and Compliance Requirements
- Operational and Staffing Requirements

### **Technical and Infrastructure Requirements**

The Supplier will submit orders to British Telecom (BT) and subsequently oversee the implementation of six Public Service Broadband Aggregations (PSBAs) to provide private and secure Wide Area Network (WAN). This will be for the six CCTV Zones as set out in Schedule 4. The Customer will be responsible for the associated installation and on-going operating charges of the equipment required for this purpose, as well as any associated costs of the Supplier's IT service or contractors.

The Supplier will submit orders to BT and oversee the implementation of one further PSBA providing a private and secure WAN for the remaining CCTV Zone of Llanhilleth (at a future date within timeframe of this agreement, such date to be agreed between the parties). The Customer will be responsible for the associated installation and on-going operating charges for equipment associated with this one PSBA as with others noted above, as well as any associated costs of the Suppliers IT Service or contractors.

The Customer and any identified contractors operating on its behalf, will carry out all required preparatory work to enable the connection of the Blaenau Gwent Camera Infrastructure (as listed in Schedule 4) to the Supplier's existing operating infrastructure and systems. This includes the installation of compliant network video recorders and changing IP addresses to fit with the Supplier's operating arrangements and standards.

The Supplier will, if requested to do so by the Customer, supply to the Customer proposals for the use of remote cameras, i.e., Deployable/4G cameras, supplied by the Customer, if compatible with the Supplier's operating systems for monitoring and

downloading footage therefrom. All installation, set-up and on-going costs for this service will be paid by the Customer.

The Supplier will operate all the Customer's camera infrastructure through its already established operating system, Synetics, at its control room.

The Supplier's IT service will provide the Customer, and any contractor nominated by the Customer, with IP addresses/ranges for all camera infrastructure configured to the Customer NVRs (as set out in Schedule 4).

The Customer will liaise directly with the Suppliers contractor to obtain quotations and carry out all required work to connect the PSBA lines to the Supplier's Control Room and operating system. This will include quotations for completion of implementation including testing before live implementation.

The Supplier will expand its scheme and maps to include the Customer's camera infrastructure to the extent that the same is subject to this agreement.

The Customer will be responsible for all set up costs to complete the above actions/work, and supplementary on-going costs such as annual fees associated with installation for operations e.g., PBSA annual licences and running costs.

### **Licensing and Compliance Requirements**

The Customer will engage with the Suppliers contractor to provide the required Synergy camera licences and complete installation to the Supplier's Synergy System as detailed in Schedule 2 to accommodate the monitoring of the Customer's camera infrastructure as outlined in Schedule 4.

The Supplier will ensure the appropriate Security Industry Authority (SIA) Licences are in place for all of its personnel engaged in the delivery of the Services.

The Customer will check that all Privacy zones (aimed at reducing potential for privacy infringements) on camera infrastructure are in place before implementation and provide information so that the Supplier can monitor and audit as part of the service delivery.

The Supplier will carry out monthly audits on privacy zones, check for any changes. The Supplier will report any questions, issues or concerns relating to privacy zones to the Customer for consideration and agreed actions.

The Supplier will ensure that any staff carrying out work on the Customer's systems are appropriately trained to be able to carry out any part of the delivery of the Services.

The Supplier will ensure that all relevant legislation and statutory codes of practice are adhered to for the provision of the Services, including but not limited to any requirements in relation to directed surveillance as defined in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

### **Operational and Staffing Requirements**

The Supplier will provide appropriate staffing levels to deliver the Services to the Customer, initially on the basis of the Supplier's assumptions as to appropriate levels of staffing based on the Supplier's knowledge of the Customer's operations and its own operating responsibilities. Any proposed changes to staffing levels would be made in-line with the main agreement as set out at sections 5 and 7. This will be carried out generally through the Contract Management arrangements provided at schedule 6.

The Services will be delivered 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

The Supplier will carry out proactive maintenance checks of the Customer's camera infrastructure as listed in Schedule 4 in order to ensure effective operation with a focus on diagnosing issues and faults. Any issues and faults discovered by the Supplier will be reported to the Customer's nominated contractor, as well as being reported to the Customer by e-mail to [CCTV@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:CCTV@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk). These patrols will generally be carried out once per shift i.e. three times in every 24-hour period 7 days a week. The number of patrols carried out each month will be reported to the Customer through the Synergy System.

The Supplier will be the point of contact for liaison with the Customer's nominated contractor during remedial works identified by camera patrols and confirmation of rectification.

### **Retrospective requests for Information from the Police**

The Supplier will retrospectively (not live) facilitate the provision of information (CCTV footage) from the Customer's camera infrastructure for requests from the Police through established and agreed Policy/Procedure requirements set out and agreed by both the Supplier and the Customer.

The Supplier, Customer and Gwent Police will agree and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), provided at Schedule 5, which outlines the expected procedures and protocols for requesting and supply of information.

Any information exchanged with the Police will be transmitted by the Supplier to Police using the Supplier's existing mechanisms. The focus of this will generally be through established online portals. The Customer recognises that under certain exceptional circumstances, for example where the size of the request is substantial, alternative methods for exchange may be used e.g. physical transfer of information via DVDs or hard drives. The Supplier will ensure that any such transfer follows a lawful process and is in-line with its own operating procedures.

The Supplier will submit a weekly log sheet to the Customer with the number of requests received. A more detailed summary will be submitted monthly, requests received may relate to earlier time periods and are therefore subject to change, numbers will be updated and reconciled retrospectively.

#### **Live Response to requests from Gwent Police**

The Supplier, on request from Gwent Police, will provide them the opportunity to obtain live response information from the Customer's camera infrastructure and or the transmission of a live image to Gwent Police HQ Control Room

The Supplier and the Customer will agree and provide a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), provided at Schedule 5, which will outline the expected procedures and protocols for operating such a service, including utilising the dedicated telephone line in place and already provided to Gwent Police.

Such requests will be recorded by the Supplier on a daily log sheet, which will be shared every morning via email to the Customer via [CCTV@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:CCTV@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).

### **Other Retrospective requests for information from the Customer**

The Supplier will retrospectively (not live) provide to the Customer CCTV footage from the Customer's camera infrastructure following a request from the Customer through an established and agreed Policy/Procedure agreed by both the Supplier and the Customer

The Supplier will submit a weekly log sheet detailing all the nature of the requests and the footage supplied.

### **Monitoring Information for the Service**

The Supplier will provide statistical information on a monthly and annual basis in relation to camera faults and issues; privacy zones audits; live incidents as requested by Police, retrospective requests for others, and any other information agreed between the parties from time to time.

The Supplier will provide daily incident logs as detailed in Schedule 6

which will be emailed to the Customer via [CCTV@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:CCTV@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) the next working day.

The Supplier will provide appropriate summaries on key financial and staffing information for meetings associated to contract management arrangements (see Schedule 6)

Signed by ROBERT HARTSHORN  
for and on behalf of Caerphilly  
County Borough Council



.....

Robert Hartshorn  
Head of Public Protection,  
Community & Leisure

Date 20<sup>th</sup> April  
2023.....

Signed by SARAH KING for and  
on behalf of BLAENAU GWENT  
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL



.....

Sarah King  
Head of Governance and  
Partnerships

Date 20<sup>th</sup> April  
2023.....



## **Schedule 5**

### **Memorandum of Understanding** **Access to the CCBC Control Room at Tiryberth and Images** **recorded by Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent County Borough** **Councils Public Open Space CCTV Systems.**

**Parties:** Caerphilly County Borough Council, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Gwent Police.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to define the arrangements for the shared duty to minimise crime and disorder within the Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent County Borough areas by effective use of the CCTV Control Room maintained and operated by Caerphilly County Borough Council.

#### **Images**

Video images recorded by the Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Public Open Space CCTV systems are collected for the following purposes:

The prevention and detection of crime, reducing crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour and fear of crime, maintaining security of premises and helping to provide a safe environment for the benefit of those people who live, work, trade, visit, serve and enjoy the facilities within the areas covered by the County Borough Councils.

Specific scheme objectives for each Council are detailed for information at appendix A.

#### **Information Sharing**

Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gives the power to share information, where it is necessary or expedient for the purposes of any provision of the Act, to relevant authorities. Relevant authorities for the purposes of the Act include: -

- The Chief Officer of Police
- A Local Authority

The relevant authorities are signatories to the Gwent Partnership Information Sharing Agreement made under Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

## **Storage and Request for Images**

Images recorded by public open space CCTV cameras are retained for a period of 31 days in digital format.

Images may be requested by Gwent Police Officers in pursuance of the registered purposes, the scheme objectives, or any other provision under the 1998 Act.

Images required will be stored in the 'Digital Evidence Locker' following request. Images will be retained in this location until a NICE (Digital evidence management system) request is received and images will be uploaded digitally as required. Requests for large amounts of footage may still be supplied via DVD-R/ hard drive which is produced in a format suitable for court purposes or ongoing investigation.

Preservation of footage to the point of release to a Gwent Police Officer will be secured by CCTV Control Room Operators. Control Room Operators providing or producing footage to Gwent Police Officers will evidence the secure systems and procedures used to provide that evidence.

Images within the 'Digital Evidence Locker' will be retained for a finite period. Where possible, the requesting Police Officer will be contacted prior to destruction. However, in accordance with data protection principles, retained footage will be periodically cleared down. No images will be retained in the Digital Evidence Locker for longer than 6 months from date of request.

## **Reviewing and Securing Images**

Images may be reviewed by Gwent Police Officers to determine the evidential value of information retained within the Control Room systems. CCTV Control Room Operators will afford any possible assistance to Gwent Police Officers in achieving this task, including the production of NICE digital upload / DVD-R/hard drive format evidence when requested.

A review suite exists at the CCTV Control Room to assist Gwent Police Officers if required.

## **Access to Images**

The CCTV Control Room operates on a 24/7 basis.

The shift system in operation defines that the greatest resource in terms of staffing is in the afternoons, evenings and at weekends.

If Gwent Police Officers need to attend the control room in person, they should if possible, ring in advance using the dedicated police line (see below) to make arrangements.

## **Real time requests for response/access by Gwent Police**

Gwent Police may contact the CCTV Control room 24/7 via a dedicated Police line (██████████). Officers may request operators to monitor specific areas/cameras in response to live events. Operators can also submit live footage one camera at a time to Gwent Police HQ via a dedicated line.

## **Directed Surveillance**

The Public Open Space CCTV systems may be used for directed surveillance under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Requests for use of the system for directed surveillance must be accompanied by an appropriate Authorisation made under the 2000 Act (redacted as necessary to prevent disclosure of sensitive information) and to ensure CCTV equipment is used in accordance with the authorisation. Contact details for the Authorising Officer and Police RIPA Bureau should also be provided. Authorisations will be retained by the CCTV Control Room in order to satisfy inspections by the relevant Commissioner. Additional summary documents may also be provided for use by the CCTV operatives.

## **Urgent Oral Applications**

The CCTV system may also be used in response to Urgent oral authorisations from Gwent Police. In such incidences the Authority should be provided with details (including contact information) of the Authorising Officer, the start and expiry date and time and a written summary of what has been authorised.

Any pre planned operations requiring the use of the CCTV systems which would constitute directed surveillance must be covered by an appropriate authorisation under the 2000 Act.

## **Signatories**

### **Gwent Police:-**

Rank: C/Inspector

Name: Paul Biggs



Signature:

Date: 14/09/2023

**Caerphilly County Borough Council:-**

Head of Public Protection:

Name: Robert Hartshorn

Signature: 

Date:

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

Head of Governance & Partnerships

Name: Sarah King

Signature 

Date

## **Appendix A- Scheme Objectives**

### **CCBC Scheme Objectives**

- To preserve life and to minimise the risk and danger to the vulnerable through effective CCTV monitoring.
- To assist in the detection and prevention of crime.
- To facilitate the identification, apprehension and prosecution of offenders in relation to crime and public order.
- To assist in the restoration of tranquillity and reduction in anti-social behaviour.
- To prevent or mitigate interruptions to traffic flow (not to enforce breaches of the traffic law).
- To assist in the reduction of the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour thereby promoting the reassurance of the communities affected and promoting community regeneration throughout the region.

### **BGCBC Scheme Objectives**

- Assisting in the detection and prevention of crime
- Provide evidential material to assist Police investigations
- Deter those having criminal intent

- Reduce the fear of crime and give confidence to the public that they are in a secure environment
- Provide safer communities
- Reduce acts of vandalism
- Assist in the prevention and detection of anti-social behaviour
- Assist with traffic management in our towns

The  
Blaenau Gwent County  
Borough Council  
Education &  
Leisure Services  
Annual Performance  
Report

2023- 24 Mid Year Snapshot



Empowering our communities to be ambitious, ethically-  
informed Life-long learners who lead full and healthy lives

# Contents

Page 864

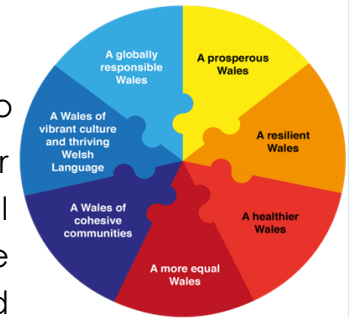


Foreword	3
The Shape of Our Place	4
Director's Overview & Reflections on 2022/23	7
Local, Political Leadership, Governance & Accountability	11
Audit and Inspection	12
Maximise learning, skills and wellbeing for children, young people and the community	14
Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services	44
Ensure effective governance and delivery of commissioned services	49
Maximise partnership working to meet community need	50
Case Studies	51
Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management	58
Future Direction	



# Foreword

**Why this is important** - Improving the quality and provision of teaching and learning is vitally important to ensure we are achieving ambitious outcomes for all children and young people. We will continue to invest in our education services and present service activity which highlights how we are contributing to the Council's overall aim of delivering all seven national well-being goals. These goals are set out within The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which is legislation aiming to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The vision of this legislation is expressed in the seven National well-being goals.



The Act also puts a duty on public bodies to apply the **sustainable development principles** which states they 'must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The sustainable development principle is made up of the following five ways of working, pictured below:



**Integration**



**Collaboration**



**Involvement**



**Long Term**



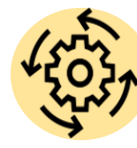
**Prevention**

Throughout this report some areas of performance that meet these ways of working are demonstrated by the above images.

**The Purpose of this report** - To present service activity for the period, detailing achievements and challenges aligned to the priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27, which are to :



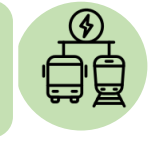
**Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent**



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



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



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



# The Shape of Our Place



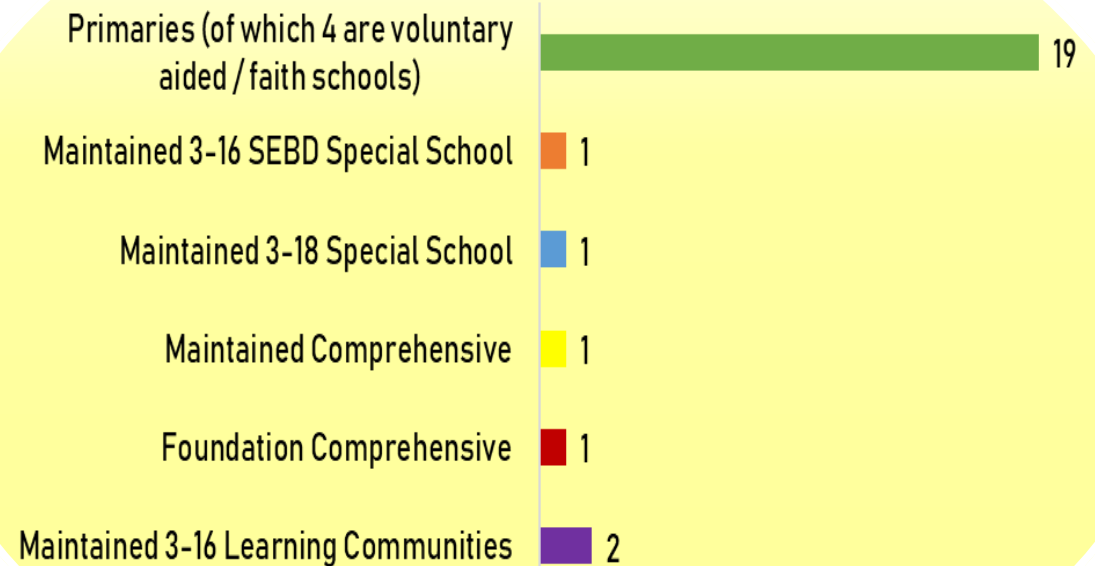
Blaenau Gwent is relatively small geographically, being at most 15 miles north to south, and 8 miles east to west. It is defined physically by high hillsides dividing three main valleys. These valleys are home to our towns and villages and house our education provision, made up of sustainable communities for learning nestled within beautiful countryside.

Blaenau Gwent has 25 schools across 31 school sites and there are currently circa 9,000+ pupils on roll across all Blaenau Gwent schools.

The Education Directorate provides services to support children and young people's educational learning opportunities whilst working collaboratively with our schools and the Aneurin Leisure and Awen Trust in a Council client function role.

The Education Directorate's three main areas of core service delivery are

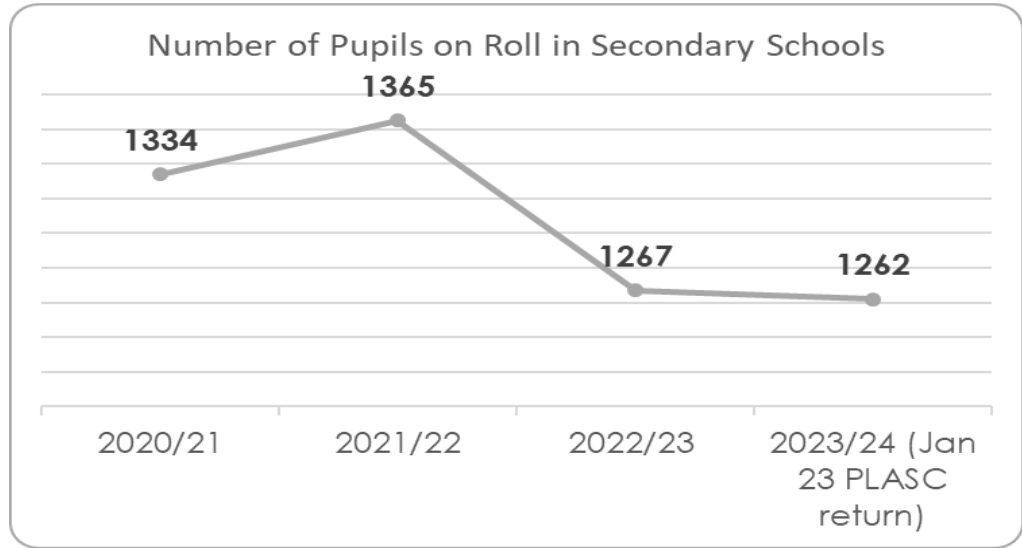
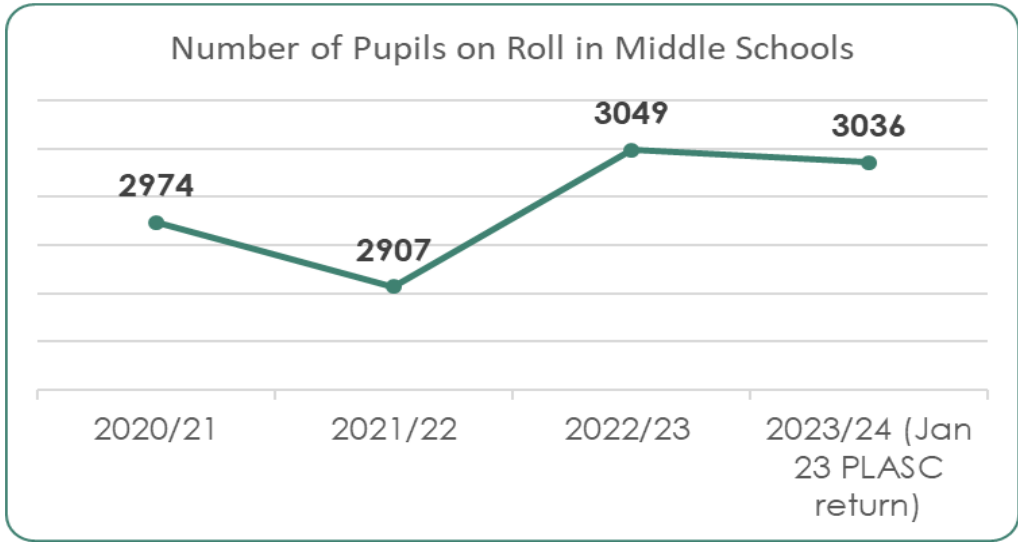
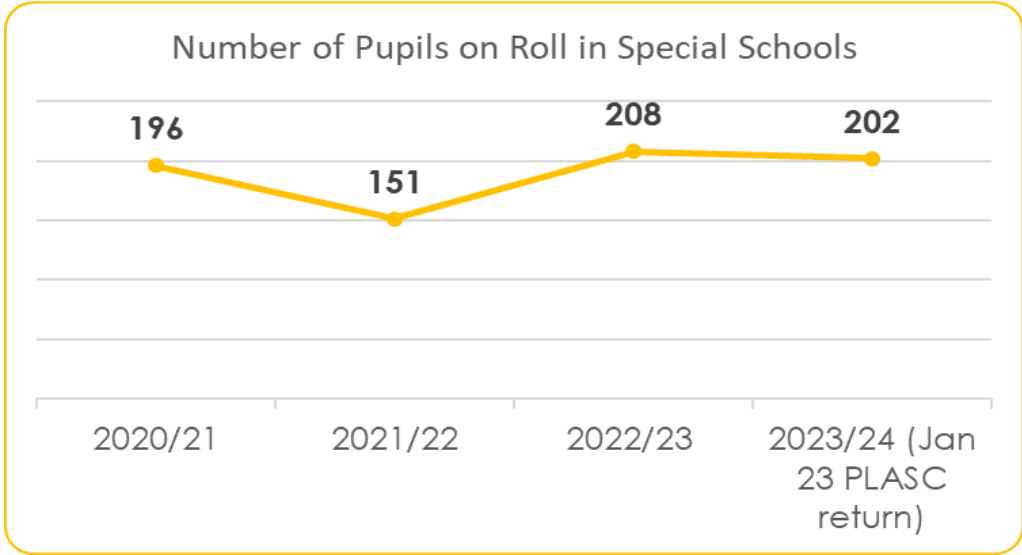
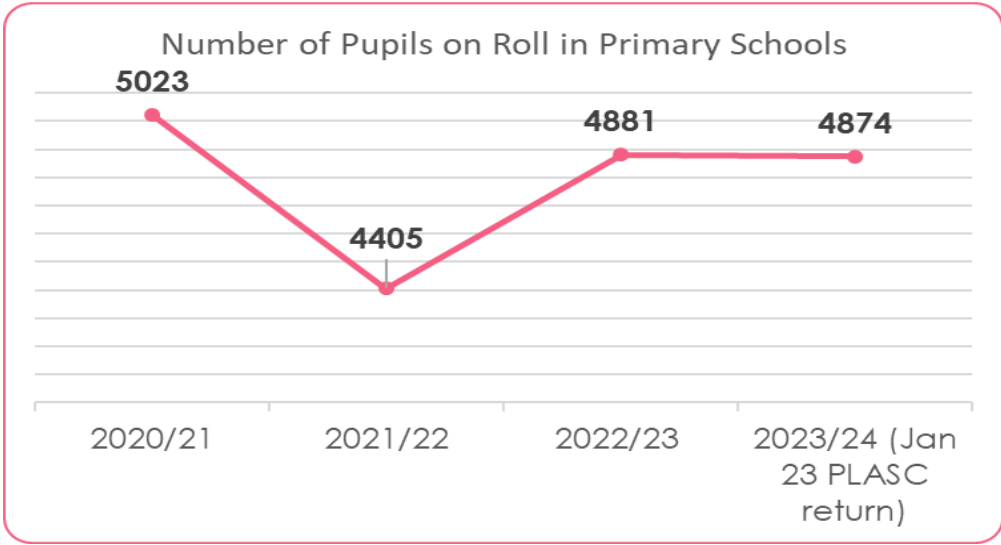
- **School Improvement and Inclusion;**
- **Education Transformation and Business Change; and,**
- **Young People and Partnerships.**



# The Shape of Our Place (continued)

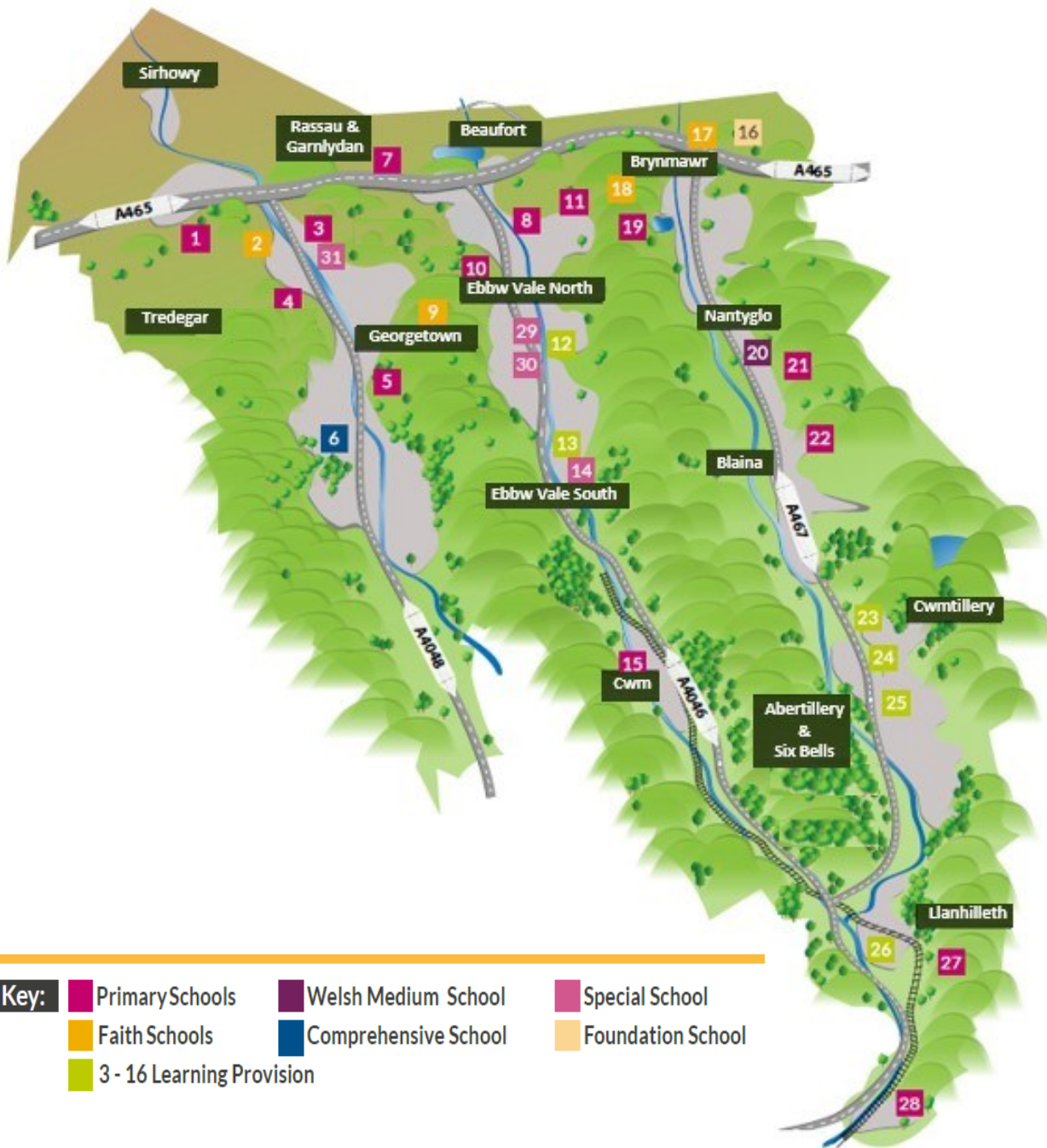
Number of pupils on roll in each categorisation of school.

Page 867



# Location of Schools

Page 868



- 1 Brynbach Primary School
- 2 St Joseph's RC School
- 3 Glanhowy Primary School
- 4 Deighton Primary School
- 5 Georgetown Primary School
- 6 Tredegar Comprehensive School
- 7 Rhos y Fedwen Primary School
- 8 Glyncoed Primary School
- 9 All Saint's RC School
- 10 Willowtown Primary School
- 11 Beaufort Hill Primary School
- 12 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Secondary Phase
- 13 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Primary Phase
- 14 Pen Y Cwm Special School
- 15 Cwm Primary School
- 16 Brynmawr Foundation School
- 17 St Mary's Church in Wales School
- 18 St Mary's Roman Catholic School
- 19 Blaenycwm Primary School
- 20 Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
- 21 Coed y Garn Primary School
- 22 Ystruth Primary School
- 23 Abertillery Learning Community - Roseheyworth Road Campus
- 24 Abertillery Learning Community - Secondary Campus
- 25 Abertillery Learning Community - Tillery Street Campus
- 26 Abertillery Learning Community - Six Bells Campus
- 27 St Illtyds Primary School
- 28 Sofrydd Primary School
- 29 River Centre 3-16 Learning Community - Secondary Campus
- 30 River Centre 3-16 Learning Community - Primary Campus
- 31 River Centre 3-16 Learning Community - House

# Director's overview and reflections on 2023/24 (April to September)

## Overview

Blaenau Gwent has big ambitions for our schools and learners. We are determined to play our part in Wales being a first class education system with a clear ambition to increase the skills and standards of education across the County Borough. We fully support and are committed to the Welsh Government's national mission for educational transformation, including curriculum and ALN reforms. The Education Directorate are currently consulting on a new vision and strategic priorities.






### Education Directorate Draft Vision:

*'Empowering our communities to be ambitious, ethically-informed life-long learners who lead full and healthy lives.'*

### How are we going to deliver this:

- Ensure that people are consulted and informed
- Provide effective and responsive school support services
- Provide a school estate that is fit for the 21st Century
- Prioritise people's physical, mental health and well-being
- Ensure effective collaboration with key stakeholders
- Ensure all services are inclusive
- Maximise opportunities for our communities

**Education Improvement Plan (Business Plan) – 5 Priorities**, supporting delivery of the Corporate priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27 (detailed on page 3):-

-  Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services
-  Maximise learning, skills and wellbeing for children, young people and the community in Blaenau Gwent
-  Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management
-  Ensure effective governance and delivery of commissioned services
-  Maximise partnership working to meet community need

## Reflections on 2023/24

This report demonstrates how the Education Directorate contributes to the team (the council as a whole) aim of delivering our corporate priorities. Throughout the body of the report you will find details of performance, both positive achievements and areas that we continue to focus on improving. We recognise that even the achievements are not yet completed but remain areas for progress to be maintained and improved upon where possible.

You will find below a short summary detailing some examples of these performance outcomes, broken down into sections of how they are supporting delivery of our corporate objectives.

As a council we are looking to be **'an ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place'**. To support this, the Education Directorate aim to deliver effective and efficient services within financial constraints. The Local Authority has a track record of spending within its education budget in recent years and 2022-23 provisional end of year position was favourable despite an overspend on Transport. During the reporting period new and better processes have been put in place between Education & Finance to ensure improved monitoring of the budgets and 2023/24 portfolio is currently on target or underspending in some areas. The financial outlook, however, for the public sector will be challenging over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and continued close financial management will be essential to achieve value for money. The Education Directorate wants to drive forward the right leadership approaches, right staffing capacity, people with the right skills/capabilities and the right forward planning to prepare for the future needs of the service. Appropriate training has been delivered to staff during the period and good engagement with staff and members continue. The Directorate sickness absence levels have also improved. It is recognised that one of the main strategic risks identified for the directorate is dependency on external funding to support key services and the workforce. During the reporting period a full review of directorate priorities has been carried out and the new vision statement and associated priorities are now directly aligned with Estyn recommendations for improvement.



As a council we are looking to **'Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent'**. To support this, the Education Directorate aim to ensure that all children and young people are given the best start in life, enabling them to live healthy, fulfilling lives whilst contributing to society and forming a valuable part of their community. We prioritise the importance of language acquisition and reading across the board, to support with positive outcomes and attainment. We continue to support children and young people to be in a good position to find skills and employment at the appropriate times, However, our NEET figures for 2022 demonstrate an increase in this category leading to a deep dive into the reasoning behind this increase. As a result improved processes/systems have been put in place allowing resolutions for other gaps to be developed. The monitoring of school attendance and exclusion numbers is key to understand potential barriers to learning. This is one area that needs further work and something that we will be analysing in much greater depth. Our long term aim is to decrease the percentage of adults aged 16-24 with no qualifications, and a number of new areas of work detailed throughout the report will support this, including a new Youth Service provision development of which was led by engagement with young people within our community, development of a digital presence making it more accessible and effective links with Elected Home Education young people, all of which will support these better outcomes. Partnership working and effective communication continually improves and better links have now been developed with early years and health. There are some new initiatives around mental health which will help to improve access to timely and appropriate support and the counselling / play therapy service has been extended to include the age range of below 6 years. The ICT Infrastructure and Connectivity project is progressing well alongside delivery of our Additional Learning Needs expansion and Sustainable Communities for learning Band B projects. Our educational building provision continues to deliver suitable learning environments due to effective monitoring and management of capacity and pupil places, effective delivery of needed minor works and larger school remodelling and rebuild works.



## Director's overview and reflections on 2023/24 (continued)



As a council we are looking to '**empower and support communities to be safe, independent and resilient**'. To deliver this, the Education Directorate support children and young people's educational learning opportunities whilst working collaboratively with the Aneurin Leisure and Awen Trust in a Council client function role, with an aim to ensure that all children and young people's well-being and educational needs are catered for. There is an appropriate safeguarding culture within the local authority where all staff and elected members receive suitable safeguarding training. Effective integration and collaboration between directorates and external partners such as education, schools, health and children's services delivers a system which manages the needs of our pupils and young adults. Counselling services and youth support services are in place and working well. Our dedicated staff and the implementation of integrated systems and processes support our children and young people to be resilient members of society.



As a council we are looking to '**Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities**'. To support this, the Education Directorate aim to ensure that decarbonisation measures are at the forefront of our future planning and teaching. The environment and biodiversity considerations form the basis of all new school buildings and existing school upgrades and we encourage nature friendly management on school grounds. Effective partnership working enables us to provide advice and guidance to support our children and young people around biodiversity, decarbonisation, equalities, diversity and inclusion. These partnerships with schools and the Children's Grand Council are very effective and not only inform but support our children and young people to have a voice. We are and will continue to deliver effective sustainable communities for learning which are environmentally friendly and support the delivery of our educated young people who will in the future form our connected communities.



**Luisa Munro-  
Morris**  
Interim Director  
of Education



**Cllr Sue Edmunds**  
Cabinet  
Member  
Education



# Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

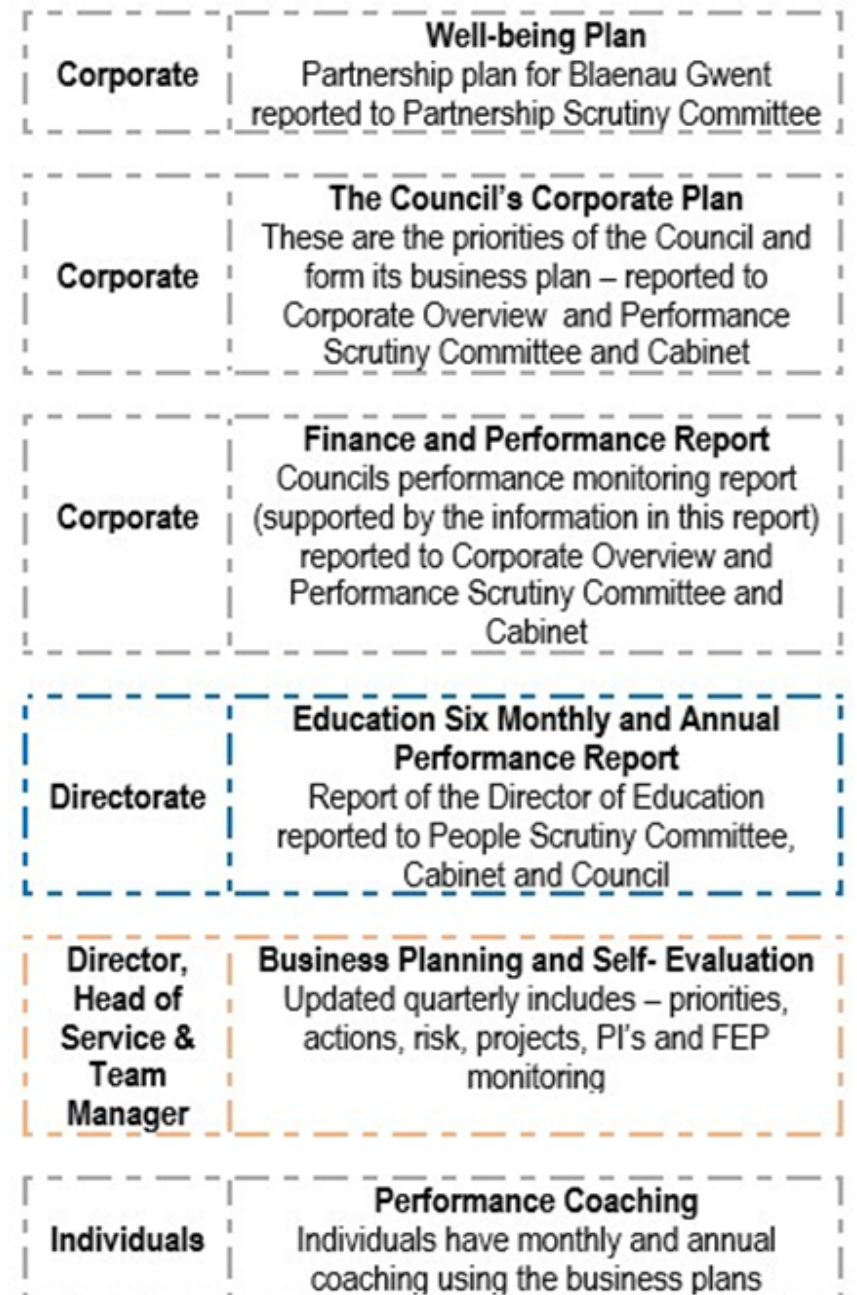
The structure of the Education Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. The Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create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

The Internal Planning framework to the right demonstrates how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create this 'golden thread'.

## Progress against actions

This report is broken down into the Directorate priority areas previously detailed in the 'Director's Overview' on page 7.

The following overview pages and case studies detail our performance for the period along with some associated achievements and challenges aligned to supporting delivery of the corporate priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27.



# Audit and Inspection

The Education Directorate is subject to audit, inspection and review by Estyn and Audit Wales. On a quarterly basis the Director of Education and service managers meet with Estyn to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. Estyn also undertake an annual review and evaluation of the Directorate's performance.

## Estyn



No new Estyn Inspections have been instigated during the reporting period that were specific to Blaenau Gwent. However, at the end of 2022, Blaenau Gwent Council was subject to an Estyn inspection resulting in the following recommendations for improvement which are being monitored as part of the corporate business planning process until fully delivered upon.

**Report title:** Report on Blaenau Gwent Education Services

**Local or National Report:** Local

**Completion date:** Published February 2023

**Report Link:-** You can read the full inspection report [here](#)

**R1. Improve the corporate leadership of education services;  
R2. Improve the quality of self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management; and,  
R3. Accelerate improvements in provision for secondary age pupils in schools causing concern**

## Audit Wales



No specific Education Audit Wales Inspections have been instigated during the reporting period. However, in response to previous corporate inspections carried out by Audit Wales, recommendations for improvement were made which are then monitored as part of the corporate business planning process until fully delivered upon. Ongoing recommendations are:-

**Report title:** Corporate Safeguarding Follow-up

**Local or National Report:** Local

**Completion date:** Published November 2022

**Report Link:-**You can read the full inspection report [here](#)

**Recommendation - 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 following pages detail Performance broken down into the five priority areas of the Directorate :

**Maximise learning, skills and wellbeing for children, young people and the community.**

**Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services**

**Maximise partnership working to meet community need**

**Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management**

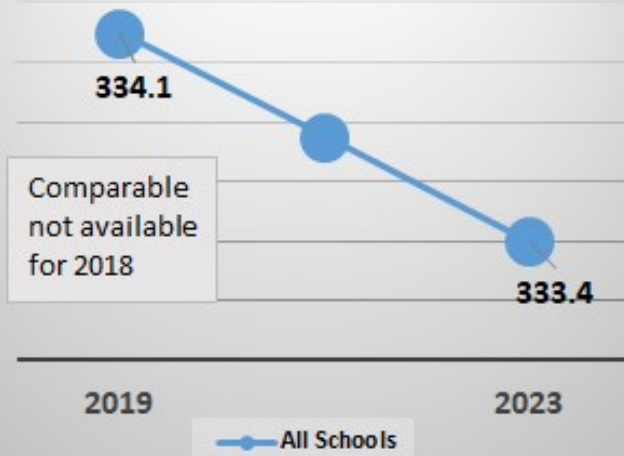
**Ensure effective governance and delivery of commissioned services**



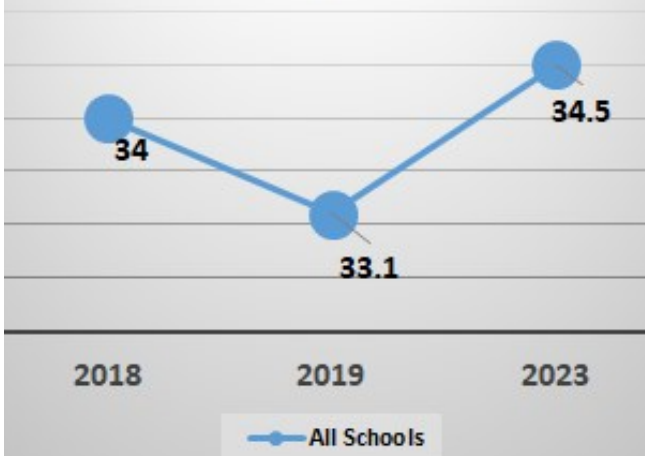
The **KS4 results were positive** and are anticipated to be in line with the School Development Plan targets. Some examples are shown below :-

(Note: only 2018, 2019 and 2023 comparison data shown due to routine data collection impacted by the covid pandemic)

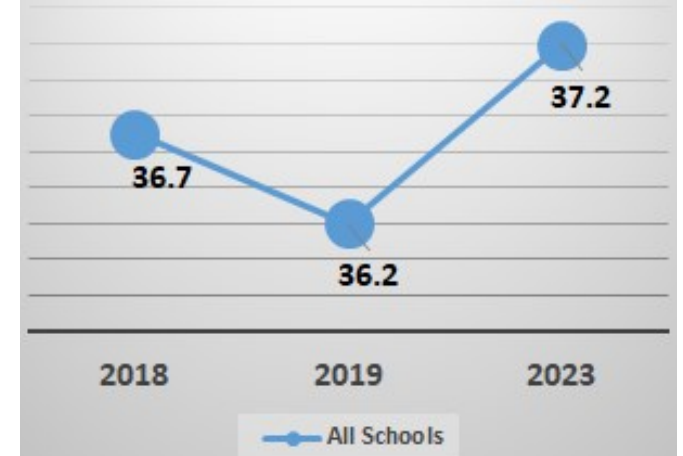
### Capped 9



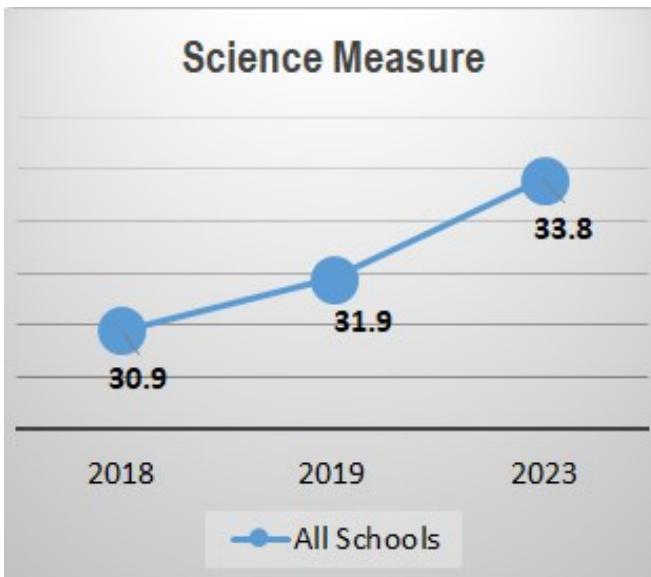
### Numeracy Measure



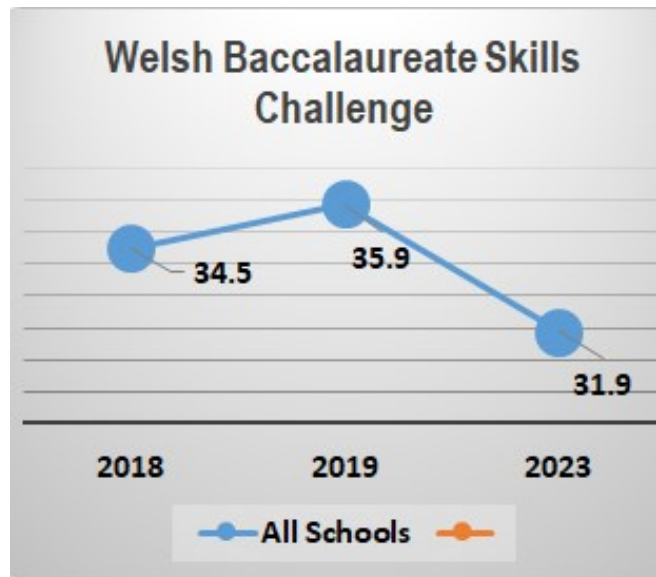
### Literacy Measure

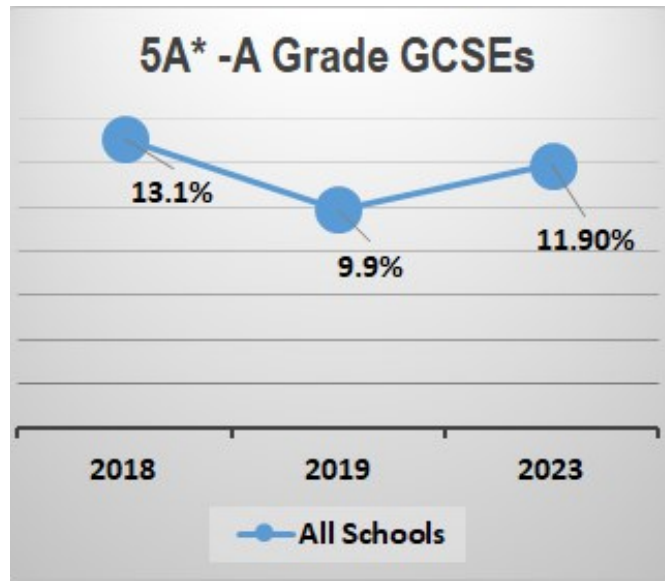
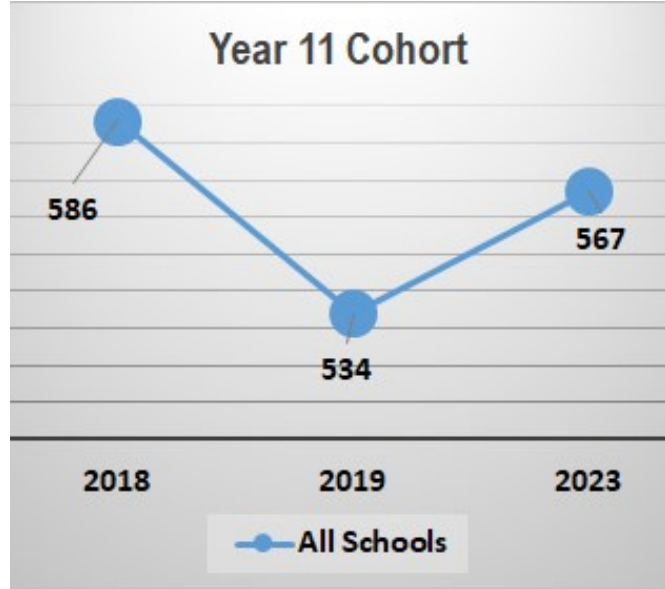


### Science Measure



### Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge





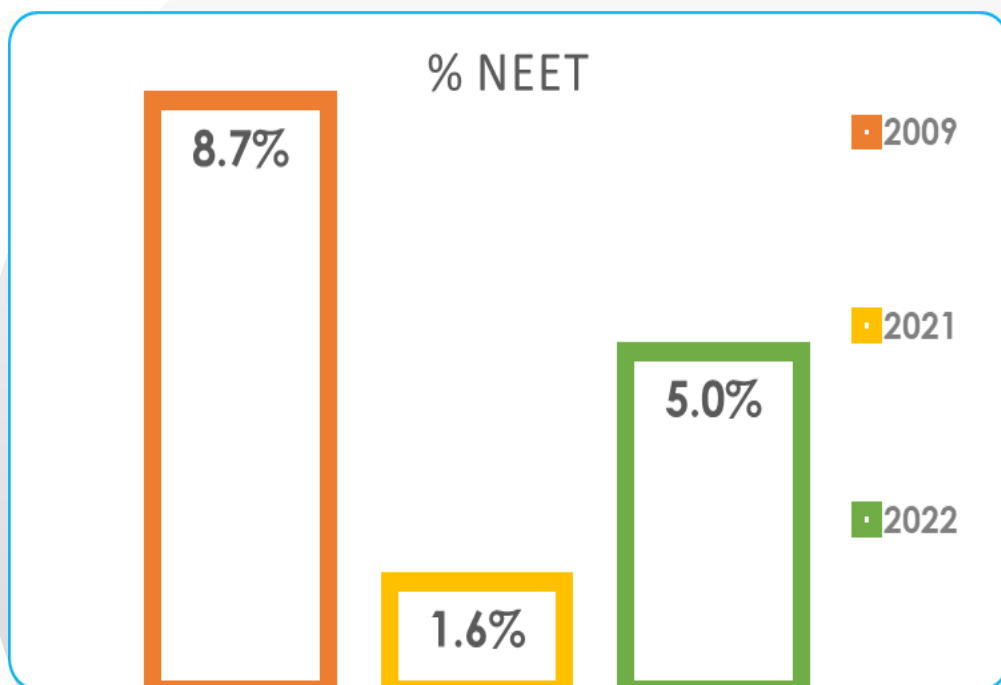
*Note: "All Schools" incorporates the 4 main secondary settings plus the "special schools" that also contribute to the KS4 results. The breakdown by school is not yet available.*

We have seen a **reduction** in **Schools Causing Concern** from **6 schools in 2019** to **2 schools in 2023**.

Going forward we will monitor and ensure the pace of change in school's causing concern is improved.



Blaenau Gwent continues to deliver a number of services that offer support for young people aged 11-25 who at risk of becoming or are currently not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).



**In 2022 Blaenau Gwent had a larger than expected figure of 5% (31 young people) NEET.**

Following this increase, there was a **deep dive evaluation with key partners** to understand and determine the cause and other contributing factors. This provided several findings, such as **gaps in the post 16 transition** for young people linked to **Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)** provisions and/or linked to Social Services, **out of county learners** and **faults in systems leading to the processing of Education, Training and Employment (ETE) status** (sometimes impacting the visibility of young people to key support services).

The evaluation proved to be a meaningful exercise and achieved its intended purpose, and as a result it has helped place more emphasis across the partnership on their engagement and involvement, leading to improved processes/systems and has allowed resolutions for other gaps to be developed (i.e., creating dedicated youth and community workers at SEBD/ALT education provisions).





Blaenau Gwent provides a good accessible counselling service to young people using counsellors who are qualified and experienced in working with young people. This will also continue using a range of digital means where young people cannot be seen in one of the appropriate settings. There are some new initiatives around mental health which may improve access to timely and appropriate support, links continue to be made by the co-ordinator with these services to ensure there is open discussion and a joined up approach in improving access to mental health services particularly for those with diagnosis/clinical mental health conditions.

A total of **263 young people** aged year 3 to 25 years **accessed counselling or play therapy** during 22/23 academic year - **222 of these were new referrals**



For the financial year 2023/2024 Welsh Government has again provided additional funding, with indicative funding provided until March 2024, to extend the service to below year 6. This indicative funding has assisted in being able to retain the current play therapist. In Blaenau Gwent and across Wales, there is a need for a service such as play therapy for young people aged 10 and under.

By providing a digital presence, the Youth Service has become more accessible to a wider audience of young



Youth workers contribute to care and support plans and attend various multi-agency meetings in relation to safeguarding issues including Section 115 meetings and Community Safety Meetings. Good relationships are forged with Social Workers and Families First Support Workers which enables a good mechanism for sharing appropriate information with regard to improving well-being or improved outcomes for young people.





The partnership with Schools, Coleg Gwent and Post 16 providers has strengthened through the establishment of the Post 16 Strategic Partnership Board.



**A-level A\*-C grades in Coleg Gwent were slightly lower (76.5%) than All Wales figures of 78.9%. A\*-E grades in Coleg Gwent (97.8%) were slightly higher than the all-Wales overall pass rate of 97.5%.**



The Youth Service is established as an **accreditation centre** with Youth Workers also providing support for parents of Elected Home Education (EHE) young people wanting to deliver units.

Currently it has contact with **18 EHE young people**, to provide a link with the service.

The **Positive Futures** school groups and community referrals are highly successful in helping young people better understand their behaviour and how to manage it. **38 young people** are **supported** in a weekly social group and 8 young people who are on the cusp of permanent exclusion from across all mainstream secondary schools are supported each year to develop social skills, understand peer pressure and how to manage their emotions through attending a rolling programme of workshops.

The scheme **promotes positivity, health and wellbeing** and new experiences to help **raise aspirations, resilience, reduce anti social behaviour** and first-time entrance into youth justice system.



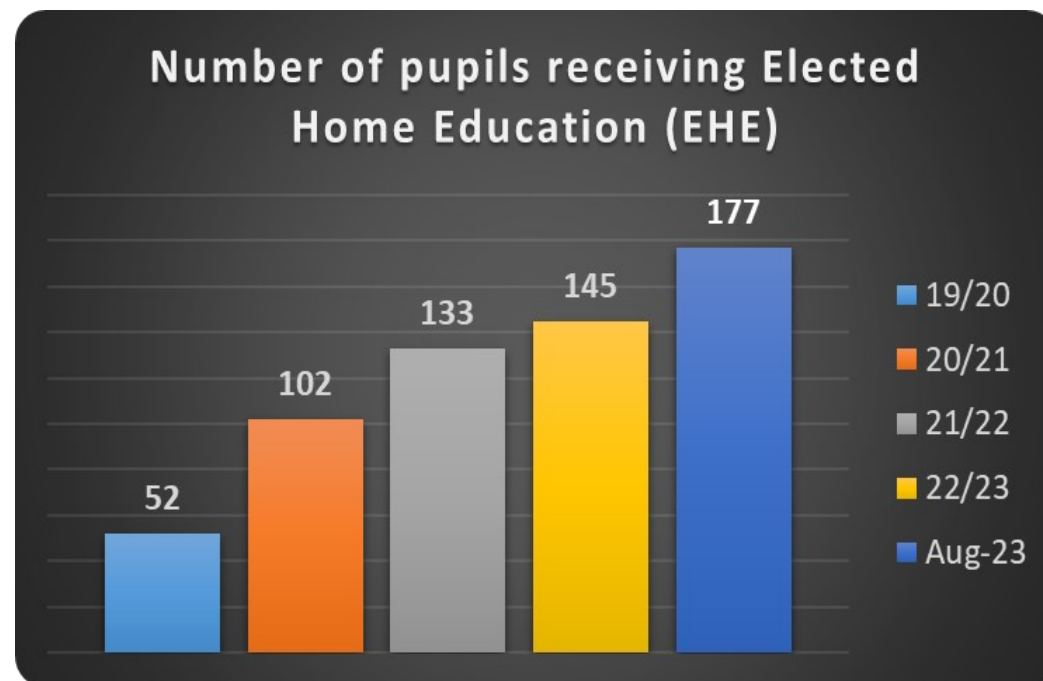




## Elected Home Education within Blaenau Gwent

As demonstrated in the chart there has been an increase in the number of home educated children within Blaenau Gwent over the past few years. Elected Home Education (EHE) pupils continue to be supported by the Education Welfare Service, however this needs to be monitored closely going forward to ensure that the number of visits increase in line with the above.

**As at 31st August 2023 there were 177 pupils on the EHE database compared to 145 at the end of February 2023. This is an increase of 18%.** Thirty of these pupils are from the Gypsy Roma Traveller Community (GRT).

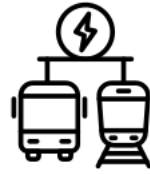


Between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023, 74 children became EHE. Fifty-Two of these were secondary aged and Twenty-two were primary age.

Thirteen children were from schools outside of the Local Authority, seven children were from Abertillery Learning Community, 10 from Ebbw Fawr Learning Community, 11 from Tredegar Comprehensive and 11 from Brynmawr Foundation School.



### Cymunedau **Dysgu** Cynaliadwy Sustainable Communities for Learning



The Band B Programme seeks to deliver the following key projects:

- **Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Refurbishment**
- **Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment**
  - Glyncoed Primary New Build
  - Rhos y Fedwen Primary Refurbishment
- **Continued Secondary School Re-modelling**



The delivery of the Sustainable Communities for Learning **Band B programme** is well underway with an **investment of circa £33m** into the school estate.

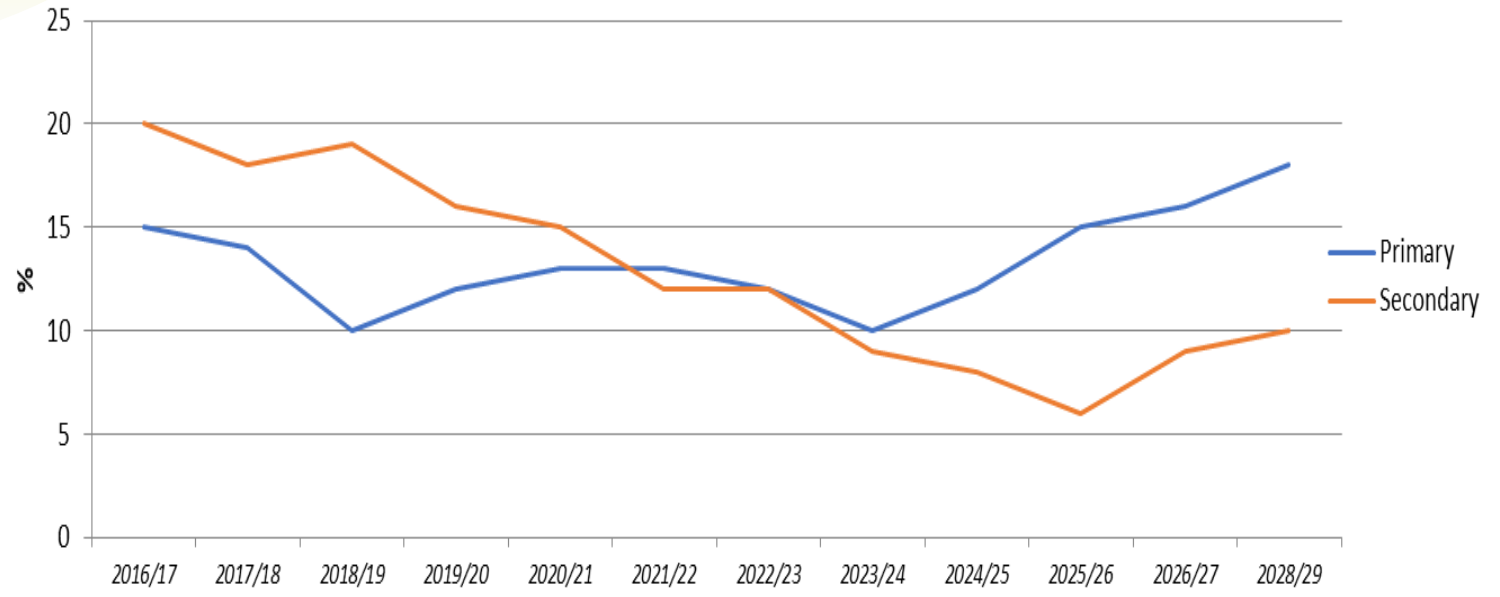
The suitability and condition of the school estate continues to improve with circa **58%** categorised as A/B

The 2023 primary projections show a small number of primary schools projected to have over 15% surplus places during the next 5 years. However, the surplus in these schools does need to remain higher, to enable pupil population growth in line with live birth rate fluctuations, also due to the fact that a reduction in the admission number would negatively affect configuration of the teaching and learning environment and staffing levels.

Page 882



**LONG TERM** –Building condition and suitability ratings and capacity projections inform the prioritisation of projects within Band B and the rolling programme for Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, along with potential further school organisation priorities, minor and planned works programmes etc.





**Rhos y Fedwen Primary - Remodelling** - Willis is the appointed contractor for the Foundation Phase scheme, they commenced works in August 2023 and are scheduled to conclude February 2024. Tender documents will be going out January 2024 for the 3G pitch area, this has been moved due to the contractor also being on site now and the advice from professionals is not to lay pitches in cold/wet weather and plan between April/September months. The project group meets regularly to inform implementation of works.

**Brynmawr Foundation School - Remodelling** of Brynmawr Foundation school is needed and the project team have been working closely with Community Services and the school to carry out a comprehensive Options and Cost appraisal - The outcome of this determined that the school will need extensive remodelling/refurbishment in the next 10 years at a very high cost therefore longer term options for the school are being explored.

**Ebbw Fawr – Secondary Campus** - In 2022 the school raised sufficiency issues for the 2024/25 academic year, stating that it needed additional classrooms to accommodate pupil needs. Since then, this has become a priority for the Education Transformation team to develop options. A full business case is intended to be submitted to Welsh Government, based on the preferred option of a standalone extension with additional classrooms, a canteen and dining area on the grounds of the existing school site in April 2024.

**Tredegar Secondary** - A project group in relation to Tredegar Secondary school has met several times over the last year, the project brief is being developed by the school in relation to an extension to the building (Subject to planning approval) in line with projected sufficiency figures. This will then form the basis of the business case submission to WG, which depending on the development of the project brief, is intended to be submitted in the Spring term 24



By March 2024 Welsh Government has stipulated that any remaining projects for delivery under the Band B programme will automatically move over to the Rolling Programme. This programme will benefit Councils across Wales as it has a 1-3 year plan, a 4-6 year plan and a 7 year and beyond plan. This means that any project not delivered under the Band B programme will automatically transfer into their 1-3 year plan. A new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) will need to be completed and submitted by the deadline date. The Project team are currently carrying out a desktop exercise on the priorities coming forward from schools capacity and condition survey.





The inclusion team lead by Education Transformation team went out to consultation in April 2023 to increase the capacity for resource bases and ASD provision in mainstream schools. The statutory notice period ran through June/July with a decision for implementation scheduled for this year. The proposal is in 2 parts, part one meet the need of learners in secondary and Welsh-medium provision. Part 2 will focus on the success and need for additional bases after 2025, this will also consider religious character schools.

The council have been awarded 2 grants 2022/23 and 2023/24 from Welsh Government Additional Learning Needs (ALN) capital grant.



- The 2022/23 grant was used predominantly for Pen y Cwm and River Centre 3-16 Learning Community – Secondary Site
- The 2023/24 grant allocation will be used to implement the ALN review.

**River Centre Learning Community – Secondary Campus**

- In 2022, the school had an Estyn Inspection which recommended change and with this in mind the ALN grant was used to transform the learning environment, both internally and externally, making this a fit for purpose facility for vulnerable learners .

The River Centre Secondary Campus was **subject to investment circa £450,000.**

The complete refurb included 3 extra classrooms including sensory provision, new furniture, home economics and independent living area, outdoor muga and gym.



Works to Pen y Cwm Special School includes remodelling the existing learning environment to create additional classroom spaces and associated facilities i.e. additional sensory rooms and a hobbit house, to create an outdoor learning space. This work continues whilst the Council are working with the school to develop a long-term plan to support sustained growth and development.



**Better links** have been developed **with early years and health**, and a more comprehensive **tracking tool has been created** in order to improve the tracking of pupils with Additional Learning Needs **to ensure better planning of provision.**

Our Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (EY ALNLO) now holds registers and continues to work closely with health colleagues, attending ISCAN panel meetings to maintain accurate registers.

### Early Years Additional Learning Needs

Every Local Authority will have a designated officer known as the 'Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer' (EY ALNLO), who will have responsibility for strategically co-ordinating the Local Authority's functions in relation to children under compulsory school age who are not attending maintained schools.

The role of the EY ALNLO is to work with parents, early years settings, health professionals and others who may be working with children below compulsory school age, to raise awareness of the ALN system and to promote early intervention. The EY ALNLO holds robust and

#### Early Years ALNLO

Promotes early intervention.  
Focus on early years.



#### What does the EYALNLO do?

The EY ALNLO works closely with health visitors as well as many other health professionals and monitor children below the age of 5 to identify ALN at the earliest opportunity. The EY ALNLO also works alongside the Early Years Support Team and the Inclusive Practice Team here in Blaenau Gwent, to provide support and advice as well as signposting of services within a strategic role.

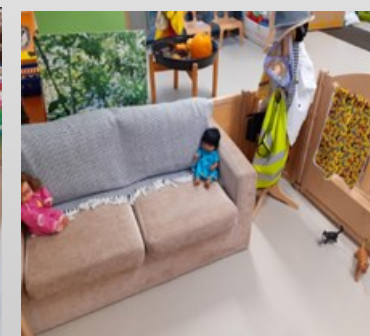
The EYALNLO has responsibility for co-ordinating the local authority's role in relation to children under statutory school age, who are not attending maintained schools. This is applicable to all children until they are of statutory school age – the term after their 5th birthday.

#### What happens when a learner starts school nursery/reception?

The EY ALNLO will support a learner until they begin school. Once the learner is registered at, and attends a school, responsibility for supporting this learner passes onto the school and the schools Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo).

#### Additional Learning Needs coordinator (ALNCO)

The school ALNCO is the lead co-ordinator for learners with additional needs. They work in maintained schools, school nurseries, resource bases and special schools.





**The ALN Code makes it clear that learners should be able to access provision, in so far as possible, within their locality.**

The Local Authority are keeping their Additional Learning Needs provision under review as per the Welsh Government directive. As is similar in most Local Authorities across Wales, and certainly within the South East Wales Consortium family, placements for specialist provision are extremely limited for learners with cognition and learning difficulties in primary settings and secondary is running above capacity. We are already running **over capacity at Primary Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) placements**, and we currently hold a **waiting list of 6 pupils** requiring an ASD placement as determined by Additional Learning Needs Panel.

In order to mitigate the need for out of county placements for ASD learners, **Inclusion and Education Transformation worked together over 22/23 to plan future resource base allocation within the Borough**. This involved an ALN consultation which formed the basis to move forward to a development and implementation stage, with the first being the **development of an ASD base at the Tredegar Comprehensive site, which opened September 23** with an investment of **approximately £200k**.

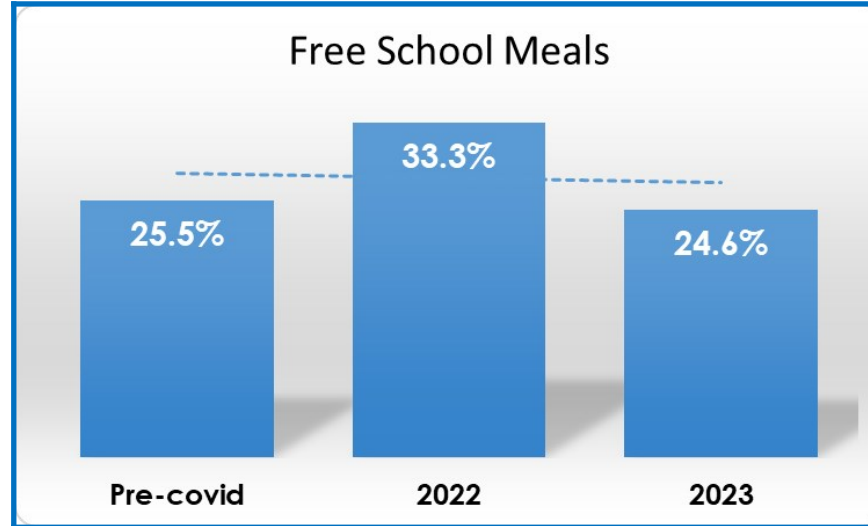


There are further plans in place to extend capacity in primary settings for 24/25 with 2 schools earmarked for ASD bases, one of which is Welsh medium. This should mitigate the need for seeking out alternative options for the learners on waiting lists for specialist ASD provision. Further information regarding the plans to increase capacity is available via the ALN Consultation. **[RIGHT CLICK HERE AND OPEN HYPERLINK](#)**





In terms of transition panel for year 6 – 7, last year the Local Authority considered 33 children for a more specialist placement for secondary. By December 2023 the team will be aware of figures for entry Sept 24 and those learners will be presented at panel for consideration.



Current data suggests that eFSM figures have gone down, however a robust check is currently being undertaken to ensure figures are accurate.

A resource base review was carried out in the autumn/spring terms and recommendations for inclusion were made and shared with all resource base placements. We are aware that across Blaenau Gwent there is a variation in inclusion to mainstream time for learners and thinking ahead, and in order to move a learner on back in to mainstream, there needs to be promotion of inclusion. We are, for example, aware of in excess of 10 learners in Penycwm Special School that would potentially be able to move across to a resource base; however, places in those resource bases appear to be currently stagnant and there is work needing to be done to support integration with mainstream peers.

Of all the Welsh local authorities, **child poverty rates are highest in Blaenau Gwent (30.3%) and Ceredigion (30%)**. <https://www.business-live.co.uk/economic-development/new-data-reveals-extent-child-27044774> It is also reported that **children from larger families are significantly more likely to live in poverty**. The current Child Poverty Strategy for Wales has been in place since 2015.

A “Draft Child Poverty Strategy for Wales 2023: Integrated impact assessment”

has been published by Welsh Government to help alleviate the situation. Right click here to view the strategy





### Accessibility and Poverty -



Over the summer 2023, young people were consulted on what is needed in each area and since September, Youth Service teams have implemented new provision in each area covering Abertillery, Brynmawr, Cwm, Ebbw Vale and Tredegar. The Youth Service's Detached Team works across all areas going to where young people are at – town centres, shop fronts, parks, bus stops and other areas where young people are meeting and gathering. By delivering a mix of both detached and centre based work the Youth Service provides opportunities for young people to access within a variety of settings. Most the Youth Service's open access activities and opportunities are provided outside of school hours either during the evening, weekends or school holidays to ensure they are accessible when young people need to access them.

The ethos within the Youth Service is to assume that all young people may need financial support, to avoid stigmatising any individuals. Therefore, all opportunities are provided free and where possible transport is provided. Where activities maybe more than an a few hours, refreshments and food is provided to all young people so that those who would not normally be able to provide this for themselves are not 'singled out'.

Page 888



We provide Free Activities and youth club access



We provide Free facility hire at sports centres (sports pitches)



Free gym memberships



Monthly free movie screenings at Brynmawr Cinema



Free sanitary products available – part of the period poverty/equity approach



Free hygiene products available such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap and deodorants



Free clothes washing and drying facilities at both youth centres



Fresh new bedding/sleeping bags/cooking equipment available for those who need it



Prom outfits/Interview clothes/General clothing



Equipment/resources for college/school/training/employment







Youth Service Activities include providing a full summer and winter programme during school term and school holidays, supported by the Welsh Government Youth Support Grant.

The full summer programme of activities had themed days and were mixed with both positive activities, health and well-being and new experiences.

Page 889

At the start of the summer period **over 250 young people attended the Open 4 youth event** at Ebbw Vale Sports centre.

Over **400 young people participated in the full summer programme.**

To make the booking process fair and accessible for all young people there was an electronic booking process. This was promoted via our social media channels.

Food was provided to any young people that may need it on activities during the school holidays



Through the development of the Service's digital platforms (social media and website) young people can access information and support without the need to physically attend at a time that suits them. By providing a digital presence, the Youth Service has become more accessible to a wider audience of young people.



**As of September 22 a transition process commenced whereby the duties for Post 16 Additional Learning Needs became the local authority responsibility.**

Arrangements are currently in place for the transfer of Welsh Government (WG) post 16 funding to local authorities until the end of implementation when WG will transfer a mean amount of funding via the LEAG for post 16. At this current time we must use the funding only for registered Independent Specialist Provision (ISPI); however, then we will be able to utilise these funds as we wish for Post 16 following the end of implementation.

**This year (Sept 23 entry) there were 2 applications for Independent Special Post-16 Institutions ISPI from Year 11 learners where the local Further Education college had indicated they could not meet the need.**

**COLLABORATION** - The Early Years ALN Lead Officer has close links with the ALN Teams both in the education and social services directorates; the focus is learners pre statutory school age, those with emerging needs and those who may be identified as ALN.

During academic year 22/23 there were no learners who were identified as requiring an IDP in the Early Years settings ( An IDP is a document for children and young people with additional learning needs which helps teaching staff to plan for your child, teach them, and review their progress.)

**This academic year there has been extensive work with Early Years team in Social Services, which has included forging relationships with the Local Authority team and also the early years settings.**

There were **21 referrals to Early Years panel** during the summer term of 2023 in readiness for learners **commencing nursery in September 23**; these referrals were specifically following Education Psychology assessments for two terms of Rising 3 funding for schools.

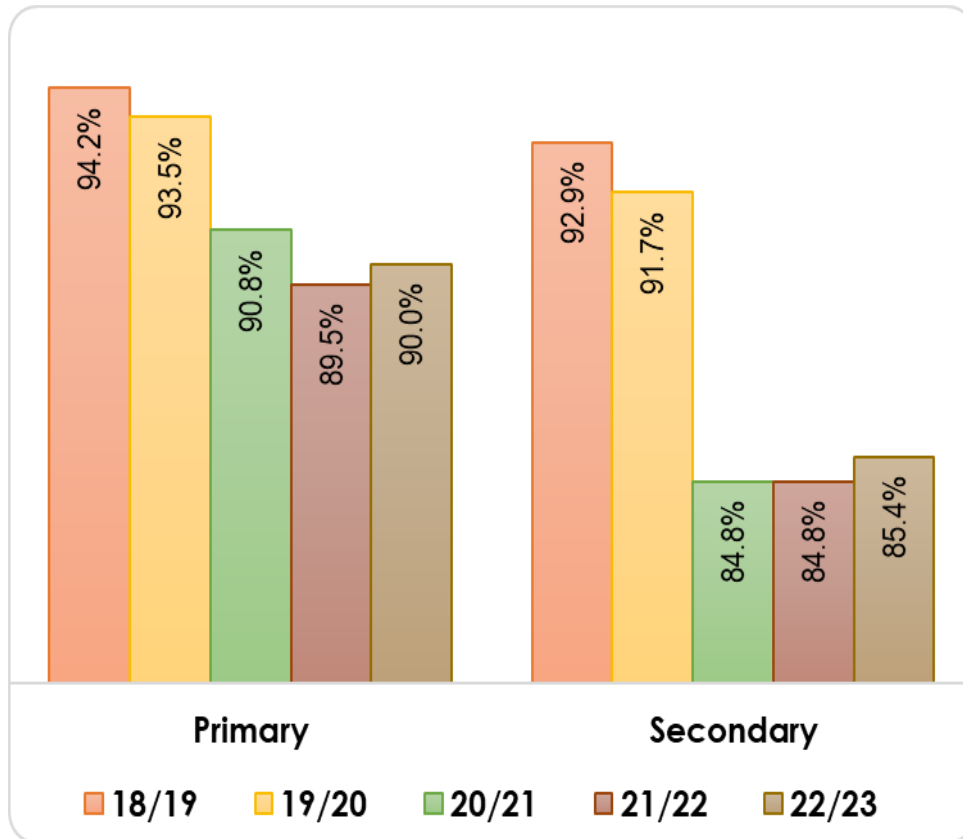
**Moving forward into the new academic year of 23/24 Early Years panels will become part of the ALN statutory panel.**



Joint meetings between Head teachers, senior Education Welfare Officer and Youth Service Manager have taken place with secondary schools to support improving attendance and reducing exclusions. Further analysis will take place in order to identify the reason for decline and put mitigating actions in place.



School Attendance



**Attendance/exclusions are still following the National trend although the downward trend for attendance in Blaenau Gwent seems to have settled.**

Education Minister Jeremy Miles said he would establish a National Attendance Taskforce which would "look in depth" into the reasons behind non-attendance, along with the publication of new "engagement and attendance guidance".

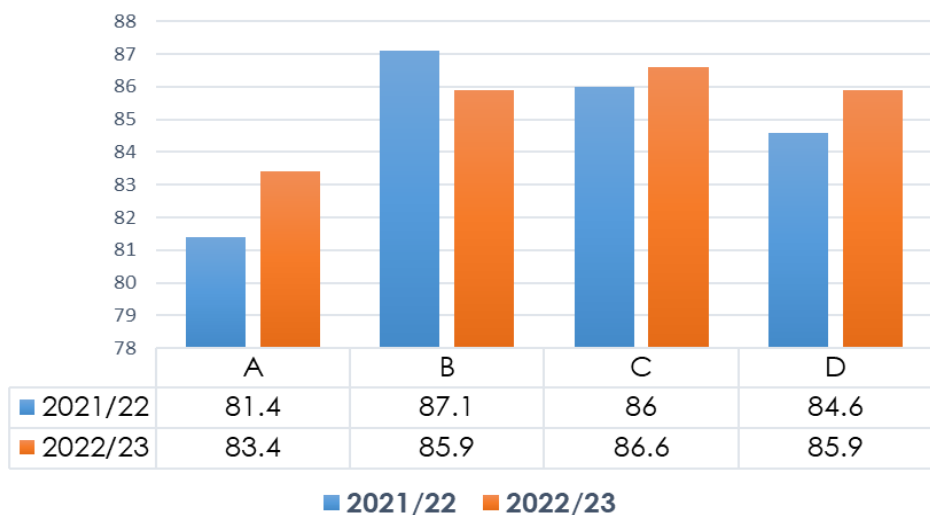
In a written statement, he said: "There are often complex and multiple factors lying behind non-attendance. These could include mental health and wellbeing, availability of specific learning support services, and the ever-rising cost of living and attitudes of parents and learners towards school attendance generally. As such a priority of the group will be to look in depth into the reasons behind non-attendance and bring to bear their expertise to identify actions that can bring about sustained improvements."

Taken from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-66933229> date 27 September 2023

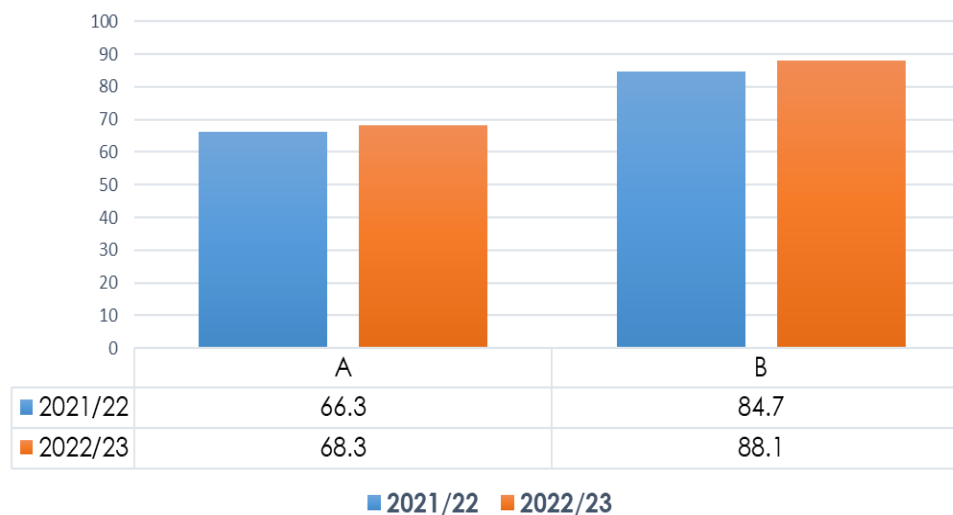




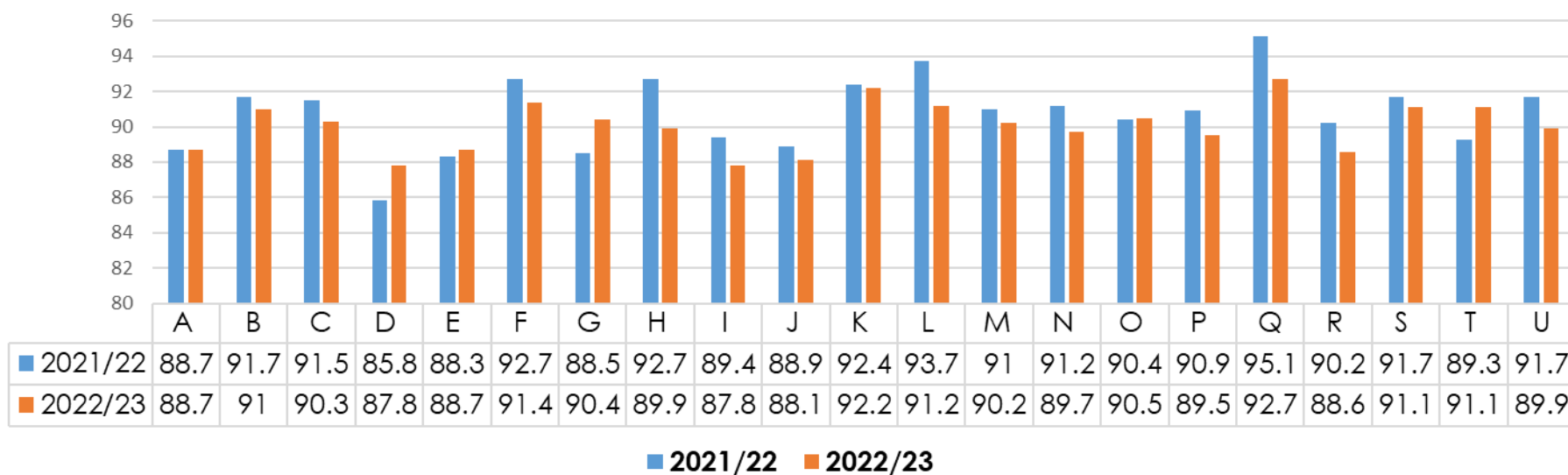
Secondary Attendance Data W/E 21st July 2023



Special School Attendance Data W/E 21st July 2023



Primary Attendance Data W/E 21st July 2023

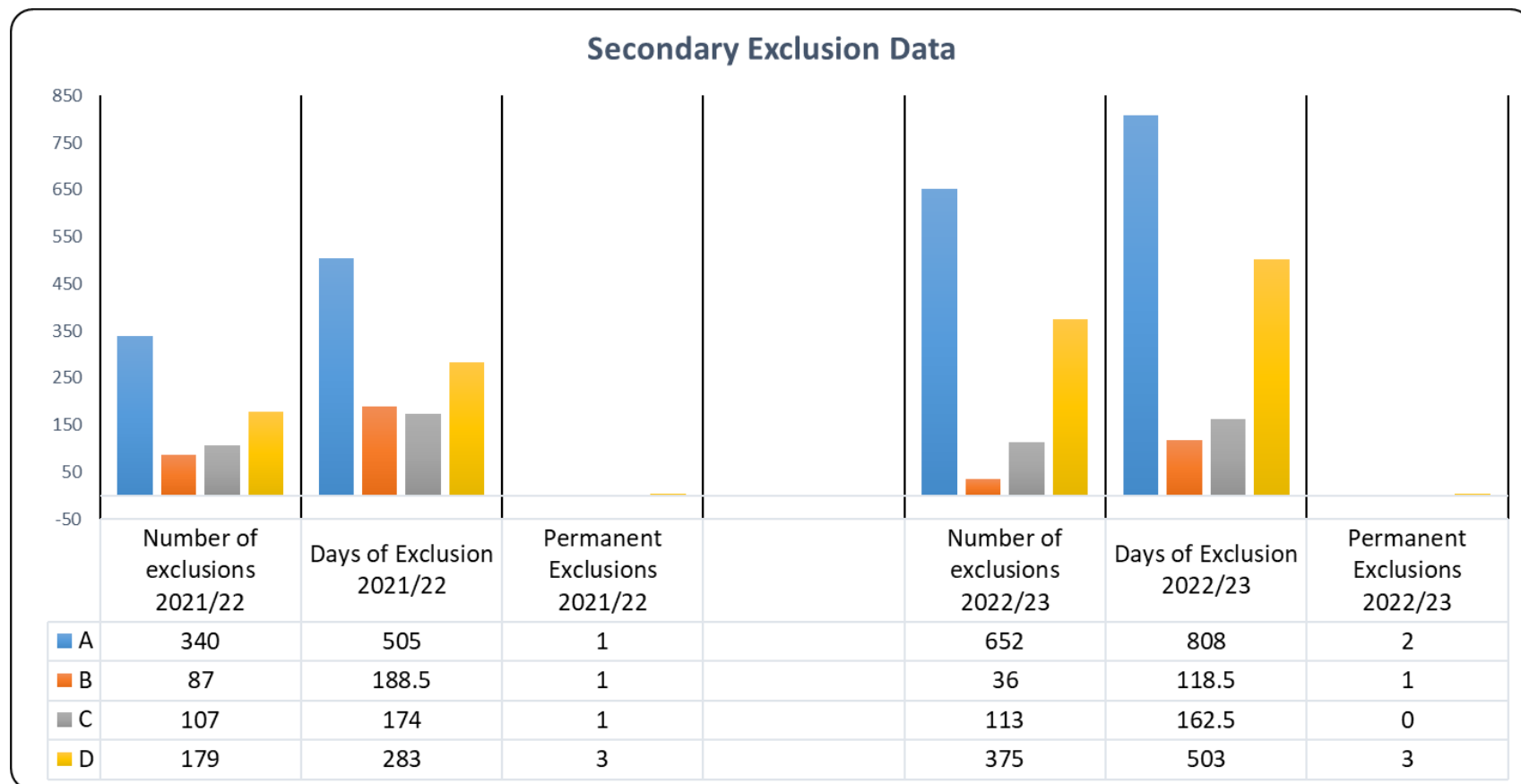




Historically in **Blaenau Gwent, exclusions** have been represented by high numbers and this had started to reduce slightly; however, we are now experiencing an **increase in exclusions** related to an increase in **adverse behaviours in school**. With the introduction of the Vulnerable learner Panel (VLP) this year, the Local Authority has been able to support learners that have been at risk of permanent exclusion and support schools in reducing this category of exclusion. However, the Local Authority is seeing a significant increase in referrals to VLP and we need to be mindful that there is only limited provision and funding available.

The exclusion data detailed over the next few pages shows the comparison of data during the 2022/23 academic year compared to the 2021/22 academic year.

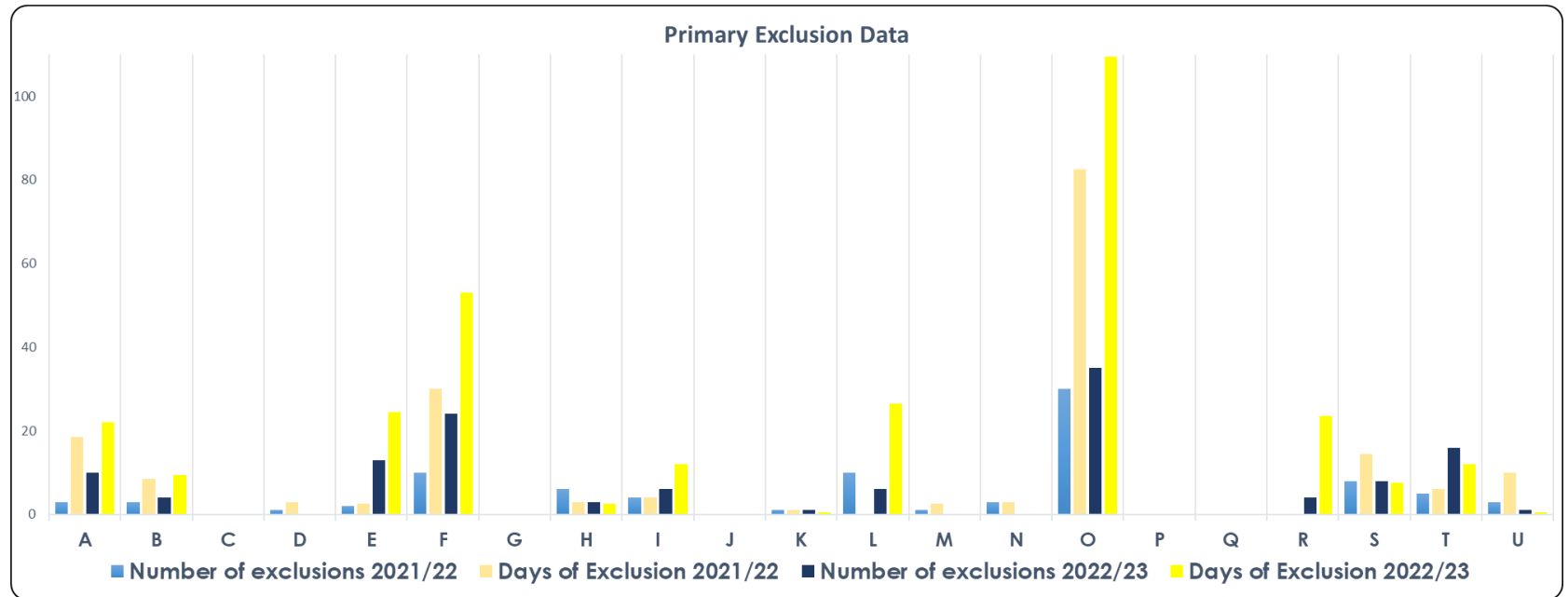
During the academic year 22/23 there were a **total of 1176 exclusions in our Secondary school estate compared to 713 in the previous year** of 21/22.





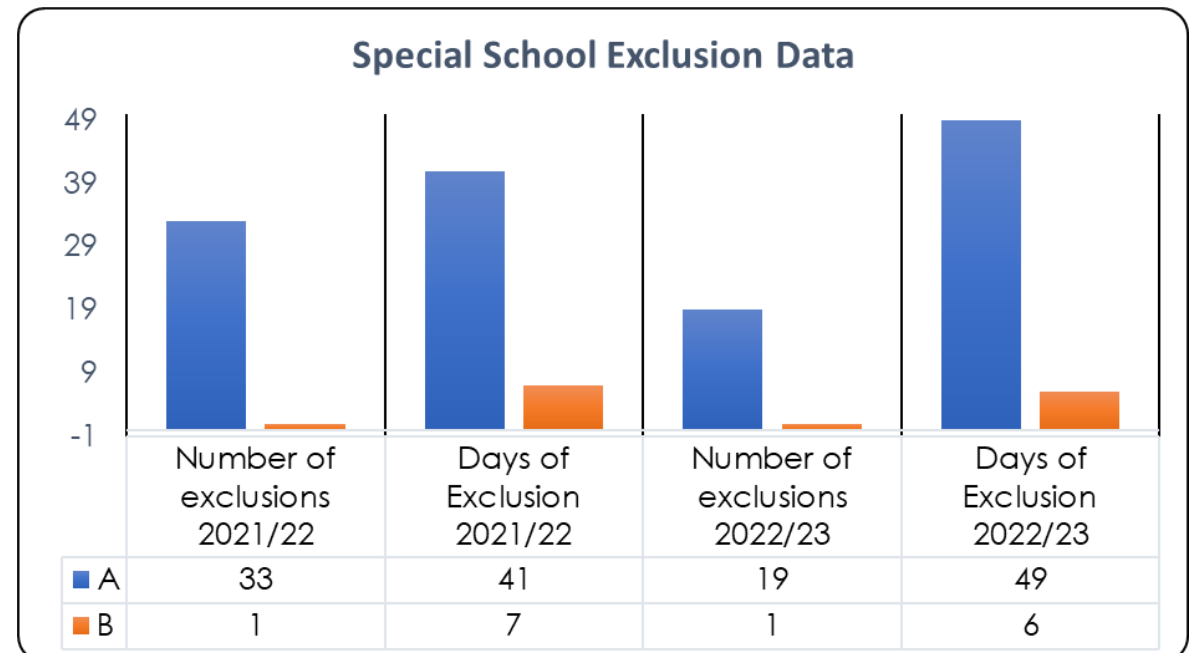
During the academic year 22/23 there were a **total of 131 exclusions overall throughout our primary school estate compared to 90 in the previous year of 21/22.**

There were no permanent primary school exclusions this year.



Although figures show that **exclusions from the 2 special schools have decreased** on the previous year, **the days lost are increased.**

There were no permanent special school exclusions this year.





The summary table below details the overall increase / decrease of exclusion numbers, number of days of exclusion and permanent exclusions across our education settings from 2022/23 academic year compared to the previous academic year 2021/22.

Overall it is not showing a positive picture with an **increase of 490 pupil exclusions across the school estate** compared to last academic year and an **increase of 561 days lost to exclusion**. The number of Permanent exclusions during 2022/23 academic year is again 6 pupils.



<b>Secondary</b>	Number of Exclusions has <b>increased by 463</b>	The number of days of exclusion has <b>increased by 441.5</b>	The number of permanent exclusions has <b>remained the same at 6</b>
<b>Primary</b>	Number of Exclusions has <b>increased by 41</b>	The number of days of exclusion has <b>increased by 114.5</b>	The number of permanent exclusions has <b>remained the same at 0</b>
<b>Special Schools</b>	Number of exclusions has <b>Reduced by 14</b>	The number of days of exclusion has <b>increased by 5</b>	The number of permanent exclusions has <b>remained the same at 0</b>
<b>Total increase compared to last academic year</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>0</b>



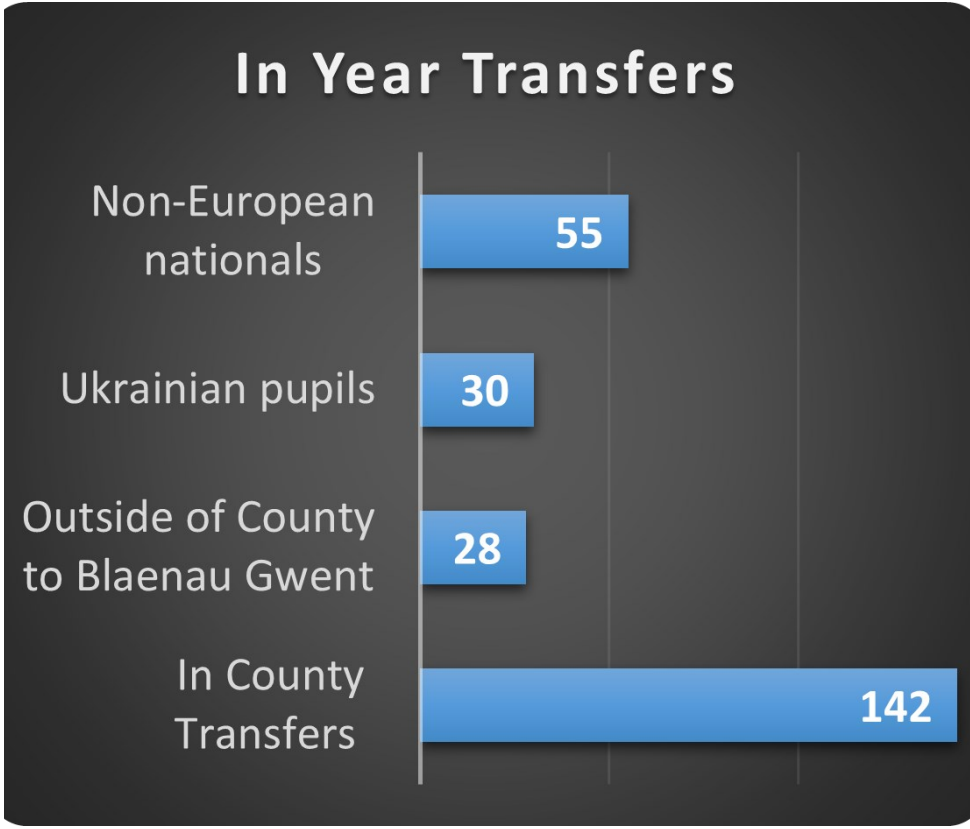
There is merit in looking at what the schools and Local Authority currently provide in terms of alternative curriculum and exploring if there is a more appropriate way of working.



All **admission rounds** were **completed** for 2022/23 academic year with **100% of first preferences being met** for both **nursery and secondary place allocation** and **99% of first preferences were met** for the **reception year group**. This is attributable to the **effective monitoring and management** of school capacities and pupil places along with the continued achievement of **surplus place reduction**.

Page 896

There have been **255 In Year Transfers** between **September 2022 and July 2023** **33% of which were due to inward migration** from foreign nationals moving **into Blaenau Gwent**. **100%** of these transfers were **processed within 15 days**



**Two admission appeals** were held for the **reception admission round** during the **summer** period. **Both** appeals were **upheld in favour of the admissions authority** due to them being **class size appeals**.



Options for further **engagement and promotion** is being explored to **increase the number of in-time applications** for reception and secondary school.



**INTEGRATION / COLLABORATION** - Strategic links with key partners such as the EAS, Coleg Gwent, Schools, WBL providers continue to be effective, ensuring that Blaenau Gwent is well placed to continue with the transformation of the Education service and supporting our children and young people.







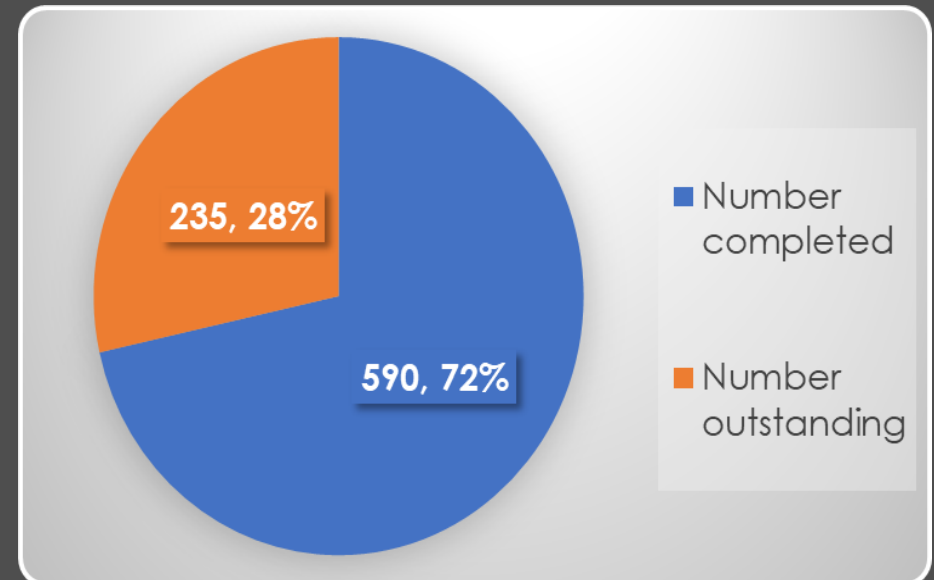
This year the Council received a Welsh Government **Schools Capital Maintenance Grant**, which alongside minor works has resulted in capital investment of **approximately £900,000 in the school estate** to date.

12 projects were completed during the summer holidays, these included full replacement of a toilet block in a secondary school, 8 classrooms refurb, full refurb of a nursery demountable building, creation of a Learning Resource Base (kitchen, office, toilets 3 classrooms) in a former unused building and refurb of 3 rooms in Bedwellty House to create a temporary seedling provision for the new Welsh primary.

**825 TE100's (requests for maintenance, repair and planned works)** were received between September 2022 and August 2023, **100%** of which were acknowledged and **received a response within the specified timeframe.**

72% (590) of the 825 TE100 requests have been completed with remaining 28% scheduled for completion within the 2023/24 academic year. Delays to resolution have been due to the following factors:-

- Budgetary issues in line with identified costs;
- Market forces including material availability;
- Access to school buildings;
- Securing contractors to undertake the work; and
- The capacity of Technical Services to assess the extent of repair/ maintenance work and associated costs.





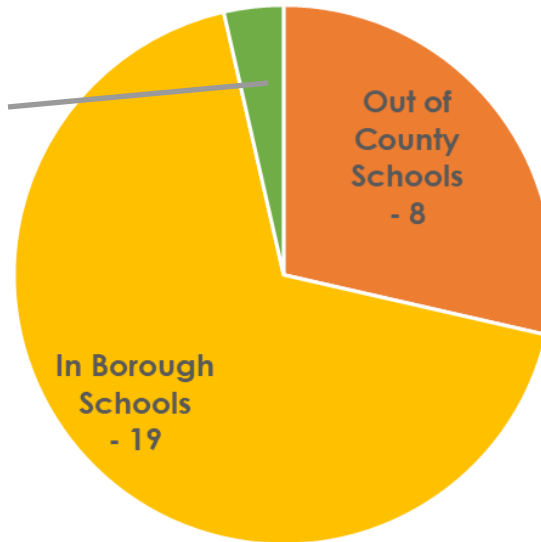
**INTEGRATION** - An effective internal partnership between the Education Directorate and the Build Environment, Environment and Regeneration continues, leading to the delivery of an efficient home to school / college transport provision.



We procure and monitor 28 operators providing transport for over 78 contracts. This includes mainstream, Welsh-medium, faith education and specialist provision for ALN.

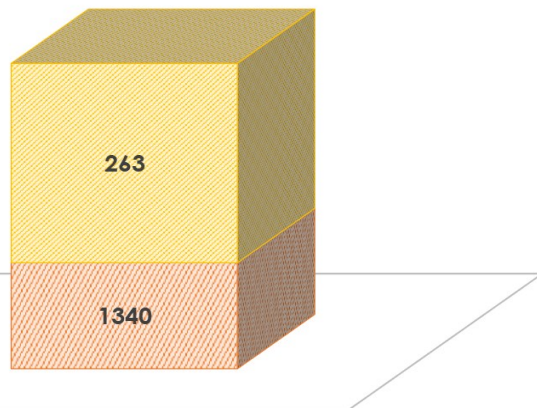
**We transport to:**

Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone and Post 16 Provision - 1



**Over 1600 school pupils use Home to School transport:**

■ Mainstream Pupils ■ ALN Pupils



We provide support for over 550 Post 16 students living in Blaenau Gwent, they are provided with a discounted bus ticket or travel grant. Applications for this academic year are still being processed.

The transport policy seeks to ensure that there is an appropriate framework to aid delivery of the services. The **Home to School Transport budget out-turn position for 2022/23 was £2.7m** (after the use of £450,000 of funding from reserves) against a budget of £2.2m.

For **2023/24** the **Home to School Transport budget is approximately £3.3m**, this is following the award of a **£682,000 cost pressure in the budget setting process in relation to the uplift in contract prices awarded to contractors as a result of the fuel crisis**. The Council received a number of requests from operators for an increase in the historical contractual rates as a result of the fuel crisis. This was agreed to ensure continuity of the home to school transport service.



**The ICT Infrastructure and Connectivity Project** - The Local Authority has again made strong progress in line with its strategy for improving standards in ICT. This has involved continued progression of the Infrastructure and Connectivity Project, implementation of Waves 1-4 of the Welsh Government HWB EdTech Programme and work towards the development of a strategy and associated sustainability plan for both infrastructure and devices in Blaenau Gwent.

### Estyn & Welsh Government Thematic Review

**A recent ICT thematic review was undertaken by Estyn and Welsh Government which provided the council with suggestions to improve practice and enhance outcomes for learners in the LA. The review is based around 4 key areas:**

1. Education Digital Standards
2. Quality and impact of online provision for schools
3. Hwb Approach and Other platforms
4. Digital Resilience

**Overall the review was positive, highlighting the active work that the Education team have undertaken thus far. There were three recommendations identified:**

- Blaenau Gwent to work with schools to re-focus on utilising 360 Safe Cymru tool.
- Provide finalised Digital Strategy to WG once consultation is completed.
- WG to support Blaenau Gwent with planned Hwb email migration and further Hwb adoption across the LA.

**The 360 Safe Cymru tool forms part of the council's Education ICT strategy. There are Bi-monthly ICT strategy meetings due to restart in the Autumn-term 2023 where this recommendation will be added to the agenda and discussed in depth .**

The ICT strategy is currently in draft format and the consultation has concluded. There were no further comments received from the consultation, however, Education have been liaising with the Digital Team to ensure the strategy aligns with the corporate ICT strategy. The final draft is to be reviewed in the Autumn-term 2023 for final sign off.

**Education will collaborate with the Digital team and SRS to consider the Hwb Migration in the Autumn 2023 term**

The **Educational Digital Standards** are designed to assist schools to understand, manage and implement their digital environment. The Standards also provide guidance on how schools should future-proof their digital environment to meet the needs of a more digitally focused school curriculum. The standards suggest all infrastructure work undertaken to meet the standards should be carefully considered, planned and procured in compliance with national procurement regulations and installed by professional organisations.



A corporate ICT strategy has been devised by the Digital team, and Education has worked with the team to ensure the Education strategy aligns with the corporate strategy

*'To secure continued development ensuring that all learners regardless of age or demographic have continued safe access to a blend of digital resources, hardware and cloud-based learning throughout the course of their education.'*



- Infrastructure and Connectivity
- Digital Inclusion
- Device Sustainability
- Migration to and use of Hwb
- Digital tools and resources
- Training and Development
- Online Safety
- Support for Schools
- Education Management and support systems
- Blaenau Gwent corporate approach and overview

Page 900

There are 9 priority areas identified within the strategy. These areas have been focused on heavily over the past 2 years, we will continue to progress these in line with the Digital competency framework.





Through a partnership approach the Youth Engagement and Progression Team continue to support young people to prevent youth homelessness and to support emotional wellbeing.

**Youth Service**

The Youth Service provides a number of high quality projects providing young people with personal support, advice, guidance, advocacy and counselling services in school and community settings - this is supported by a well-developed workforce.

**The team has continued to support individuals on a one-to-one basis, along with running groups and community projects.**

**During the last academic year,  
25 young people were supported  
on a one-to-one basis.**

**These young people are often in precarious housing situations, and support is based around navigating appropriate information, advice and guidance from other services to help provide some stability and to enable them to improve their housing situation.**

**Groups continue to be facilitated with young people in alternative school settings accessing opportunities and provision.  
This includes a group linked to having difficulties in a mainstream setting (and a group at the SEBD provision), in total 38 young people have engaged.**



**This has continued to develop, with ongoing relationships with partners growing and understanding of routes and support available locally expanding, overall becoming more efficient and effective.**



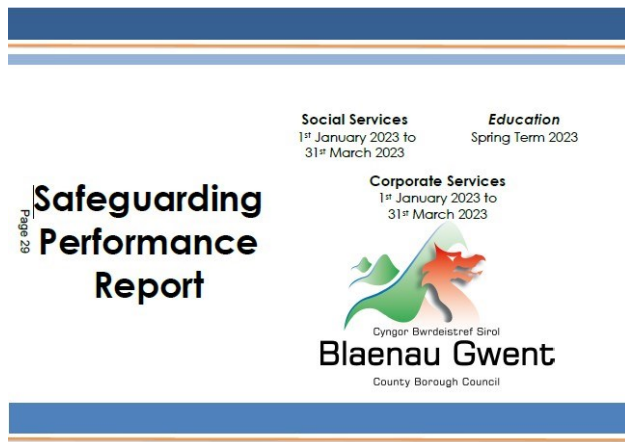


Safeguarding processes are well established in the Youth Service and are fit for purpose. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, with robust records kept on all safeguarding matters including Duty to Report (DTRs) Referrals to Social Services, feedback and staff training. Termly meetings are held between the Youth Service and the Safeguarding in Education Officer, and any areas of concern outside of child protection are escalated through this process. All Youth Service staff have received training in Prevent and actively use this understanding to identify any concerns in youth settings. Staff are giving regular opportunities to attend other training to identify, support and report safeguarding issues which include child exploitation, domestic abuse, emotional wellbeing support.



**Safeguarding** is a corporate responsibility and is an important aspect of the Education Directorates service delivery.

Between September 2022 and August 2023, **44 referrals (DTRs)** were made to Social Services and more detail relating to these are included in the Joint Safeguarding Report.



Right click here and open hyperlink to view our most recent Safeguarding Performance Report



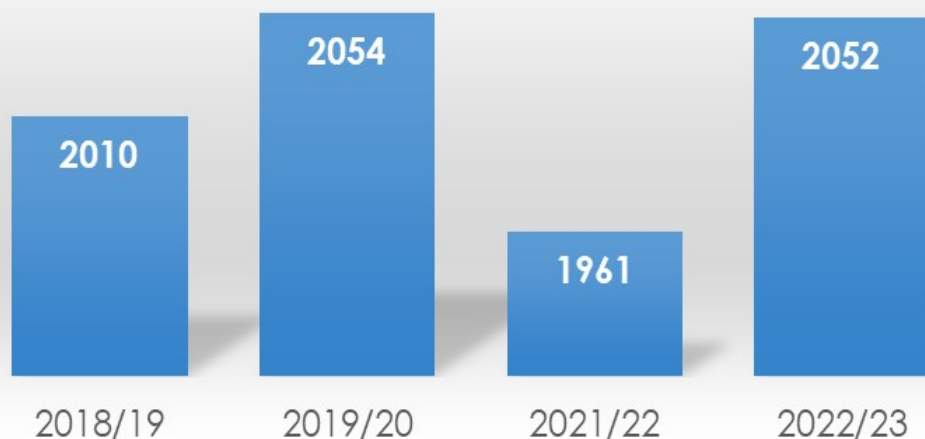
The Youth Service operates a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure which sits underneath The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Education Directorate Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy and includes the procedure for Youth Workers who work out of hours and the procedure for Safeguarding Adults at Risk.

All youth service staff, students, counsellors, therapists and volunteers receive **safeguarding training**. Depending on the role, staff also attend additional training in specific areas such as child exploitation, substance misuse and Prevent to ensure **effective identification and reporting** of safeguarding concerns.





### Number of 11-25 year olds supported by the Youth Service

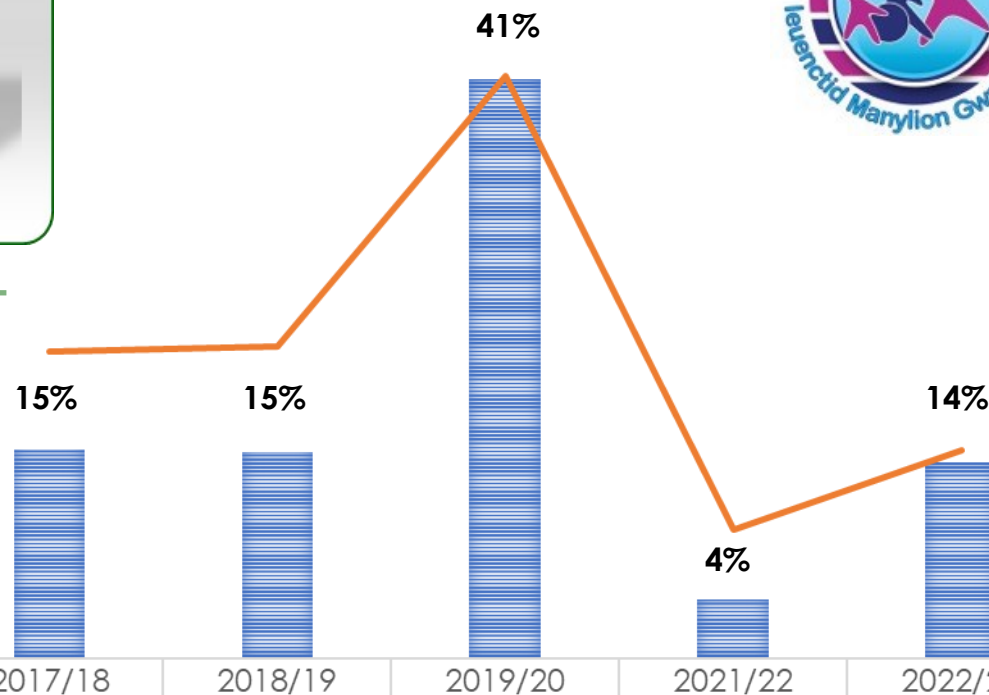


The **number of 11-25 year olds supported by the Youth Service** during 2022/23 is 2052 (Reach of 19%). The reach is 2% higher than the 2021/2022 data and shows that the reach has almost returned to pre-pandemic levels.



Page 903

Out of the 2,052 11-25 year olds supported by the Youth Service above, **14% (287 young people) have gained 340 nationally recognised qualifications.** Any achievements are made voluntarily and completed during the young people's spare time.



	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2021/22	2022/23
Number of young people supported (11-25) that gained accredited qualifications	306	301	847	86	287
Number of qualifications achieved	448	456	851	188	304



**The number of additional contacts made with anonymous young people (not registered with the service)**

through the 11-25 Counselling Service, detached youth work, outreach and out of school activities and events with some online activities offered.



(one contact is between 1-3 hours long)



**Prevention** - The service is led by the needs and interests of young people, and as we returned to face to face delivery accreditations were not the focus of the work, as needs being presented by young people have been mostly around **emotional well-being** where different approaches have been needed. Dependent on the project, the outcomes for each programme are now measured on participation, improved wellbeing as well as improvement in either school attendance or behaviour, rather than accreditations. Despite this a significant number of young people still undertook an accreditation .







Over the last year, both core and external funding has been secured to continue a variety of projects to meet identified needs which include :

- SPF 11-25 Youth and Community programmes;
- Youth Homelessness;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing;
- Duke of Edinburgh;
- Detached and Outreach Youth Workers;
- Positive Futures (ASB programmes);
- Open for Youth Nights;
- Youth Clubs;
- Youth Information Service;
- Young Ambassadors (YAMs);
- the 11-25 Counselling Service;
- the Young Reps Volunteering Programme; and
- the school holiday programme.



Funding was secured via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) from 1st April 2023 until 31st March 2025 to continue the successful delivery of both Inspire 2 Achieve and Inspire 2 Work. The SPF programme has been planned and developed based upon learning from Inspire and youth workers within the SPF project continue to support young people aged 11-25 who are at risk of becoming or are NEET.

The programme will again support young people within learning settings and in the community. The programme aims to support 900 young people within its duration and key outcomes include development of life skills, employability skills, achieving additional qualifications and transition into further education, training or employment.

Partnership working will remain and continue as a key function of the programme in both 11-16 and 16-25 support pathways, ensuring young people receive the appropriate access to a wide of support without duplication.

Ysbrydoli  Gyflawni  
Inspire  Achieve



Inspire  Work  
Ysbrydoli  Weithio



## Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services



The Council's Workforce Strategy 2022-26 aims to build on existing good practice and is continuing to promote the Council as a good place to work – **developing a workforce that feels connected to and can meet the current and future needs of our community.**

The Directorate recognises the critical need to communicate and engage staff in service delivery, transformation, change, new commercial thinking and financial efficiency. This is currently undertaken through a number of methods: • Regular one to one performance coaching • Annual performance review • Team meetings • Staff meetings • Management team meetings • Staff Surveys • Engagement in financial planning

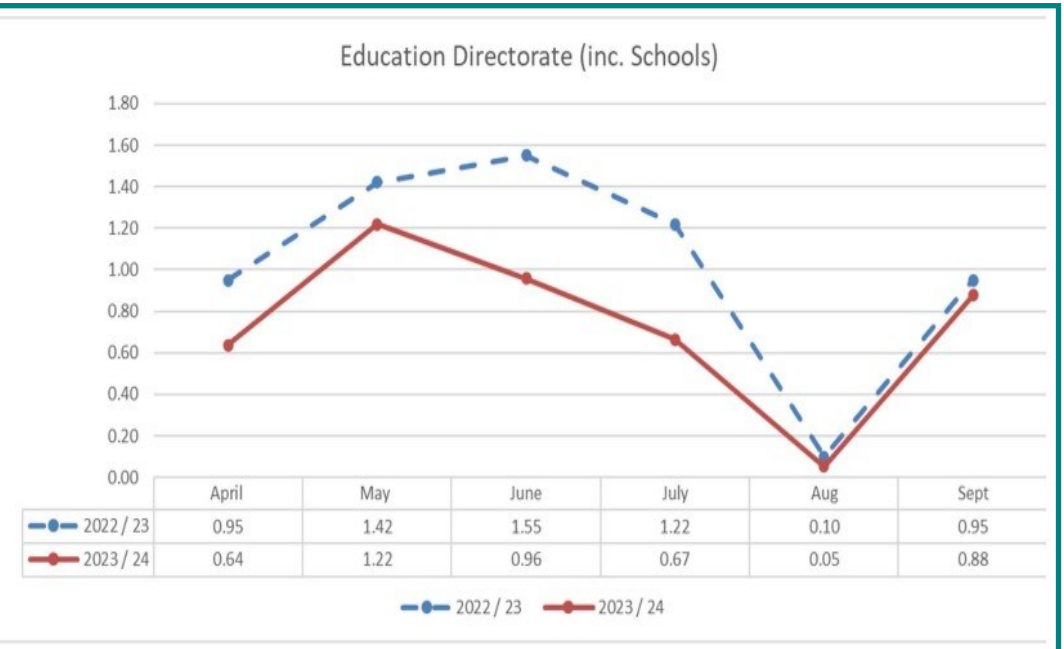
Close work with Organisational Development continues and includes monitoring of staff attendance rates.

	Quarter 1 (Cumulative) 2022/23	Quarter 2 (Cumulative) 2022/23	Quarter 2 - 22/23 Target	Quarter 1 (Cumulative) 2023/24	Quarter 2 (Cumulative) 2023/24	Quarter 2 - 23/24 Target	Trend
Education Directorate							
Education Transformation and Business Change	0.60	9.40	2.75	3.56	4.20	3.5	Improvement but over target
School Improvement & Inclusion	0.25	0.47	2.75	0.49	2.32	3.5	Decline but within target
Young People and Partnerships.	2.46	2.46	2.75	0.82	0.78	3.5	Improvement and within target
Senior Management	0.00	0.00	2.75	26.09	40.50	3	Decline and over target
School Based Staff (excluding Teachers)	4.98	7.87	4.25	3.28	5.18	6	Improvement and within target
Teachers	3.29	4.90	4.25	2.53	3.73	6	Improvement and within target



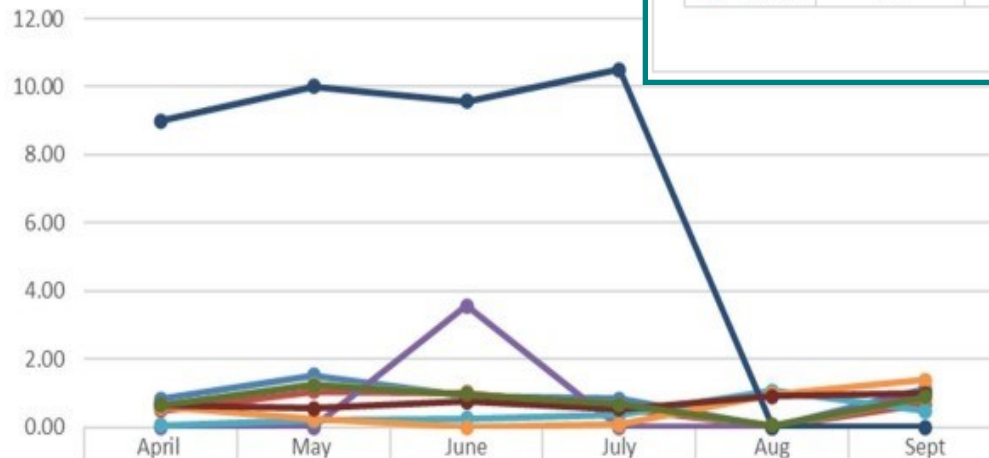
## Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services

### Education staff absence rates - Two year comparison

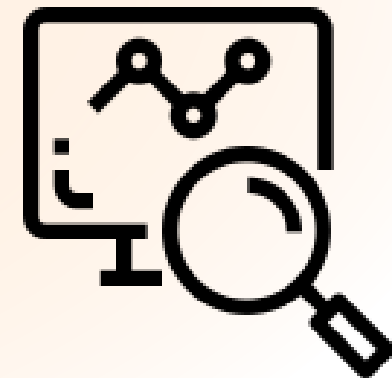


### April - September 2023/24 Sickness Breakdown

Education Directorate (inc. Schools)



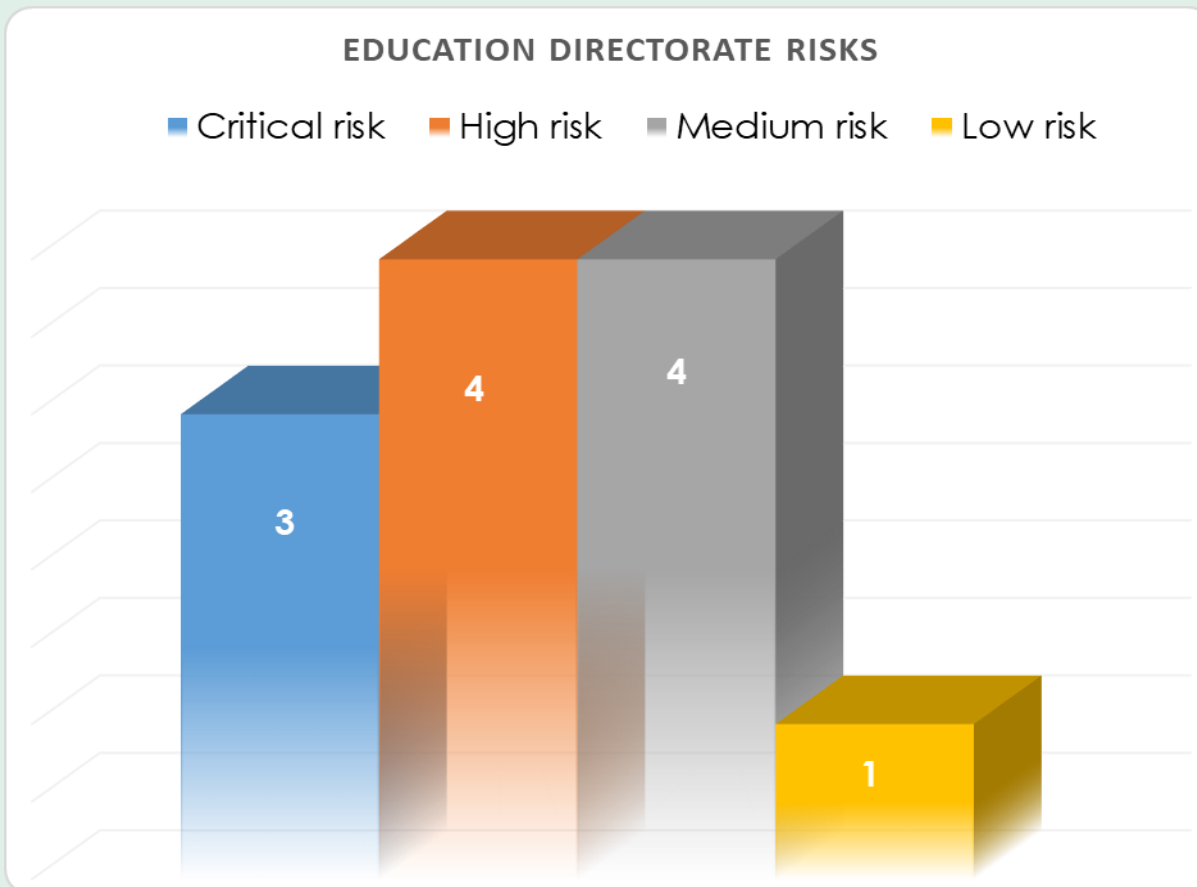
	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
School based staff (excluding Teachers)	0.83	1.52	0.93	0.83	0.00	1.13
Teachers	0.48	1.05	1.00	0.54	0.00	0.66
Schools Total	0.64	1.26	0.97	0.67	0.00	0.87
Education Transformation & Business Change	0.00	0.00	3.56	0.00	0.00	1.00
School Improvement & Inclusion	0.05	0.20	0.24	0.34	1.07	0.47
Young People & Partnerships	0.58	0.24	0.00	0.07	0.97	1.39
Senior Management *	9.00	10.00	9.57	10.50	0.00	0.00
Corporate Education Total	0.64	0.55	0.75	0.52	0.90	0.98
Education Totals	0.64	1.22	0.96	0.67	0.05	0.88





In line with the Council’s Risk Management Strategy Department Leadership Team review and challenge the risks on the Directorate Risk Register on a quarterly basis. As part of this process, they will consider new risks for inclusion on to the Directorate Risk Register and consider risks for escalation to the Corporate Risk Register.

The Education Directorate Risk Register has 12 risks, with 3 having a critical residual status, 4 having a high residual risk status, 4 being medium status and the remaining one being of low status. Mitigating actions are in place for all risks and the critical risks are detailed below .....



- **Failure to support schools in improving pupil outcomes and wellbeing.**
- **Free School Meal (FSM) figures reported to Welsh Government have included pupils who are entitled to a FSM based on transitional protection**
- **Budget concerns**





## Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services



Proposals have been shared with schools in terms of Rising 3 funding becoming a lump sum of funding shared among all schools to align with the Additional Learning Needs agenda for inclusion and to provide equity among schools in being able to build capacity to meet the needs of all learners. Discussions are



The education directorates aim is to work towards developing a robust **strategic plan for partnership working** which enables opportunities for children, young people and the wider community to be maximised. This plan will ensure communication between different service areas and partners is effective , with partnership working leading to improved services and value for money. Partners know the Education Directorate's vision and strategic aims and they provide services which positively build on these.



## Engagement with Members -

Aside from the work programmes for Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council, the Education Directorate also regularly engages with Elected Members to inform Members of key areas of the Directorate to enhance their learning and understanding.



At this stage the Local Authority has not yet received any monitoring forms, which schools are requested to return to demonstrate how the funding has been used and the impact. We are not able to evidence whether this funding has had any positive impact.



**Directorate Priority Review** - A full Business Plan review has been undertaken within the period in line with a review of each service area under the Education Directorate. This has led to new Business Plans being created based on this review, Estyn recommendations (detailed on page 12) and Corporate priorities.

**We continue to develop a clear vision for all teams based on the newly formed vision for the Education Directorate. The plan needs to be supported by clear timelines, related actions and measurable success criteria.**

**Professional Learning reviews are completed, particularly with a focus on ALN to support equity & Inclusion.**



**Improvement planning is based on sharing of key data across service areas and wider stakeholders.**

Need to build on the audit of our professional learning across service areas to promote the best opportunities for our children and young people.



A **Review** of what **commissioned services** sit within the Education Directorate has been undertaken and these include:-

- GEMS - Gwent Education Minority-ethnic Service
- SENCOM - Sensory and Communication Support Service
- YOS – Youth Offending Service
- IPS - Inclusive Practice Service
- SNAP Cymru
- EAS - Education Achievement Service



Regular contact has been maintained between the Local Authority and these commissioned services, with a clear vision shared for engagement and measurable, purposeful success criteria aligned to our bespoke priorities for our learners and schools in place.



A system for reviewing the current governance arrangements of each of these commissioned services has been created in preparation for review in quarter 3.





## People, Partnerships and Engagement

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



During quarter 3 we are aiming to develop a strategy for community engagement - linked to Community Focused Schools.

The Education Directorate recognises the importance of **effective partnership working** in maximising opportunities to support children, young people and the wider community.

It is key to the vision for the directorate:

*Empowering our communities to be ambitious, ethically-informed Life-long learners who lead full and healthy lives*

Some examples of **existing partnership working** are **demonstrated by the following icons** shown throughout the report and examples include:-



Integrated working with all other directorates within the council / a focus on the education of children looked after with Social Services and preventative services / A focus on the development of Educational facilities ensuring that they are fit for the future with the Environment Directorate, such as HIVE and sustainable communities for learning.



Collaborative working with partners such as the Education Achievement Service / Aneurin leisure trust / Health Board - school place planning .



# Case Study - Education Minister visits Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

Welsh Minister for Education & the Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles MS, visits Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg to see remodelling work funded by Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, creating both internal and external spaces to improve the teaching and learning environment.

The Minister said: "Well-designed buildings and pleasant surroundings are so important to supporting learners and staff, delivering high standards and aspirations for all. I want our schools to be inspiring places to learn and to teach, for our pupils to thrive, and Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg shows how this can be done."

Page 913



Being creative in the media suite



Quiet time in the library



Enjoying the outside space

# Case Study - Glyncoed Primary New Build

Works are progressing well on the new build to provide a 360 place primary school and separate childcare facility in Ebbw Vale. There are also close links with the Hive (STEM) Project in Blaenau Gwent. A project team continue to meet regularly. Good progress has been made by Morgan Sindall, the contractor and works on the school are half way completed with occupation is scheduled for April 2024.



Cymunedau **Dysgu** Cynaliadwy   
Sustainable Communities for **Learning**

# Case Study - Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM)

## Secondary Schools in Blaenau Gwent have received grant funding of over £66,000 from the Welsh Government's Tech Valleys programme to purchase new equipment to enhance the teaching of science, technology, engineering and maths.

Twenty schools across Blaenau Gwent and three across Merthyr successfully bid for Welsh Government funding of up to £3,000. The successful applications were awarded funding for a range of equipment from autoclaves and Raspberry Pi computers to on-line post-mortem sessions and chocolate 3-D printers all designed to help bring authentic work experiences into the classroom. The applications were judged by a panel which included representatives from the Education Advisory Service (EAS), Industry Wales, the Tech Valleys STEM Facilitation Co-ordinator and Welsh Government.



These grants to schools are part of the much wider Tech Valleys STEM Facilitation activity, a **commitment of £570,000 over four years by the Welsh Government**. The aim of the project is to increase the uptake of STEM GCSEs at Key Stage 3 and maintain that interest at Key Stage 4.

## Blaenau Gwent Council – STEM Facilitation Project has reached the final of the Wales STEM Awards 2023

and has been named as one of the 55 companies and individuals shortlisted in the Awards, which is sponsored by Cardiff Metropolitan University. The Wales STEM Awards is back for the third time to shine a spotlight on the organisations and individuals raising the profile of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Wales. All finalists from across a total of 13 categories will now be considered by an industry-leading panel of judges, with the winners being announced at the awards ceremony at the Mercure Holland House Hotel on **13th October**.

**Councillor John C Morgan, Cabinet Member for Place and Regeneration and Economic Development said:**

### Curriculum Reform -

**STEM** The focus going forward is at a strategic school level for Recovery and Renewal, with an emphasis on Curriculum Reform e.g. STEM activity.

### Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, and

STEM Schools focus on these subjects to help our nation's youth gain the skills required to succeed in today's challenging world.



# Case Study - Blaina school becomes first Prem Aware School in Wales

The Smallest Things charity has presented Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary School with their Prem Aware Award! By completing additional training and steps to become a Prem Aware School teaching staff at Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary will have a better understanding of the learning needs some children born prematurely may have, will be able to identify needs earlier, and will be able to provide timely and targeted support.



## **Lauren Cairns, Headteacher, at Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary said:**

*"Having taken the pledge earlier this year, we are ever so proud at Coed-y-Garn to become the first school in Wales to achieve The Smallest Things Prem Aware Award. As a school, we are committed to improving wellbeing and supporting learners, and having an improved understanding of the impact that being born prematurely can have on an individual will be beneficial in supporting our learners and our families."*

## **Congratulating the steps taken by Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary School, Catriona Ogilvy, Founder and Chair of The Smallest Things said:**

*"The Smallest Things is delighted that Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary School has joined our growing list of Prem Aware schools across the UK. In doing so they have shown their commitment to meeting the needs some pupils born premature may have. With an average of two to three children in every classroom being born prematurely, we know that teachers can play a crucial role in supporting and improving the long term outcomes for this cohort of children. Having trained teachers who know what to look out for and how to help pupils born prematurely will have such a positive impact on the children's educational journeys."*

The Smallest Things Prem Aware Award scheme promotes use of the 'Preterm Birth Information for Educational Professionals', a free online training resource developed by Professor Samantha Johnson and her colleagues in the PRISM (Premature Infants' Skills in Mathematics) Study Team. The online resource outlines the impact premature birth can have on a child's development and learning, and offers practical ways to support children born prematurely at school.

While pupils born extremely prematurely (before 28 weeks' gestation) are most likely to need extra support,

# Case Study - Telephony in Blaenau Gwent Schools and the wider Council

In line with the Digital Teams review of telephony across the council, Education are collaborating with the team to review and provide telephony solutions for schools. This is one of the key projects of the Council's Digital Programme which contributes to the Bridging the Gap programme in aiming to reduce our Third Party Spend and maximising the use of core digital systems. Education's involvement is vital in this project in order to engage and co-ordinate with schools. It has already been established that 9 schools are using the current corporate telephony provider (Avaya).



Avaya platform is at "End of Life", and the Council are due to cease the contract. In addition, the PSTN analogue lines are due to be switched off nationwide in December 2025. A number of schools are also experiencing severe issues with alternative providers and there is a risk to safeguarding should these systems fail. Microsoft Teams telephony has been identified as the corporate solution, and to mitigate the potential risks and issues that schools are facing, there are aspirations to move all schools to Teams telephony.

Education recently met with Head teachers to understand current systems, individual requirements, and work towards a "one council approach" for telephony. Including schools in this corporate approach will ensure that communications are modern and fit for purpose. It will enable us to better manage the telephony estate, licenses and call plans. It will help deliver services in the most effective way. A single solution will reduce inefficiencies, duplication, and licence costs.

Page 917



Education has identified two schools who will pilot the Teams telephony product in the Autumn 2023 term. These schools have been chosen based on the level of risk that their current telephony poses. Following this pilot, all other schools will be given the opportunity to move to Teams telephony by the end of the Autumn term/ Early Spring 2024 term.



**The Education Directorate continue to work with partners, both internal and external in order to support our pupils development.**



# Case Study - Period Equity work in Blaenau Gwent

Blaenau Gwent Council is working with schools and a range of local partners to ensure that no female, whatever their age, is disadvantaged by not having access to period products and has made sure these are now readily and freely available in over 100 education and community settings.

The Welsh Minister for Social Justice Jane Hutt MS has visited Blaenau Gwent to see the pioneering work in period equity and dignity which is being delivered across the county borough, and met with residents and school pupils who have benefitted from the scheme.



Some highlights of the visit

## The Council's Cabinet Member for People & Education, Cllr Sue Edmunds says:

"We're immensely proud of the work going on here in Blaenau Gwent to tackle period poverty and promote period dignity, so it was wonderful to have Jane Hutt MS visit to find out more about our approach to this important issue. We have a very enthusiastic project team with a range of partners who are all fully committed to making sure that no female should be at a disadvantage when it comes to their period. Not only are we committed to making sure products are available, but we are also working with all our partners to break down the stigma around periods. Periods are normal and we want people not to be embarrassed to request products.

**BALCH | PERIOD**  
**O'R MISLIF | PROUD**

#BalchOrMislif  
llyw.cymru/balchormislif

#PeriodProudWales  
gov.wales/periodproud

# Case Study - New Welsh Medium school, Tredegar



Blaenau Gwent Council is building a new 210 place Welsh Medium Primary School, inclusive of a Welsh-medium childcare provision, at Chartist Way, Sirhowy Tredegar. The Council has secured £13.4million of capital funding via the Welsh Government Welsh Medium Capital Grant and Childcare Capital Grant schemes to progress with the school build and will also incorporate a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), a forest play area, a growing orchard and wild-flower meadows. The school will also be climate conscious with solar panels and electric vehicle charging points. A play area on the site will also be relocated as part of the project on the same site and be furnished with new play equipment.

The project has progressed to full planning and appointment of contractor in July 2023. The works on site are commencing September 2023 with the new park being erected outside the school boundary, then the main contractor will start the school build November 2023 with completion being expected early 2025.

In the interim period temporary accommodation was opened in September 23 at Bedwellty House, for pupils of Nursery and Reception age signed up for the new school , so that they can start this academic year.

There are currently 6 pupils that started in September rising to 9 in January 2024.



Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management



## Future Direction and areas that we feel we need to focus upon going forward

As stated at the beginning of this report our overall aim is to support delivery of our corporate objectives. Listed below are some of the areas we recognise that we need to continue to focus on improving. We recognise that even the achievements are not yet completed but remain areas for progress to be maintained and improved upon where possible.

As a council we are looking to be '**An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Further engagement and promotion to increase the 'on time' admission applications;
- Monitor Home to school transport funding issues;
- Secure external funding for the future delivery of services;
- Ensure that our vision and strategic aims for education are fully understood by other officers, elected members, school staff and external partners;
- Develop a strategy for community engagement, linked to community focussed schools;
- Progress analysis of Rising 3 funding impact;
- Develop a strategic plan for partnership working;
- Build on the audit of our professional learning across service areas to promote best opportunities for our children and young people;
- Develop clear timelines, related actions and measurable success criteria to support delivery of the new vision and business plans;
- Develop a suitable vision and strategy for the future provision of ALN; and
- Continue to improve the quality of self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management.







## Future Direction and areas that we feel we need to focus upon going forward (continued)

As a council we are looking to '**Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report that have been delivered by the Education Directorate over this past year to support delivery of this corporate objective, we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Further analysis of reasons for decline in attendance and exclusion and mitigating actions put in place;
- Monitor NEET figures and ensure new systems and processes put in place are effective;
- Continue to monitor and improve on attainment levels;
- Focus on pupil integration back into mainstream and promotion of inclusion;
- Explore options for further engagement and promotion to increase the number of in-time pupil school applications;
- Higher levels of language acquisition and reading across the board, but particularly in our very young children in early years; and
- Focus on improving the pace of change for Schools Causing Concern (SCC) improvement journeys.





As a council we are looking to '**Empower and support communities to be safe, independent and resilient**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report that have been delivered by the Education Directorate over this past year to support delivery of this corporate objective, we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Continue to closely monitor safeguarding and use data more effectively to inform long term planning;
- Monitor timeliness and access to mental health provision along with new referral numbers;
- Monitor numbers of referrals to vulnerable learners provision; and
- Continue to improve the reach of 11-25 year olds supported by Youth and increase the number for which well-being improvements are made.



As a council we are looking to '**Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Continue to effectively deliver sustainable communities for learning which are environmentally friendly;
- Further encourage nature friendly management on school grounds;
- Develop a schools Biodiversity policy and support with the integration; and
- Continue to engage all young people with the environment.

The  
Blaenau Gwent County  
Borough Council  
Education &  
Leisure Services  
Annual Performance  
Report

2023- 24 Mid Year Snapshot



Empowering our communities to be ambitious, ethically-  
informed Life-long learners who lead full and healthy lives

# Contents

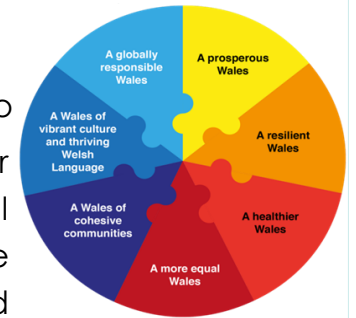
Page 924



Foreword	3
The Shape of Our Place	4
Director's Overview & Reflections on 2022/23	7
Local, Political Leadership, Governance & Accountability	11
Audit and Inspection	12
Maximise learning, skills and wellbeing for children, young people and the community	14
Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services	44
Ensure effective governance and delivery of commissioned services	49
Maximise partnership working to meet community need	50
Case Studies	51
Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management	58
Future Direction	

# Foreword

**Why this is important** - Improving the quality and provision of teaching and learning is vitally important to ensure we are achieving ambitious outcomes for all children and young people. We will continue to invest in our education services and present service activity which highlights how we are contributing to the Council's overall aim of delivering all seven national well-being goals. These goals are set out within The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which is legislation aiming to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The vision of this legislation is expressed in the seven National well-being goals.



The Act also puts a duty on public bodies to apply the **sustainable development principles** which states they 'must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The sustainable development principle is made up of the following five ways of working, pictured below:



**Integration**



**Collaboration**



**Involvement**



**Long Term**



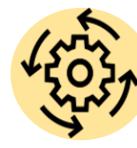
**Prevention**

Throughout this report some areas of performance that meet these ways of working are demonstrated by the above images.

**The Purpose of this report** - To present service activity for the period, detailing achievements and challenges aligned to the priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27, which are to :



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



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



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



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



# The Shape of Our Place



Blaenau Gwent is relatively small geographically, being at most 15 miles north to south, and 8 miles east to west. It is defined physically by high hillsides dividing three main valleys. These valleys are home to our towns and villages and house our education provision, made up of sustainable communities for learning nestled within beautiful countryside.

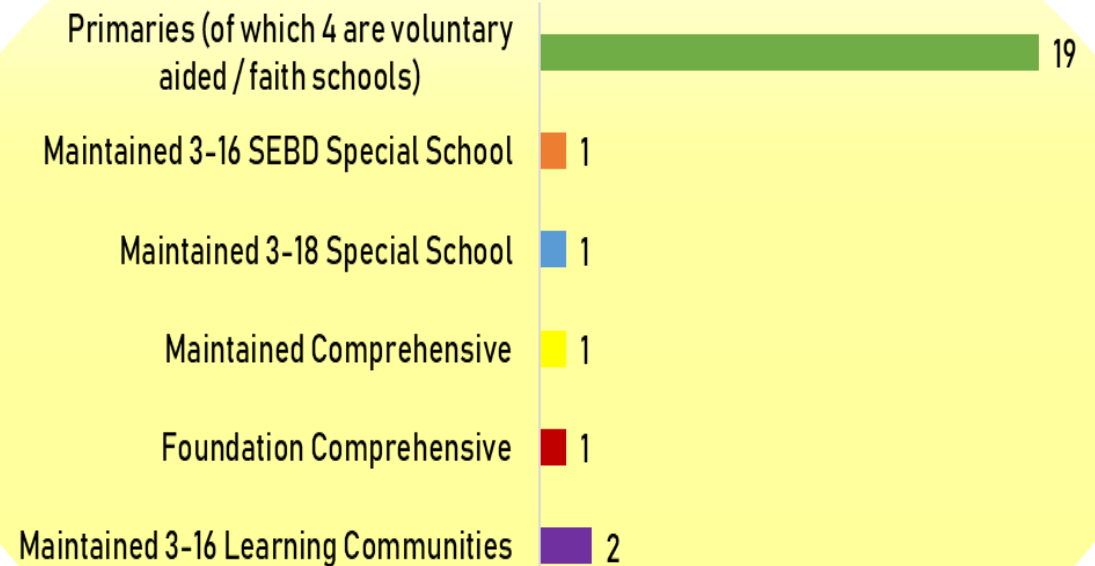
Blaenau Gwent has 25 schools across 31 school sites and there are currently circa 9,000+ pupils on roll across all Blaenau Gwent schools.

Page 926

The Education Directorate provides services to support children and young people's educational learning opportunities whilst working collaboratively with our schools and the Aneurin Leisure and Awen Trust in a Council client function role.

The Education Directorate's three main areas of core service delivery are

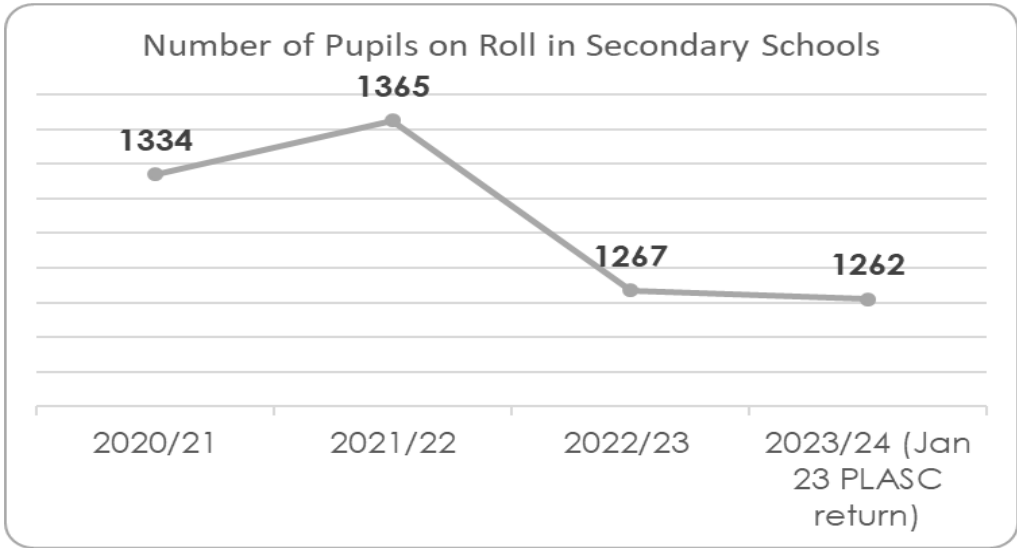
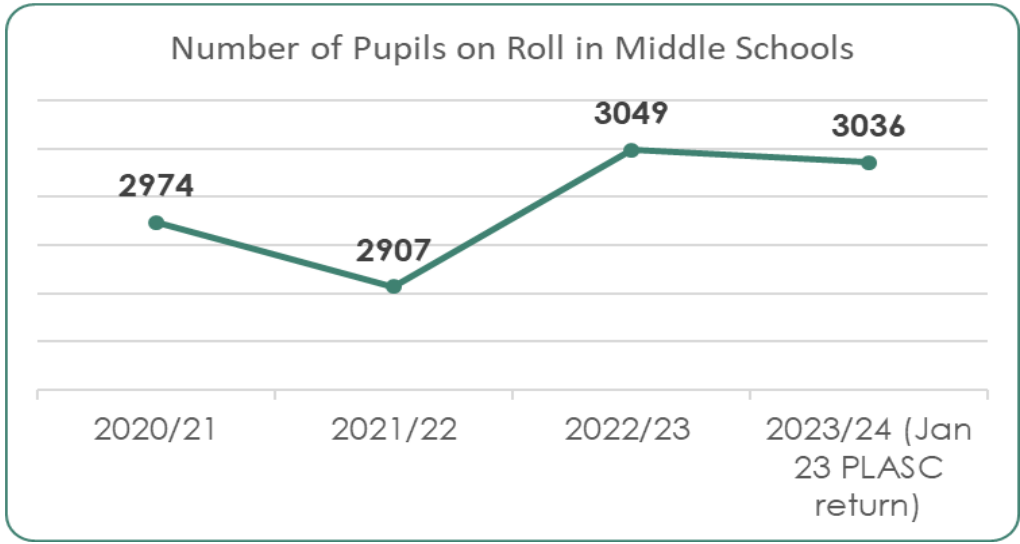
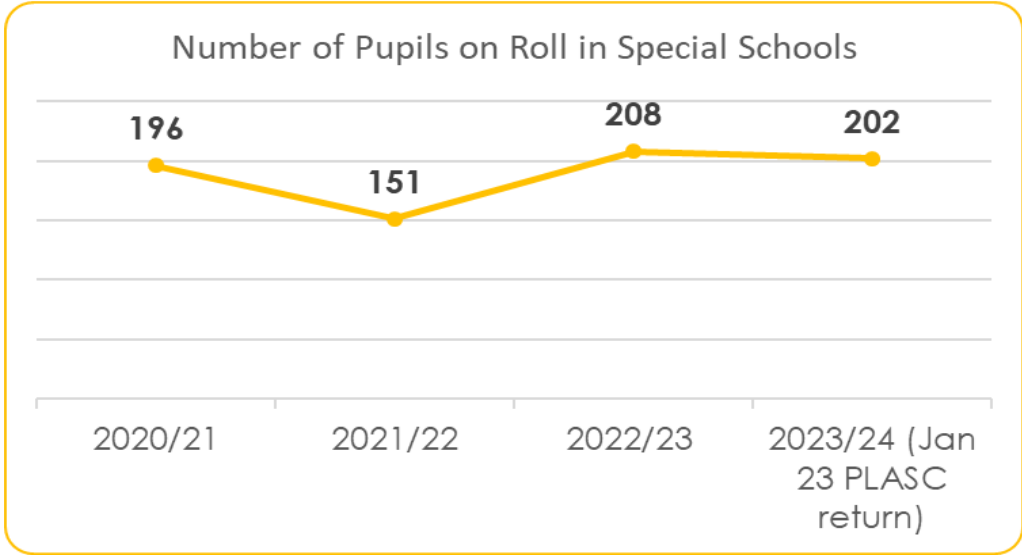
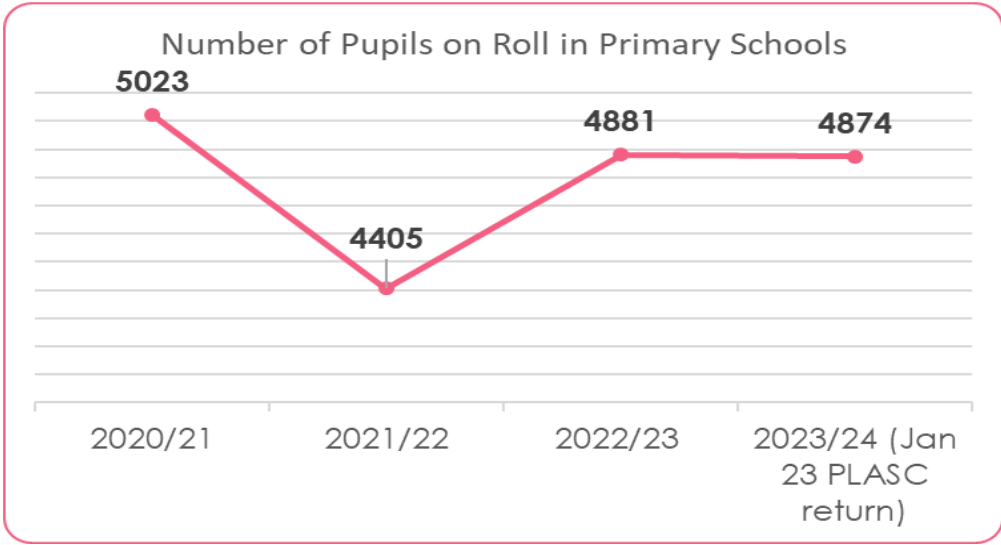
- **School Improvement and Inclusion;**
- **Education Transformation and Business Change; and,**
- **Young People and Partnerships.**



# The Shape of Our Place (continued)

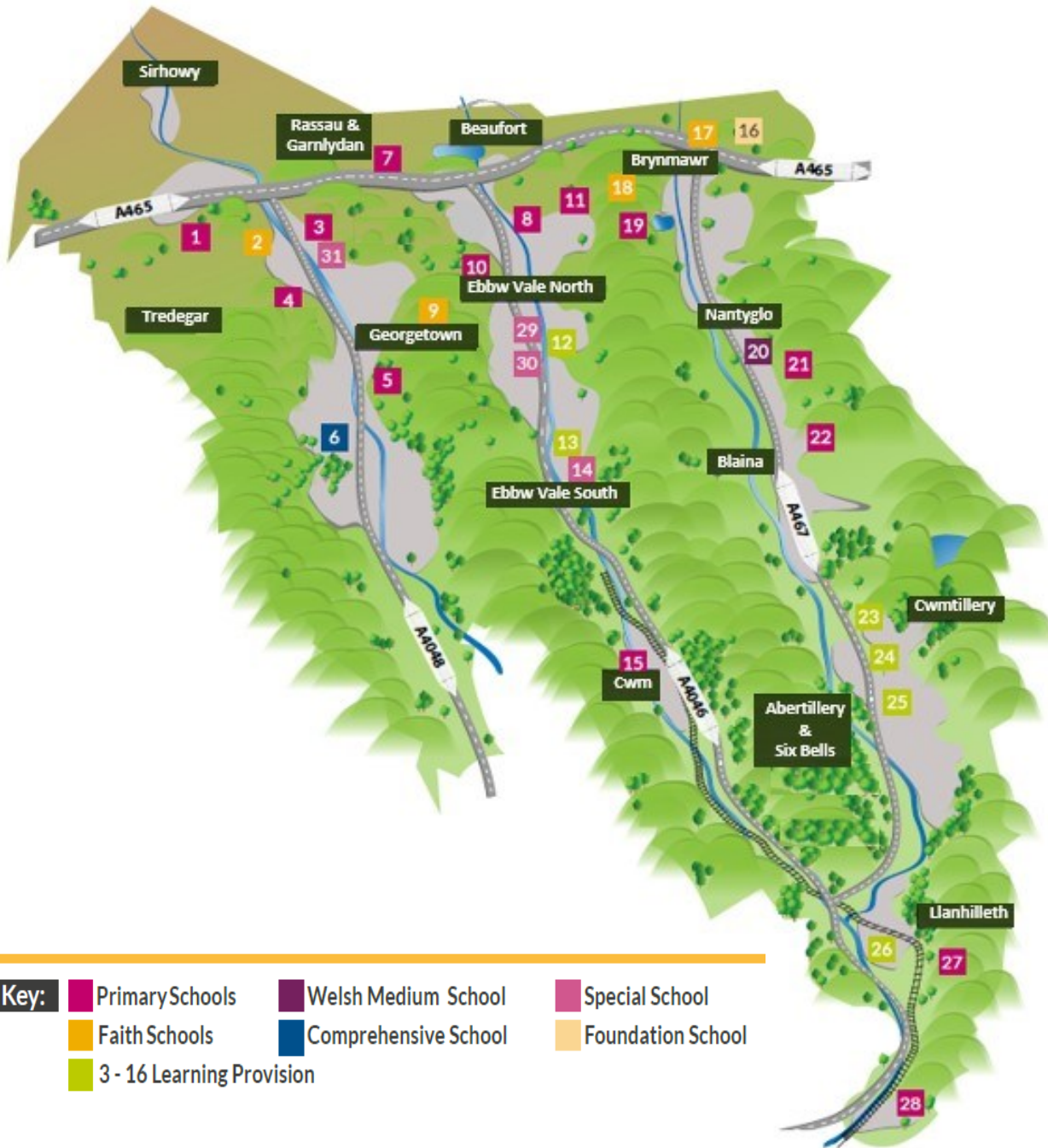
Number of pupils on roll in each categorisation of school.

Page 927



# Location of Schools

Page 928



Key:		
<span style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> Primary Schools	<span style="background-color: #5d4037; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> Welsh Medium School	<span style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> Special School
<span style="background-color: #ffc107; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> Faith Schools	<span style="background-color: #17a2b8; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> Comprehensive School	<span style="background-color: #ffc107; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> Foundation School
<span style="background-color: #90ca34; color: white; padding: 2px;">1</span> 3-16 Learning Provision		

- 1 Brynbach Primary School
- 2 St Joseph's RC School
- 3 Glanhowy Primary School
- 4 Deighton Primary School
- 5 Georgetown Primary School
- 6 Tredegar Comprehensive School
- 7 Rhos y Fedwen Primary School
- 8 Glyncoed Primary School
- 9 All Saint's RC School
- 10 Willowtown Primary School
- 11 Beaufort Hill Primary School
- 12 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Secondary Phase
- 13 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Primary Phase
- 14 Pen Y Cwm Special School
- 15 Cwm Primary School
- 16 Brynmawr Foundation School
- 17 St Mary's Church in Wales School
- 18 St Mary's Roman Catholic School
- 19 Blaenycwm Primary School
- 20 Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
- 21 Coed y Garn Primary School
- 22 Ystruth Primary School
- 23 Abertillery Learning Community - Roseheyworth Road Campus
- 24 Abertillery Learning Community - Secondary Campus
- 25 Abertillery Learning Community - Tillery Street Campus
- 26 Abertillery Learning Community - Six Bells Campus
- 27 St Illtyds Primary School
- 28 Sofrydd Primary School
- 29 River Centre 3-16 Learning Community - Secondary Campus
- 30 River Centre 3-16 Learning Community - Primary Campus
- 31 River Centre 3-16 Learning Community - House



# Director's overview and reflections on 2023/24 (April to September)

## Overview

Blaenau Gwent has big ambitions for our schools and learners. We are determined to play our part in Wales being a first class education system with a clear ambition to increase the skills and standards of education across the County Borough. We fully support and are committed to the Welsh Government's national mission for educational transformation, including curriculum and ALN reforms. The Education Directorate are currently consulting on a new vision and strategic priorities.






### Education Directorate Draft Vision:

*'Empowering our communities to be ambitious, ethically-informed life-long learners who lead full and healthy lives.'*

### How are we going to deliver this:

- Ensure that people are consulted and informed
- Provide effective and responsive school support services
- Provide a school estate that is fit for the 21st Century
- Prioritise people's physical, mental health and well-being
- Ensure effective collaboration with key stakeholders
- Ensure all services are inclusive
- Maximise opportunities for our communities

**Education Improvement Plan (Business Plan) – 5 Priorities**, supporting delivery of the Corporate priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27 (detailed on page 3):-

-  Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services
-  Maximise learning, skills and wellbeing for children, young people and the community in Blaenau Gwent
-  Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management
-  Ensure effective governance and delivery of commissioned services
-  Maximise partnership working to meet community need

## Reflections on 2023/24

This report demonstrates how the Education Directorate contributes to the team (the council as a whole) aim of delivering our corporate priorities. Throughout the body of the report you will find details of performance, both positive achievements and areas that we continue to focus on improving. We recognise that even the achievements are not yet completed but remain areas for progress to be maintained and improved upon where possible.

You will find below a short summary detailing some examples of these performance outcomes, broken down into sections of how they are supporting delivery of our corporate objectives.

Page 930



As a council we are looking to be **'an ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place'**. To support this, the Education Directorate aim to deliver effective and efficient services within financial constraints. The Local Authority has a track record of spending within its education budget in recent years and 2022-23 provisional end of year position was favourable despite an overspend on Transport. During the reporting period new and better processes have been put in place between Education & Finance to ensure improved monitoring of the budgets and 2023/24 portfolio is currently on target or underspending in some areas. The financial outlook, however, for the public sector will be challenging over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and continued close financial management will be essential to achieve value for money. The Education Directorate wants to drive forward the right leadership approaches, right staffing capacity, people with the right skills/capabilities and the right forward planning to prepare for the future needs of the service. Appropriate training has been delivered to staff during the period and good engagement with staff and members continue. The Directorate sickness absence levels have also improved. It is recognised that one of the main strategic risks identified for the directorate is dependency on external funding to support key services and the workforce. During the reporting period a full review of directorate priorities has been carried out and the new vision statement and associated priorities are now directly aligned with Estyn recommendations for improvement.

As a council we are looking to '**Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent**'. To support this, the Education Directorate aim to ensure that all children and young people are given the best start in life, enabling them to live healthy, fulfilling lives whilst contributing to society and forming a valuable part of their community. We prioritise the importance of language acquisition and reading across the board, to support with positive outcomes and attainment. We continue to support children and young people to be in a good position to find skills and employment at the appropriate times, However, our NEET figures for 2022 demonstrate an increase in this category leading to a deep dive into the reasoning behind this increase. As a result improved processes/systems have been put in place allowing resolutions for other gaps to be developed. The monitoring of school attendance and exclusion numbers is key to understand potential barriers to learning. This is one area that needs further work and something that we will be analysing in much greater depth. Our long term aim is to decrease the percentage of adults aged 16-24 with no qualifications, and a number of new areas of work detailed throughout the report will support this, including a new Youth Service provision development of which was led by engagement with young people within our community, development of a digital presence making it more accessible and effective links with Elected Home Education young people, all of which will support these better outcomes. Partnership working and effective communication continually improves and better links have now been developed with early years and health. There are some new initiatives around mental health which will help to improve access to timely and appropriate support and the counselling / play therapy service has been extended to include the age range of below 6 years. The ICT Infrastructure and Connectivity project is progressing well alongside delivery of our Additional Learning Needs expansion and Sustainable Communities for learning Band B projects. Our educational building provision continues to deliver suitable learning environments due to effective monitoring and management of capacity and pupil places, effective delivery of needed minor works and larger school remodelling and rebuild works.



## Director's overview and reflections on 2023/24 (continued)



As a council we are looking to '**empower and support communities to be safe, independent and resilient**'. To deliver this, the Education Directorate support children and young people's educational learning opportunities whilst working collaboratively with the Aneurin Leisure and Awen Trust in a Council client function role, with an aim to ensure that all children and young people's well-being and educational needs are catered for. There is an appropriate safeguarding culture within the local authority where all staff and elected members receive suitable safeguarding training. Effective integration and collaboration between directorates and external partners such as education, schools, health and children's services delivers a system which manages the needs of our pupils and young adults. Counselling services and youth support services are in place and working well. Our dedicated staff and the implementation of integrated systems and processes support our children and young people to be resilient members of society.



As a council we are looking to '**Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities**'. To support this, the Education Directorate aim to ensure that decarbonisation measures are at the forefront of our future planning and teaching. The environment and biodiversity considerations form the basis of all new school buildings and existing school upgrades and we encourage nature friendly management on school grounds. Effective partnership working enables us to provide advice and guidance to support our children and young people around biodiversity, decarbonisation, equalities, diversity and inclusion. These partnerships with schools and the Children's Grand Council are very effective and not only inform but support our children and young people to have a voice. We are and will continue to deliver effective sustainable communities for learning which are environmentally friendly and support the delivery of our educated young people who will in the future form our connected communities.



**Luisa Munro-  
Morris**  
Interim Director  
of Education



**Cllr Sue Edmunds**  
Cabinet  
Member  
Education

# Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

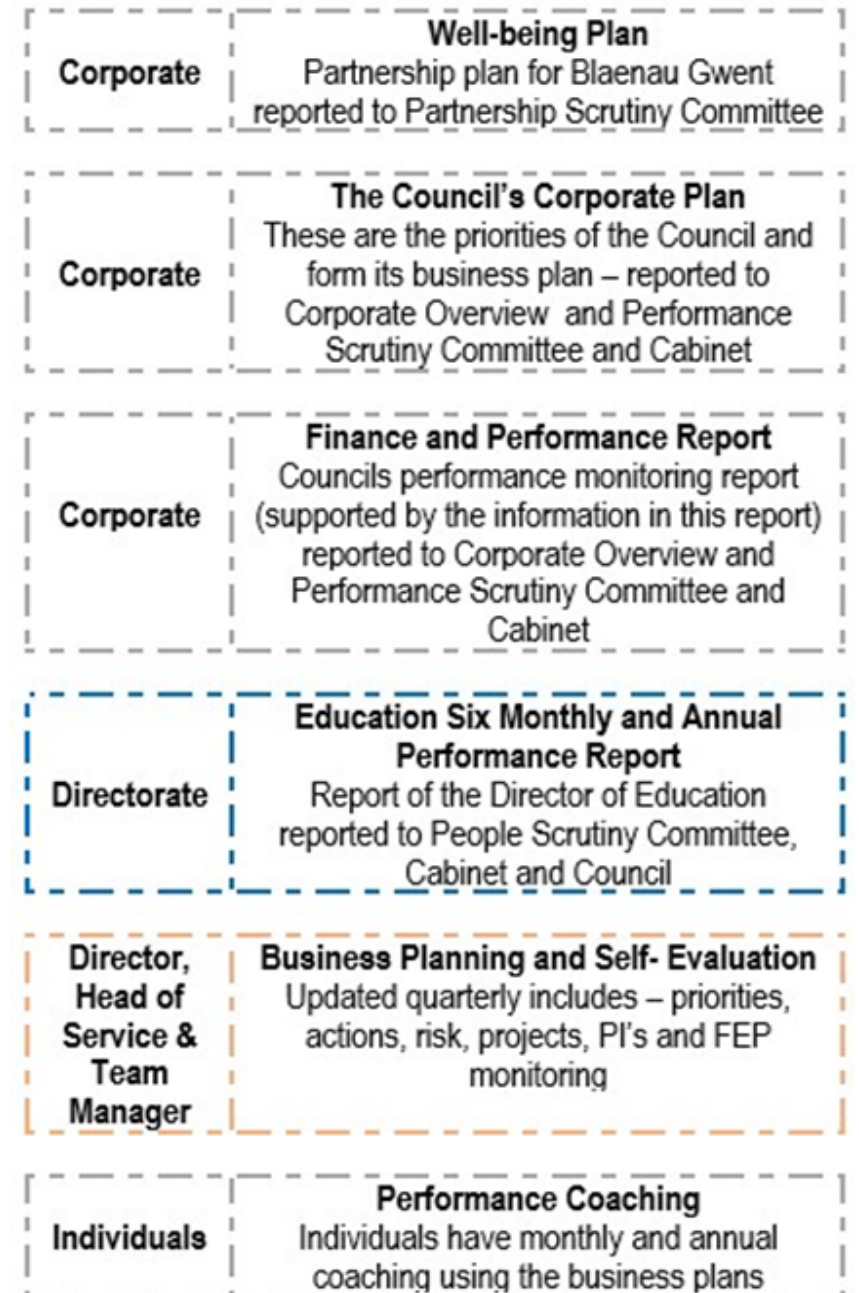
The structure of the Education Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. The Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create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

The Internal Planning framework to the right demonstrates how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create this 'golden thread'.

## Progress against actions

This report is broken down into the Directorate priority areas previously detailed in the 'Director's Overview' on page 7.

The following overview pages and case studies detail our performance for the period along with some associated achievements and challenges aligned to supporting delivery of the corporate priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27.



# Audit and Inspection

The Education Directorate is subject to audit, inspection and review by Estyn and Audit Wales. On a quarterly basis the Director of Education and service managers meet with Estyn to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. Estyn also undertake an annual review and evaluation of the Directorate's performance.

## Estyn



No new Estyn Inspections have been instigated during the reporting period that were specific to Blaenau Gwent. However, at the end of 2022, Blaenau Gwent Council was subject to an Estyn inspection resulting in the following recommendations for improvement which are being monitored as part of the corporate business planning process until fully delivered upon.

**Report title:** Report on Blaenau Gwent Education Services

**Local or National Report:** Local

**Completion date:** Published February 2023

**Report Link:-** You can read the full inspection report [here](#)

**R1. Improve the corporate leadership of education services;  
R2. Improve the quality of self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management; and,  
R3. Accelerate improvements in provision for secondary age pupils in schools causing concern**

## Audit Wales



No specific Education Audit Wales Inspections have been instigated during the reporting period. However, in response to previous corporate inspections carried out by Audit Wales, recommendations for improvement were made which are then monitored as part of the corporate business planning process until fully delivered upon. Ongoing recommendations are:-

**Report title:** Corporate Safeguarding Follow-up

**Local or National Report:** Local

**Completion date:** Published November 2022

**Report Link:-**You can read the full inspection report [here](#)

**Recommendation - 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 following pages detail Performance broken down into the five priority areas of the Directorate :

**Maximise learning, skills and wellbeing for children, young people and the community.**

**Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services**

**Maximise partnership working to meet community need**

**Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management**

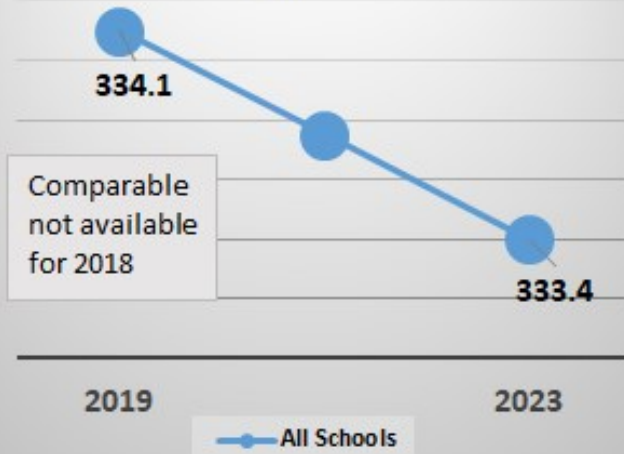
**Ensure effective governance and delivery of commissioned services**



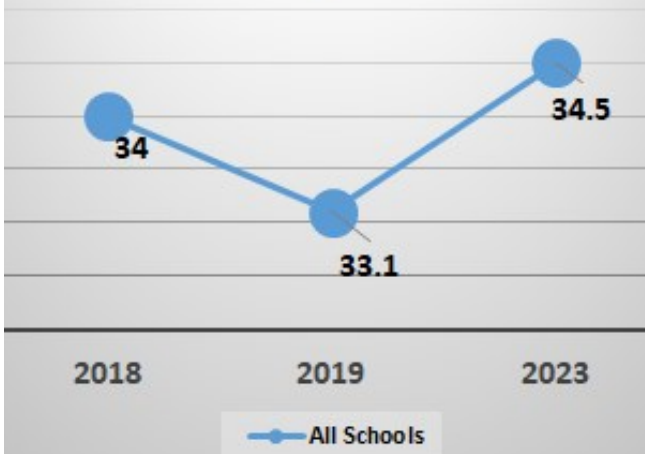
The **KS4 results were positive** and are anticipated to be in line with the School Development Plan targets. Some examples are shown below :-

(Note: only 2018, 2019 and 2023 comparison data shown due to routine data collection impacted by the covid pandemic)

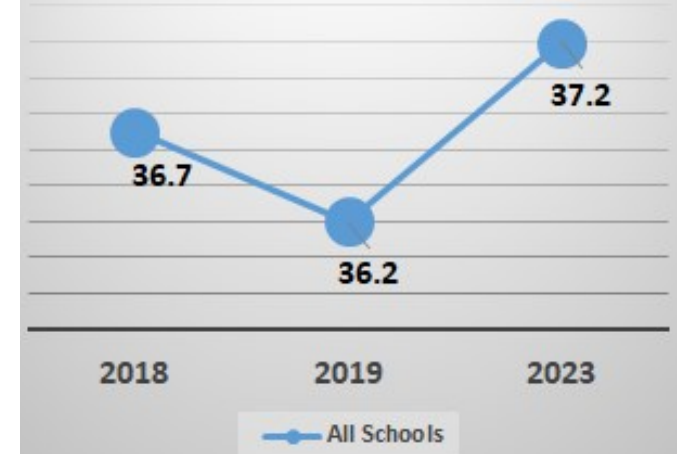
### Capped 9



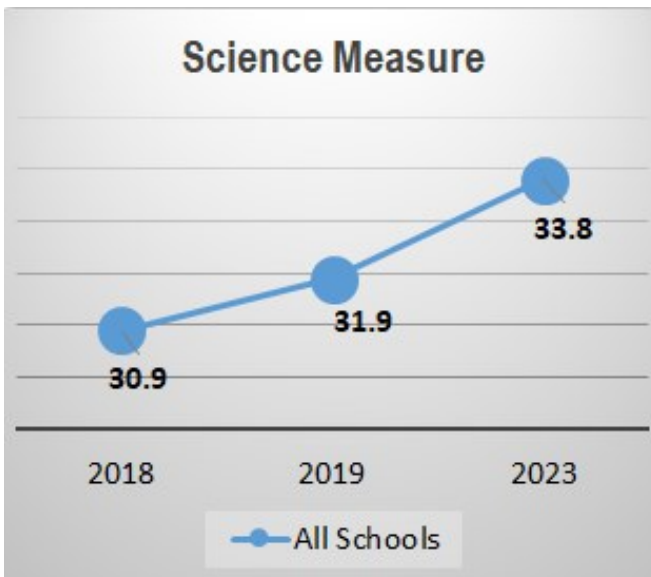
### Numeracy Measure



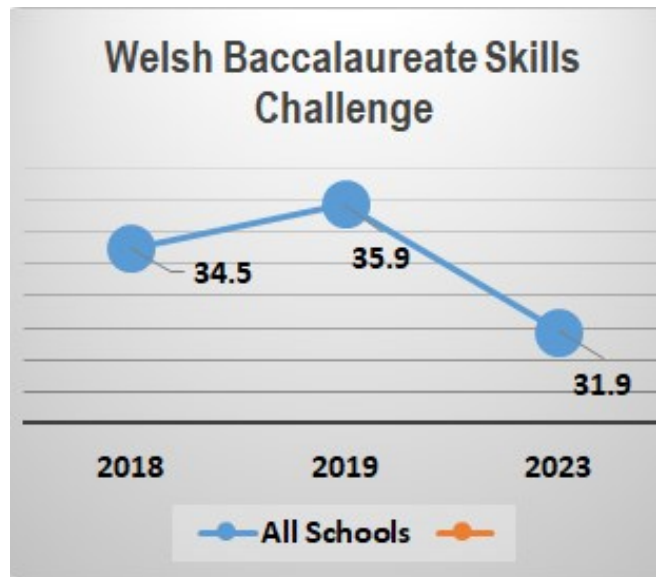
### Literacy Measure



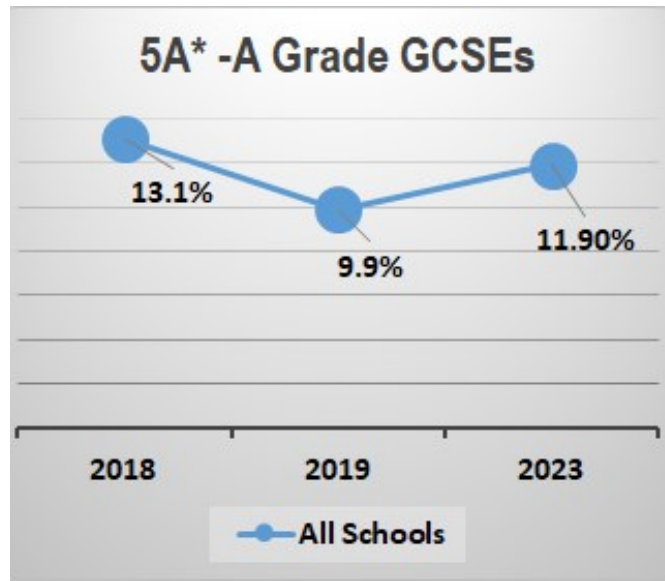
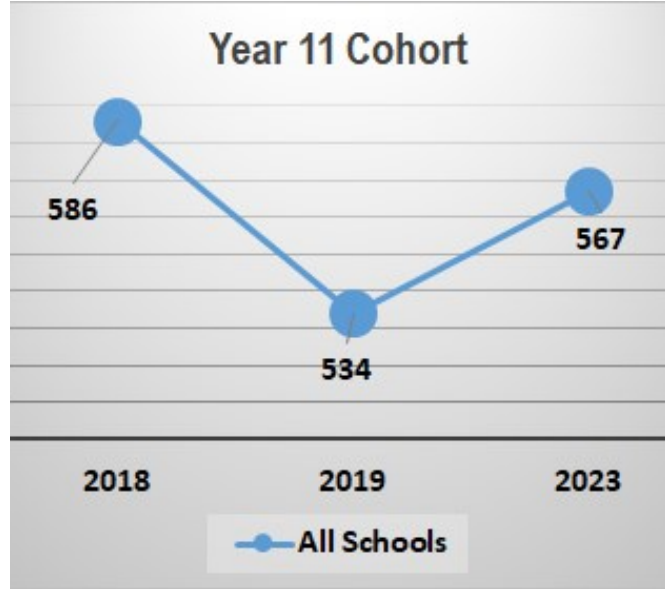
### Science Measure



### Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge







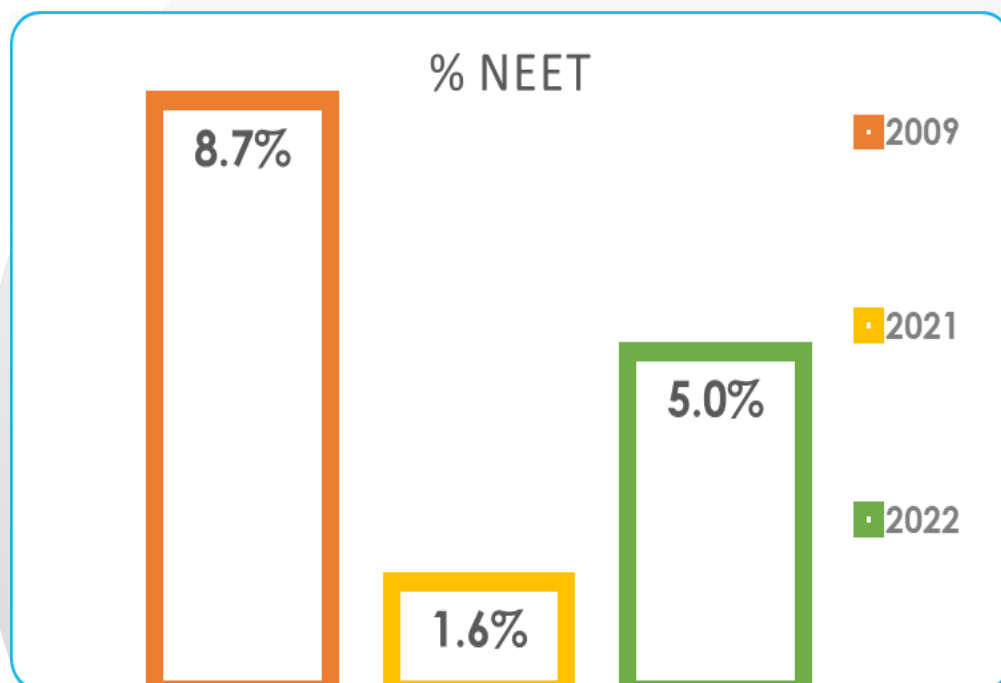
*Note: "All Schools" incorporates the 4 main secondary settings plus the "special schools" that also contribute to the KS4 results. The breakdown by school is not yet available.*

We have seen a **reduction** in **Schools Causing Concern** from **6 schools in 2019** to **2 schools in 2023.**

Going forward we will monitor and ensure the pace of change in school's causing concern is improved.



Blaenau Gwent continues to deliver a number of services that offer support for young people aged 11-25 who at risk of becoming or are currently not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).



**In 2022 Blaenau Gwent had a larger than expected figure of 5% (31 young people) NEET.**

Following this increase, there was a **deep dive evaluation with key partners** to understand and determine the cause and other contributing factors. This provided several findings, such as **gaps in the post 16 transition** for young people linked to **Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)** provisions and/or linked to Social Services, **out of county learners** and **faults in systems leading to the processing of Education, Training and Employment (ETE) status** (sometimes impacting the visibility of young people to key support services).

The evaluation proved to be a meaningful exercise and achieved its intended purpose, and as a result it has helped place more emphasis across the partnership on their engagement and involvement, leading to improved processes/systems and has allowed resolutions for other gaps to be developed (i.e., creating dedicated youth and community workers at SEBD/ALT education provisions).





Blaenau Gwent provides a good accessible counselling service to young people using counsellors who are qualified and experienced in working with young people. This will also continue using a range of digital means where young people cannot be seen in one of the appropriate settings. There are some new initiatives around mental health which may improve access to timely and appropriate support, links continue to be made by the co-ordinator with these services to ensure there is open discussion and a joined up approach in improving access to mental health services particularly for those with diagnosis/clinical mental health conditions.

A total of **263 young people** aged year 3 to 25 years **accessed counselling or play therapy** during 22/23 academic year - **222 of these were new referrals**



For the financial year 2023/2024 Welsh Government has again provided additional funding, with indicative funding provided until March 2024, to extend the service to below year 6. This indicative funding has assisted in being able to retain the current play therapist. In Blaenau Gwent and across Wales, there is a need for a service such as play therapy for young people aged 10 and under.

By providing a digital presence, the Youth Service has become more accessible to a wider audience of young



Youth workers contribute to care and support plans and attend various multi-agency meetings in relation to safeguarding issues including Section 115 meetings and Community Safety Meetings. Good relationships are forged with Social Workers and Families First Support Workers which enables a good mechanism for sharing appropriate information with regard to improving well-being or improved outcomes for young people.





The partnership with Schools, Coleg Gwent and Post 16 providers has strengthened through the establishment of the Post 16 Strategic Partnership Board.



**A-level A\*-C grades in Coleg Gwent were slightly lower (76.5%) than All Wales figures of 78.9%. A\*-E grades in Coleg Gwent (97.8%) were slightly higher than the all-Wales overall pass rate of 97.5%.**



The Youth Service is established as an **accreditation centre** with Youth Workers also providing support for parents of Elected Home Education (EHE) young people wanting to deliver units.

Currently it has contact with **18 EHE young people**, to provide a link with the service.

The **Positive Futures** school groups and community referrals are highly successful in helping young people better understand their behaviour and how to manage it. **38 young people** are **supported** in a weekly social group and 8 young people who are on the cusp of permanent exclusion from across all mainstream secondary schools are supported each year to develop social skills, understand peer pressure and how to manage their emotions through attending a rolling programme of workshops.

The scheme **promotes positivity, health and wellbeing** and new experiences to help **raise aspirations, resilience, reduce anti social behaviour** and first-time entrance into youth justice system.

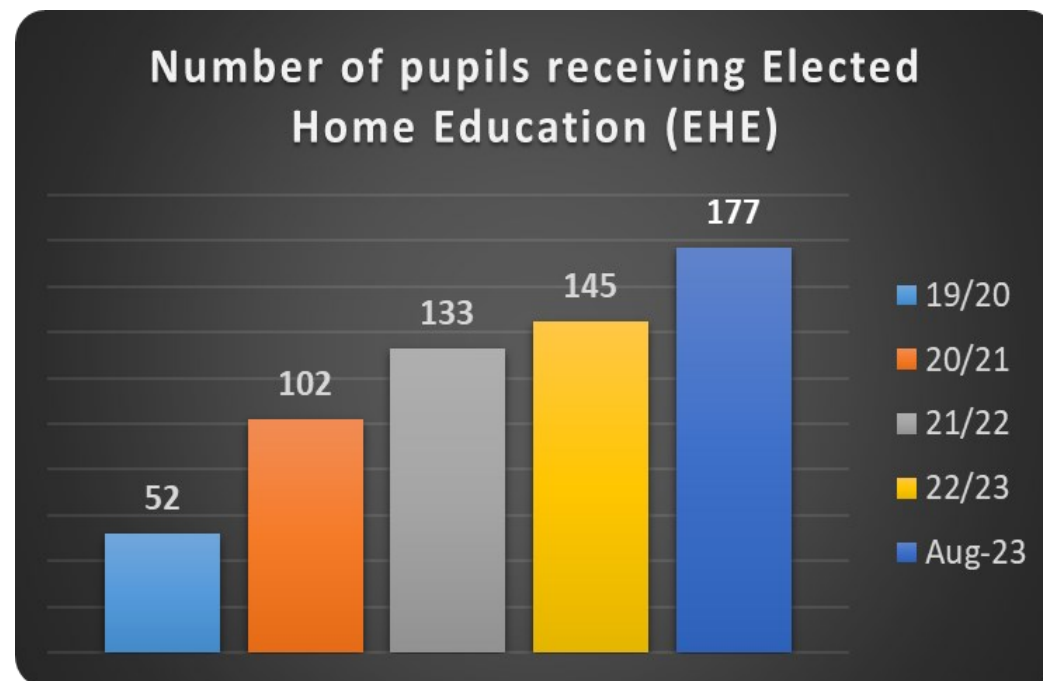




## Elected Home Education within Blaenau Gwent

As demonstrated in the chart there has been an increase in the number of home educated children within Blaenau Gwent over the past few years. Elected Home Education (EHE) pupils continue to be supported by the Education Welfare Service, however this needs to be monitored closely going forward to ensure that the number of visits increase in line with the above.

**As at 31st August 2023 there were 177 pupils on the EHE database compared to 145 at the end of February 2023. This is an increase of 18%.** Thirty of these pupils are from the Gypsy Roma Traveller Community (GRT).

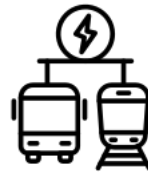


Between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023, 74 children became EHE. Fifty-Two of these were secondary aged and Twenty-two were primary age.

Thirteen children were from schools outside of the Local Authority, seven children were from Abertillery Learning Community, 10 from Ebbw Fawr Learning Community, 11 from Tredegar Comprehensive and 11 from Brynmawr Foundation School.



## Cymunedau Dysgu Cynaliadwy Sustainable Communities for Learning



The delivery of the Sustainable Communities for Learning **Band B programme** is well underway with an **investment of circa £33m** into the school estate.

The suitability and condition of the school estate continues to improve with circa **58%** categorised as A/B

The Band B Programme seeks to deliver the following key projects:

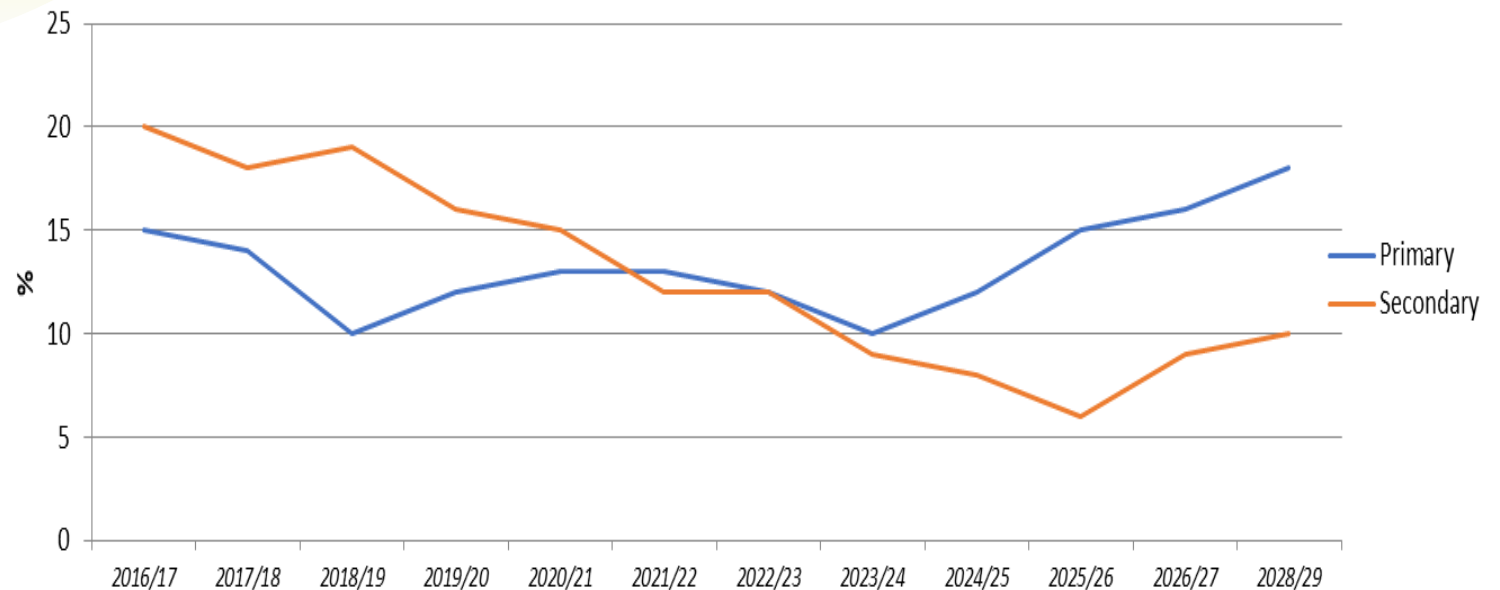
- **Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Refurbishment**
- **Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment**
  - Glyncoed Primary New Build
  - Rhos y Fedwen Primary Refurbishment
- **Continued Secondary School Re-modelling**



The 2023 primary projections show a small number of primary schools projected to have over 15% surplus places during the next 5 years. However, the surplus in these schools does need to remain higher, to enable pupil population growth in line with live birth rate fluctuations, also due to the fact that a reduction in the admission number would negatively affect configuration of the teaching and learning environment and staffing levels.



**LONG TERM** –Building condition and suitability ratings and capacity projections inform the prioritisation of projects within Band B and the rolling programme for Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, along with potential further school organisation priorities, minor and planned works programmes etc.





**Rhos y Fedwen Primary - Remodelling** - Willis is the appointed contractor for the Foundation Phase scheme, they commenced works in August 2023 and are scheduled to conclude February 2024. Tender documents will be going out January 2024 for the 3G pitch area, this has been moved due to the contractor also being on site now and the advice from professionals is not to lay pitches in cold/wet weather and plan between April/September months. The project group meets regularly to inform implementation of works.

**Brynmawr Foundation School - Remodelling** of Brynmawr Foundation school is needed and the project team have been working closely with Community Services and the school to carry out a comprehensive Options and Cost appraisal - The outcome of this determined that the school will need extensive remodelling/refurbishment in the next 10 years at a very high cost therefore longer term options for the school are being explored.

**Ebbw Fawr – Secondary Campus** - In 2022 the school raised sufficiency issues for the 2024/25 academic year, stating that it needed additional classrooms to accommodate pupil needs. Since then, this has become a priority for the Education Transformation team to develop options. A full business case is intended to be submitted to Welsh Government, based on the preferred option of a standalone extension with additional classrooms, a canteen and dining area on the grounds of the existing school site in April 2024.



**Tredegar Secondary** - A project group in relation to Tredegar Secondary school has met several times over the last year, the project brief is being developed by the school in relation to an extension to the building (Subject to planning approval) in line with projected sufficiency figures. This will then form the basis of the business case submission to WG, which depending on the development of the project brief, is intended to be submitted in the Spring term 24

By March 2024 Welsh Government has stipulated that any remaining projects for delivery under the Band B programme will automatically move over to the Rolling Programme. This programme will benefit Councils across Wales as it has a 1-3 year plan, a 4-6 year plan and a 7 year and beyond plan. This means that any project not delivered under the Band B programme will automatically transfer into their 1-3 year plan. A new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) will need to be completed and submitted by the deadline date. The Project team are currently carrying out a desktop exercise on the priorities coming forward from schools capacity and condition survey.





The inclusion team lead by Education Transformation team went out to consultation in April 2023 to increase the capacity for resource bases and ASD provision in mainstream schools. The statutory notice period ran through June/July with a decision for implementation scheduled for this year. The proposal is in 2 parts, part one meet the need of learners in secondary and Welsh-medium provision. Part 2 will focus on the success and need for additional bases after 2025, this will also consider religious character schools.

The council have been awarded 2 grants 2022/23 and 2023/24 from Welsh Government Additional Learning Needs (ALN) capital grant.



- The 2022/23 grant was used predominantly for Pen y Cwm and River Centre 3-16 Learning Community – Secondary Site
- The 2023/24 grant allocation will be used to implement the ALN review.

### River Centre Learning Community – Secondary Campus

- In 2022, the school had an Estyn Inspection which recommended change and with this in mind the ALN grant was used to transform the learning environment, both internally and externally, making this a fit for purpose facility for vulnerable learners .

The River Centre Secondary Campus was **subject to investment circa £450,000.**

The complete refurb included 3 extra classrooms including sensory provision, new furniture, home economics and independent living area, outdoor muga and gym.



Works to Pen y Cwm Special School includes remodelling the existing learning environment to create additional classroom spaces and associated facilities i.e. additional sensory rooms and a hobbit house, to create an outdoor learning space. This work continues whilst the Council are working with the school to develop a long-term plan to support sustained growth and development.





**Better links** have been developed **with early years and health**, and a more comprehensive **tracking tool has been created** in order to improve the tracking of pupils with Additional Learning Needs **to ensure better planning of provision.**

Our Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (EY ALNLO) now holds registers and continues to work closely with health colleagues, attending ISCAN panel meetings to maintain accurate registers.

### Early Years Additional Learning Needs

Every Local Authority will have a designated officer known as the 'Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer' (EY ALNLO), who will have responsibility for strategically co-ordinating the Local Authority's functions in relation to children under compulsory school age who are not attending maintained schools.

The role of the EY ALNLO is to work with parents, early years settings, health professionals and others who may be working with children below compulsory school age, to raise awareness of the ALN system and to promote early intervention. The EY ALNLO holds robust and

Page 945

#### Early Years ALNLO

Promotes early intervention.  
Focus on early years.



#### What does the EYALNLO do?

The EY ALNLO works closely with health visitors as well as many other health professionals and monitor children below the age of 5 to identify ALN at the earliest opportunity. The EY ALNLO also works alongside the Early Years Support Team and the Inclusive Practice Team here in Blaenau Gwent, to provide support and advice as well as signposting of services within a strategic role.

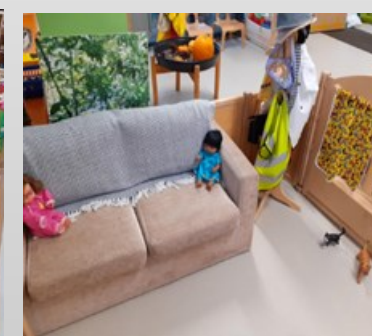
The EYALNLO has responsibility for co-ordinating the local authority's role in relation to children under statutory school age, who are not attending maintained schools. This is applicable to all children until they are of statutory school age – the term after their 5th birthday.

#### What happens when a learner starts school nursery/reception?

The EY ALNLO will support a learner until they begin school. Once the learner is registered at, and attends a school, responsibility for supporting this learner passes onto the school and the schools Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo).

#### Additional Learning Needs coordinator (ALNCO)

The school ALNCO is the lead co-ordinator for learners with additional needs. They work in maintained schools, school nurseries, resource bases and special schools.





**The ALN Code makes it clear that learners should be able to access provision, in so far as possible, within their locality.**

The Local Authority are keeping their Additional Learning Needs provision under review as per the Welsh Government directive. As is similar in most Local Authorities across Wales, and certainly within the South East Wales Consortium family, placements for specialist provision are extremely limited for learners with cognition and learning difficulties in primary settings and secondary is running above capacity. We are already running **over capacity at Primary Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) placements**, and we currently hold a **waiting list of 6 pupils** requiring an ASD placement as determined by Additional Learning Needs Panel.

In order to mitigate the need for out of county placements for ASD learners, **Inclusion and Education Transformation worked together over 22/23 to plan future resource base allocation within the Borough**. This involved an ALN consultation which formed the basis to move forward to a development and implementation stage, with the first being the **development of an ASD base at the Tredegar Comprehensive site, which opened September 23** with an investment of **approximately £200k**.



Page 946

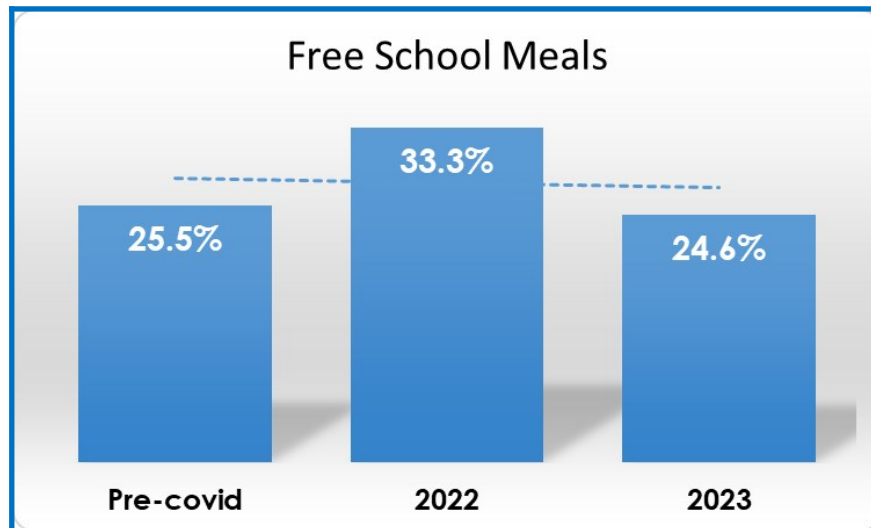


There are further plans in place to extend capacity in primary settings for 24/25 with 2 schools earmarked for ASD bases, one of which is Welsh medium. This should mitigate the need for seeking out alternative options for the learners on waiting lists for specialist ASD provision. Further information regarding the plans to increase capacity is available via the ALN Consultation. [RIGHT CLICK HERE AND OPEN HYPERLINK](#)





In terms of transition panel for year 6 – 7, last year the Local Authority considered 33 children for a more specialist placement for secondary. By December 2023 the team will be aware of figures for entry Sept 24 and those learners will be presented at panel for consideration.



Current data suggests that eFSM figures have gone down, however a robust check is currently being undertaken to ensure figures are accurate.

A resource base review was carried out in the autumn/spring terms and recommendations for inclusion were made and shared with all resource base placements. We are aware that across Blaenau Gwent there is a variation in inclusion to mainstream time for learners and thinking ahead, and in order to move a learner on back in to mainstream, there needs to be promotion of inclusion. We are, for example, aware of in excess of 10 learners in Penycwm Special School that would potentially be able to move across to a resource base; however, places in those resource bases appear to be currently stagnant and there is work needing to be done to support integration with mainstream peers.

Of all the Welsh local authorities, **child poverty rates are highest in Blaenau Gwent (30.3%) and Ceredigion (30%)**. <https://www.business-live.co.uk/economic-development/new-data-reveals-extent-child-27044774> It is also reported that **children from larger families are significantly more likely to live in poverty**. The current Child Poverty Strategy for Wales has been in place since 2015.

A “Draft Child Poverty Strategy for Wales 2023: Integrated impact assessment”



has been published by Welsh Government to help alleviate the situation. Right click here to view the strategy





### Accessibility and Poverty -

Over the summer 2023, young people were consulted on what is needed in each area and since September, Youth Service teams have implemented new provision in each area covering Abertillery, Brynmawr, Cwm, Ebbw Vale and Tredegar. The Youth Service's Detached Team works across all areas going to where young people are at – town centres, shop fronts, parks, bus stops and other areas where young people are meeting and gathering. By delivering a mix of both



detached and centre based work the Youth Service provides opportunities for young people to access within a variety of settings. Most the Youth Service's open access activities and opportunities are provided outside of school hours either during the evening, weekends or school holidays to ensure they are accessible when young people need to access them.

The ethos within the Youth Service is to assume that all young people may need financial support, to avoid stigmatising any individuals. Therefore, all opportunities are provided free and where possible transport is provided. Where activities maybe more than an a few hours, refreshments and food is provided to all young people so that those who would not normally be able to provide this for themselves are not 'singled out'.

Page 948



We provide Free Activities and youth club access



We provide Free facility hire at sports centres (sports pitches)



Free gym memberships



Monthly free movie screenings at Brynmawr Cinema



Free sanitary products available – part of the period poverty/equity approach



Free hygiene products available such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap and deodorants



Free clothes washing and drying facilities at both youth centres



Fresh new bedding/sleeping bags/cooking equipment available for those who need it



Prom outfits/Interview clothes/General clothing



Equipment/resources for college/school/training/employment





Youth Service Activities include providing a full summer and winter programme during school term and school holidays, supported by the Welsh Government Youth Support Grant.

The full summer programme of activities had themed days and were mixed with both positive activities, health and well-being and new experiences.

At the start of the summer period **over 250 young people attended the Open 4 youth event** at Ebbw Vale Sports centre.

Over **400 young people participated in the full summer programme.**

To make the booking process fair and accessible for all young people there was an electronic booking process. This was promoted via our social media channels.

Food was provided to any young people that may need it on activities during the school holidays



Through the development of the Service's digital platforms (social media and website) young people can access information and support without the need to physically attend at a time that suits them. By providing a digital presence, the Youth Service has become more accessible to a wider audience of young people.



**As of September 22 a transition process commenced whereby the duties for Post 16 Additional Learning Needs became the local authority responsibility.**

Arrangements are currently in place for the transfer of Welsh Government (WG) post 16 funding to local authorities until the end of implementation when WG will transfer a mean amount of funding via the LEAG for post 16. At this current time we must use the funding only for registered Independent Specialist Provision (ISPI); however, then we will be able to utilise these funds as we wish for Post 16 following the end of implementation.

**This year (Sept 23 entry) there were 2 applications for Independent Special Post-16 Institutions ISPI from Year 11 learners where the local Further Education college had indicated they could not meet the need.**

**COLLABORATION** - The Early Years ALN Lead Officer has close links with the ALN Teams both in the education and social services directorates; the focus is learners pre statutory school age, those with emerging needs and those who may be identified as ALN.

During academic year 22/23 there were no learners who were identified as requiring an IDP in the Early Years settings ( An IDP is a document for children and young people with additional learning needs which helps teaching staff to plan for your child, teach them, and review their progress.)

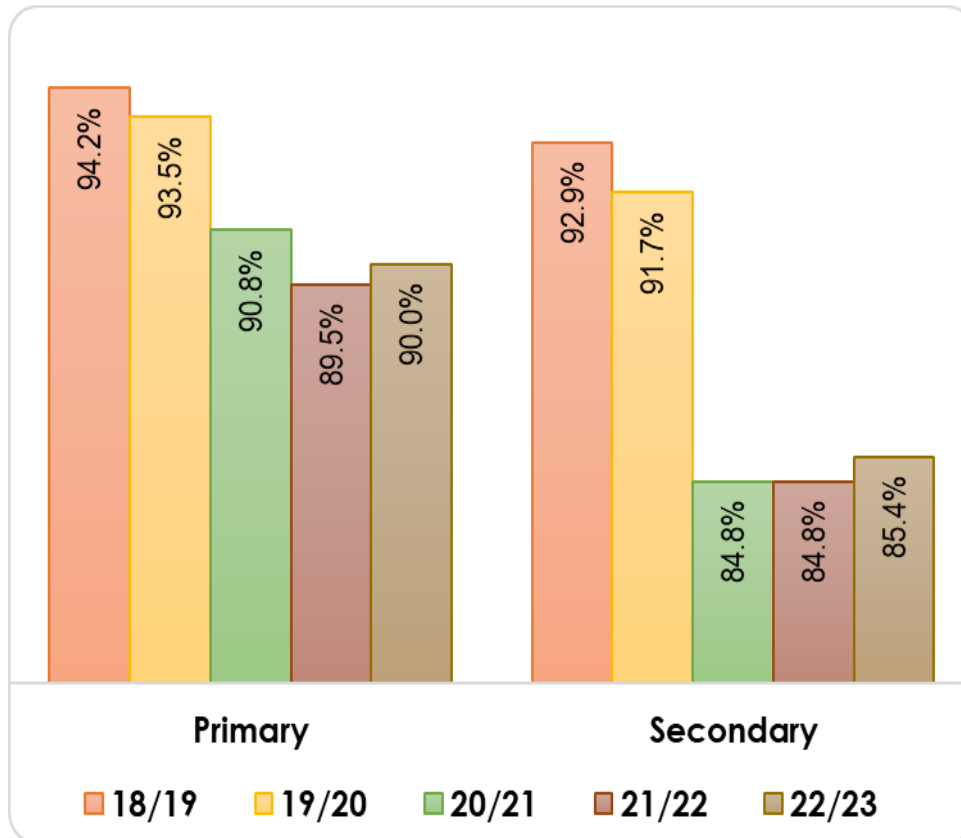
**This academic year there has been extensive work with Early Years team in Social Services, which has included forging relationships with the Local Authority team and also the early years settings.**

There were **21 referrals to Early Years panel** during the summer term of 2023 in readiness for learners **commencing nursery in September 23**; these referrals were specifically following Education Psychology assessments for two terms of Rising 3 funding for schools.

**Moving forward into the new academic year of 23/24 Early Years panels will become part of the ALN statutory panel.**



Joint meetings between Head teachers, senior Education Welfare Officer and Youth Service Manager have taken place with secondary schools to support improving attendance and reducing exclusions. Further analysis will take place in order to identify the reason for decline and put mitigating actions in place.



**Attendance/exclusions are still following the National trend although the downward trend for attendance in Blaenau Gwent seems to have settled.**

Education Minister Jeremy Miles said he would establish a National Attendance Taskforce which would "look in depth" into the reasons behind non-attendance, along with the publication of new "engagement and attendance guidance".

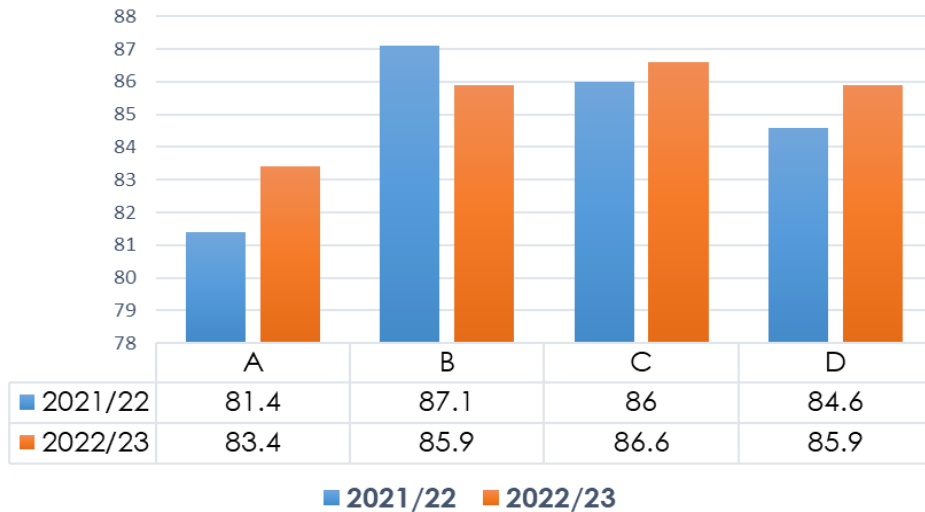
In a written statement, he said: "There are often complex and multiple factors lying behind non-attendance. These could include mental health and wellbeing, availability of specific learning support services, and the ever-rising cost of living and attitudes of parents and learners towards school attendance generally. As such a priority of the group will be to look in depth into the reasons behind non-attendance and bring to bear their expertise to identify actions that can bring about sustained improvements."

Taken from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-66933229> date 27 September 2023

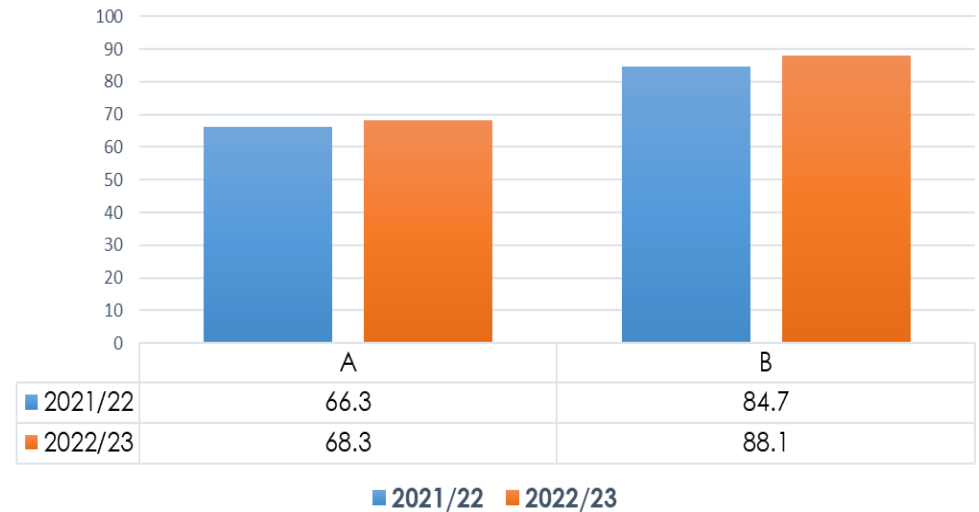




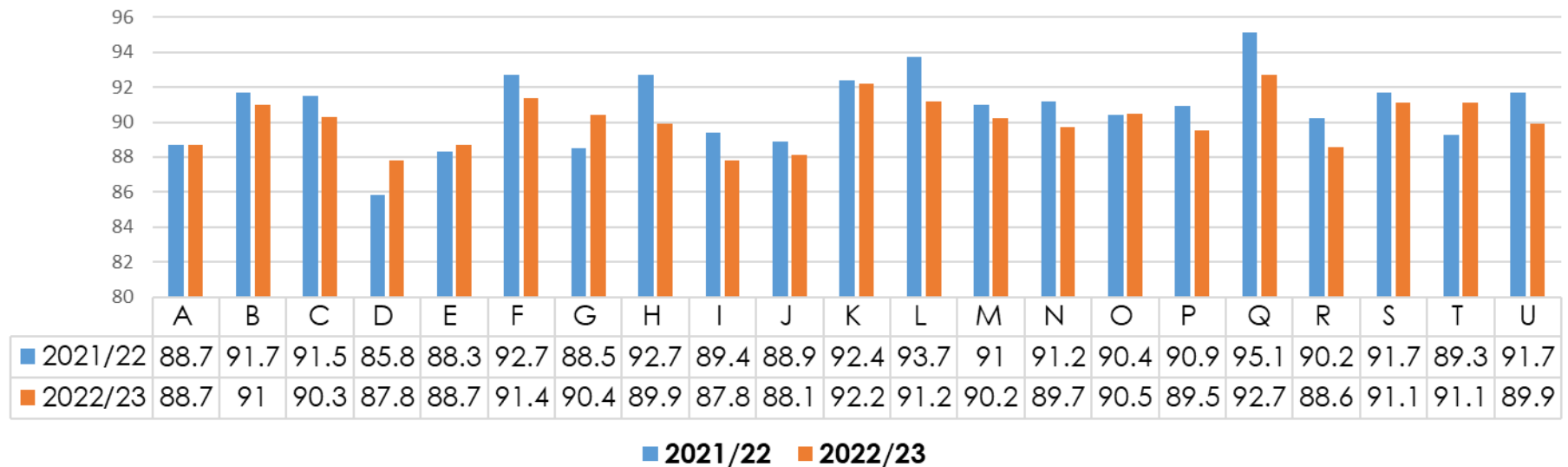
Secondary Attendance Data W/E 21st July 2023



Special School Attendance Data W/E 21st July 2023



Primary Attendance Data W/E 21st July 2023





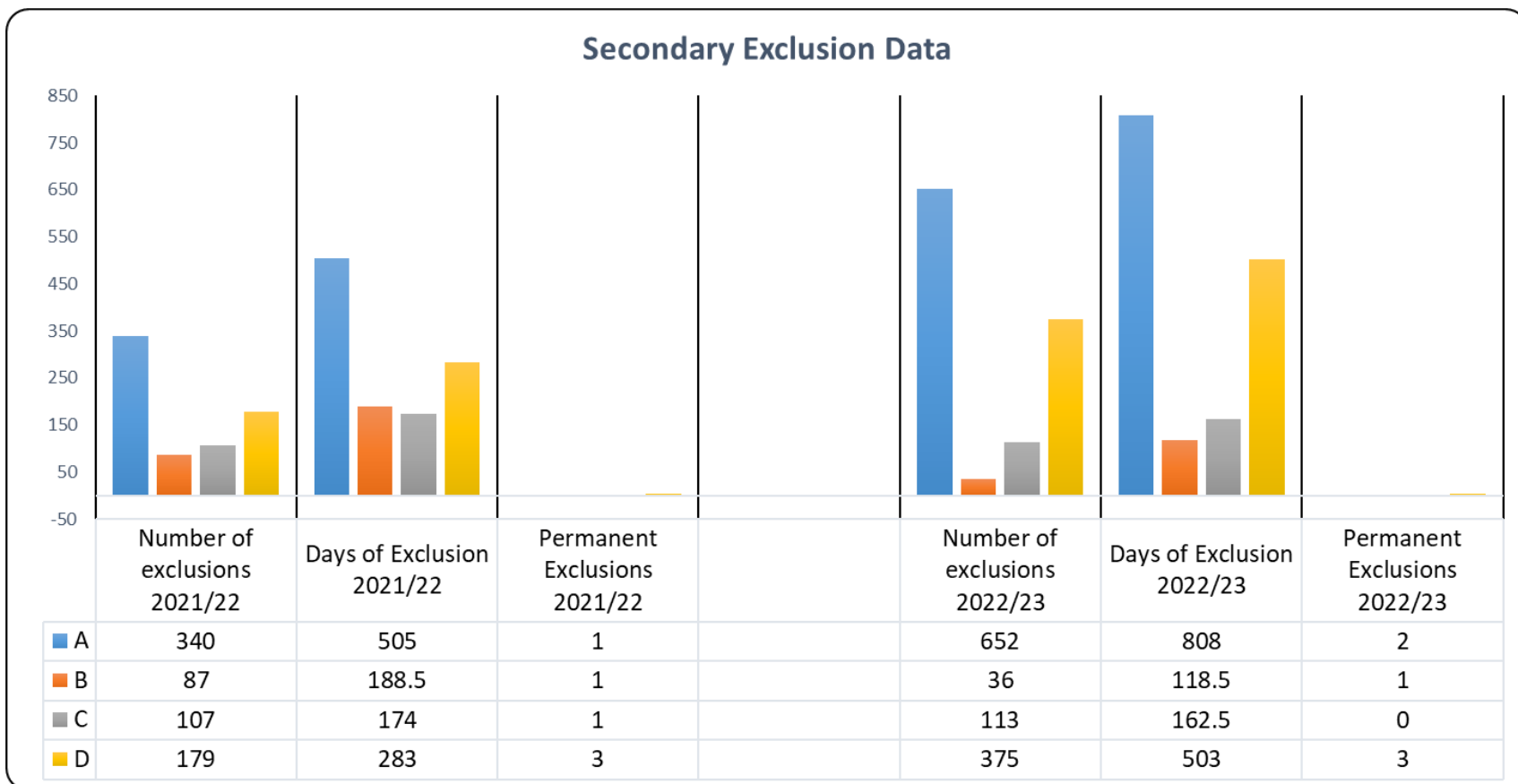


Historically in **Blaenau Gwent, exclusions** have been represented by high numbers and this had started to reduce slightly; however, we are now experiencing an **increase in exclusions** related to an increase in **adverse behaviours in school**. With the introduction of the Vulnerable learner Panel (VLP) this year, the Local Authority has been able to support learners that have been at risk of permanent exclusion and support schools in reducing this category of exclusion. However, the Local Authority is seeing a significant increase in referrals to VLP and we need to be mindful that there is only limited provision and funding available.

Page 953

The exclusion data detailed over the next few pages shows the comparison of data during the 2022/23 academic year compared to the 2021/22 academic year.

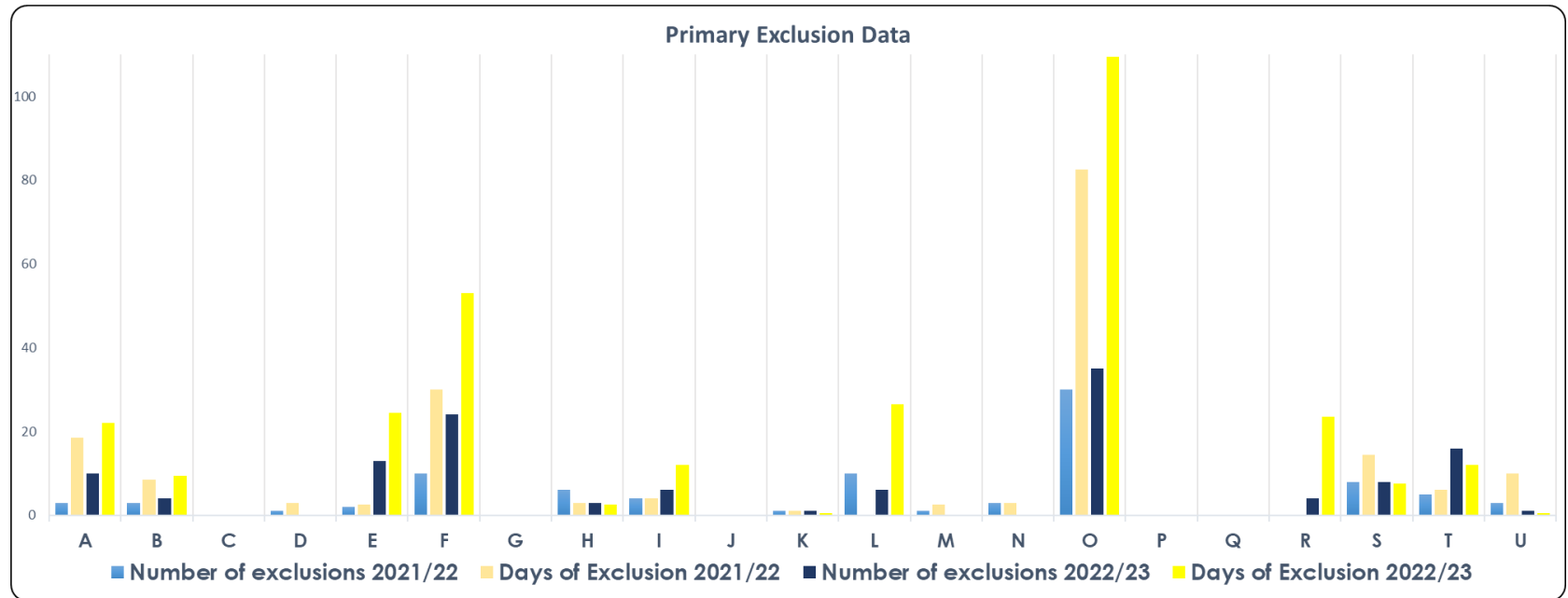
During the academic year 22/23 there were a **total of 1176 exclusions in our Secondary school estate compared to 713 in the previous year** of 21/22.





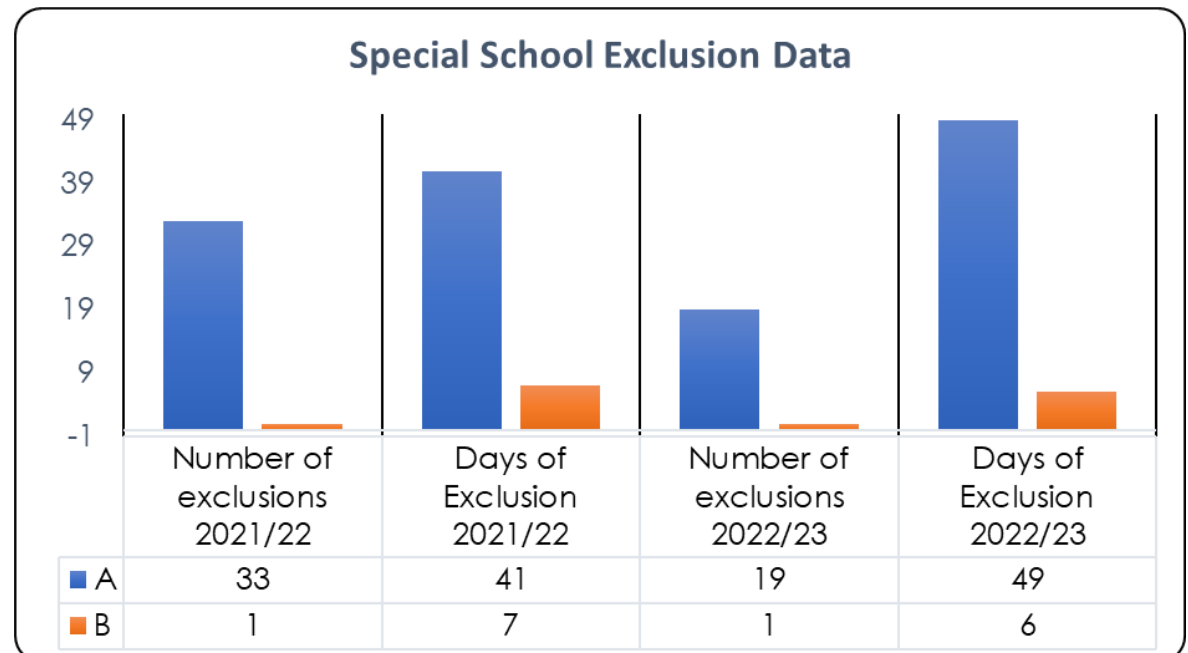
During the academic year 22/23 there were a **total of 131 exclusions overall throughout our primary school estate compared to 90 in the previous year of 21/22.**

There were no permanent primary school exclusions this year.



Although figures show that **exclusions from the 2 special schools have decreased** on the previous year, **the days lost are increased.**

There were no permanent special school exclusions this year.





The summary table below details the overall increase / decrease of exclusion numbers, number of days of exclusion and permanent exclusions across our education settings from 2022/23 academic year compared to the previous academic year 2021/22.

Overall it is not showing a positive picture with an **increase of 490 pupil exclusions across the school estate** compared to last academic year and an **increase of 561 days lost to exclusion**. The number of Permanent exclusions during 2022/23 academic year is again 6 pupils.



<b>Secondary</b>	Number of Exclusions has <b>increased by 463</b>	The number of days of exclusion has <b>increased by 441.5</b>	The number of permanent exclusions has <b>remained the same at 6</b>
<b>Primary</b>	Number of Exclusions has <b>increased by 41</b>	The number of days of exclusion has <b>increased by 114.5</b>	The number of permanent exclusions has <b>remained the same at 0</b>
<b>Special Schools</b>	Number of exclusions has <b>Reduced by 14</b>	The number of days of exclusion has <b>increased by 5</b>	The number of permanent exclusions has <b>remained the same at 0</b>
<b>Total increase compared to last academic year</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>0</b>



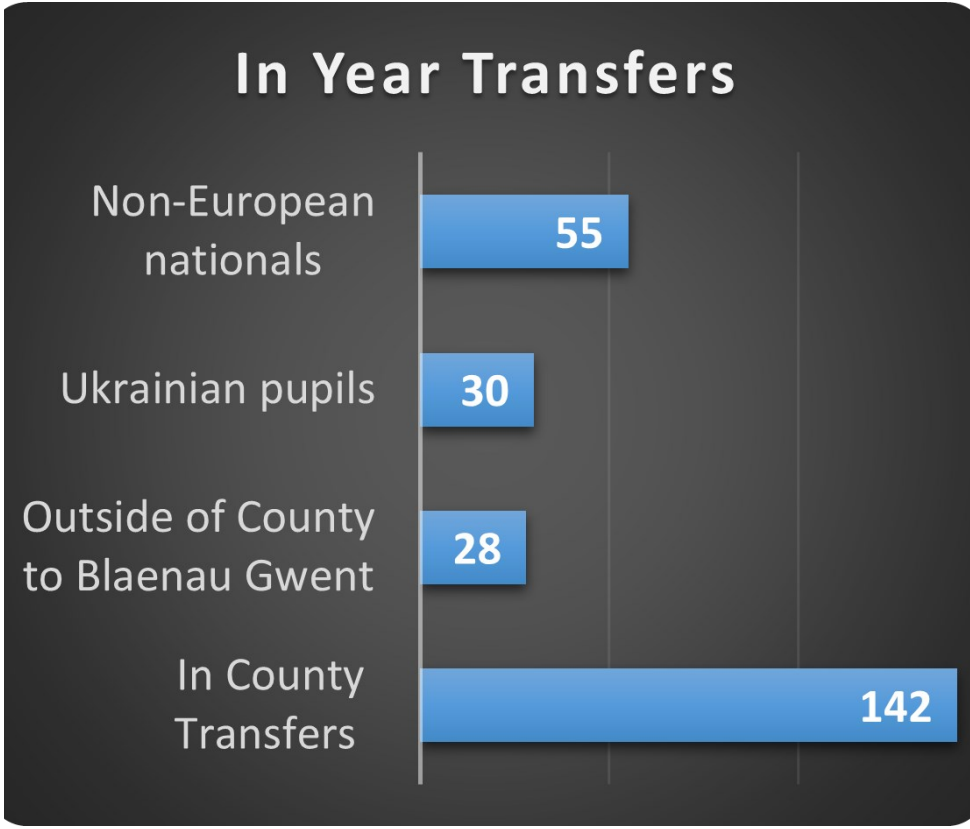
There is merit in looking at what the schools and Local Authority currently provide in terms of alternative curriculum and exploring if there is a more appropriate way of working.



All **admission rounds** were **completed** for 2022/23 academic year with **100% of first preferences being met** for both **nursery and secondary place allocation** and **99% of first preferences were met** for the **reception year group**. This is attributable to the **effective monitoring and management** of school capacities and pupil places along with the continued achievement of **surplus place reduction**.

Page 956

There have been **255 In Year Transfers** between **September 2022 and July 2023** **33% of which were due to inward migration** from foreign nationals moving **into Blaenau Gwent**. **100%** of these transfers were **processed within 15 days**



**Two admission appeals** were held for the **reception admission round** during the **summer** period. **Both** appeals were **upheld in favour of the admissions authority** due to them being **class size appeals**.



Options for further **engagement and promotion** is being explored to **increase the number of in-time applications** for reception and secondary school.



**INTEGRATION / COLLABORATION** - Strategic links with key partners such as the EAS, Coleg Gwent, Schools, WBL providers continue to be effective, ensuring that Blaenau Gwent is well placed to continue with the transformation of the Education service and supporting our children and young people.





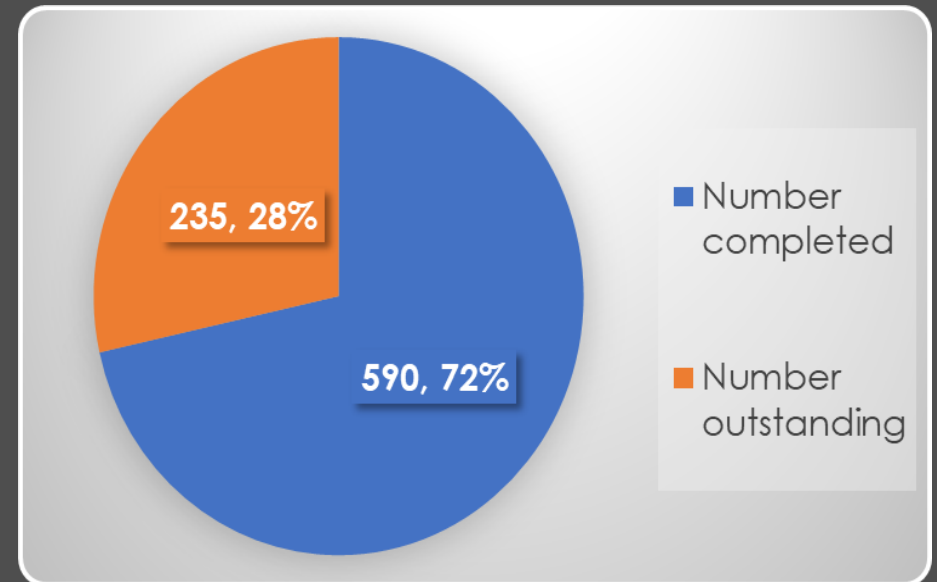
This year the Council received a Welsh Government **Schools Capital Maintenance Grant**, which alongside minor works has resulted in capital investment of **approximately £900,000 in the school estate** to date.

12 projects were completed during the summer holidays, these included full replacement of a toilet block in a secondary school, 8 classrooms refurb, full refurb of a nursery demountable building, creation of a Learning Resource Base (kitchen, office, toilets 3 classrooms) in a former unused building and refurb of 3 rooms in Bedwellty House to create a temporary seedling provision for the new Welsh primary.

**825 TE100's (requests for maintenance, repair and planned works)** were received between September 2022 and August 2023, **100%** of which were acknowledged and **received a response within the specified timeframe.**

72% (590) of the 825 TE100 requests have been completed with remaining 28% scheduled for completion within the 2023/24 academic year. Delays to resolution have been due to the following factors:-

- Budgetary issues in line with identified costs;
- Market forces including material availability;
- Access to school buildings;
- Securing contractors to undertake the work; and
- The capacity of Technical Services to assess the extent of repair/ maintenance work and associated costs.





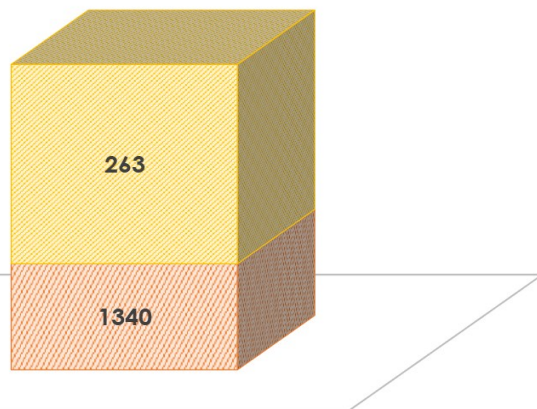
**INTEGRATION** - An effective internal partnership between the Education Directorate and the Build Environment, Environment and Regeneration continues, leading to the delivery of an efficient home to school / college transport provision.



We procure and monitor 28 operators providing transport for over 78 contracts. This includes mainstream, Welsh-medium, faith education and specialist provision for ALN.

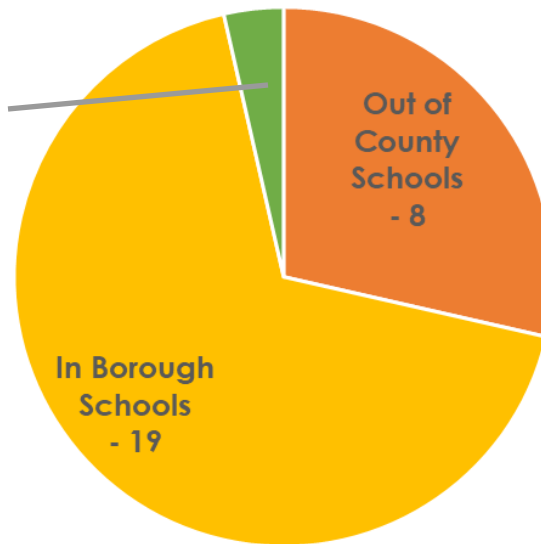
### Over 1600 school pupils use Home to School transport:

■ Mainstream Pupils ■ ALN Pupils



### We transport to:

Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone and Post 16 Provision - 1



We provide support for over 550 Post 16 students living in Blaenau Gwent, they are provided with a discounted bus ticket or travel grant. Applications for this academic year are still being processed.



The transport policy seeks to ensure that there is an appropriate framework to aid delivery of the services. The **Home to School Transport budget out-turn position for 2022/23 was £2.7m** (after the use of £450,000 of funding from reserves) against a budget of £2.2m.

For **2023/24** the **Home to School Transport budget is approximately £3.3m**, this is following the award of a **£682,000 cost pressure in the budget setting process in relation to the uplift in contract prices awarded to contractors as a result of the fuel crisis**. The Council received a number of requests from operators for an increase in the historical contractual rates as a result of the fuel crisis. This was agreed to ensure continuity of the home to school transport service.



## The ICT Infrastructure and Connectivity Project

- The Local Authority has again made strong progress in line with its strategy for improving standards in ICT. This has involved continued progression of the Infrastructure and Connectivity Project, implementation of Waves 1-4 of the Welsh Government HWB EdTech Programme and work towards the development of a strategy and associated sustainability plan for both infrastructure and devices in Blaenau Gwent.

### Estyn & Welsh Government Thematic Review

**A recent ICT thematic review was undertaken by Estyn and Welsh Government which provided the council with suggestions to improve practice and enhance outcomes for learners in the LA. The review is based around 4 key areas:**

1. Education Digital Standards
2. Quality and impact of online provision for schools
3. Hwb Approach and Other platforms
4. Digital Resilience

**Overall the review was positive, highlighting the active work that the Education team have undertaken thus far. There were three recommendations identified:**

- Blaenau Gwent to work with schools to re-focus on utilising 360 Safe Cymru tool.
- Provide finalised Digital Strategy to WG once consultation is completed.
- WG to support Blaenau Gwent with planned Hwb email migration and further Hwb adoption across the LA.

**The 360 Safe Cymru tool forms part of the council's Education ICT strategy. There are Bi-monthly ICT strategy meetings due to restart in the Autumn-term 2023 where this recommendation will be added to the agenda and discussed in depth .**

The ICT strategy is currently in draft format and the consultation has concluded. There were no further comments received from the consultation, however, Education have been liaising with the Digital Team to ensure the strategy aligns with the corporate ICT strategy. The final draft is to be reviewed in the Autumn-term 2023 for final sign off.

**Education will collaborate with the Digital team and SRS to consider the Hwb Migration in the Autumn 2023 term**

The **Educational Digital Standards** are designed to assist schools to understand, manage and implement their digital environment. The Standards also provide guidance on how schools should future-proof their digital environment to meet the needs of a more digitally focused school curriculum. The standards suggest all infrastructure work undertaken to meet the standards should be carefully considered, planned and procured in compliance with national procurement regulations and installed by professional organisations.



A corporate ICT strategy has been devised by the Digital team, and Education has worked with the team to ensure the Education strategy aligns with the corporate strategy

*'To secure continued development ensuring that all learners regardless of age or demographic have continued safe access to a blend of digital resources, hardware and cloud-based learning throughout the course of their education.'*



- Infrastructure and Connectivity
- Digital Inclusion
- Device Sustainability
- Migration to and use of Hwb
- Digital tools and resources
- Training and Development
- Online Safety
- Support for Schools
- Education Management and support systems
- Blaenau Gwent corporate approach and overview

Page 960

There are 9 priority areas identified within the strategy. These areas have been focused on heavily over the past 2 years, we will continue to progress these in line with the Digital competency framework.







Through a partnership approach the Youth Engagement and Progression Team continue to support young people to prevent youth homelessness and to support emotional wellbeing.

**Youth Service**

The Youth Service provides a number of high quality projects providing young people with personal support, advice, guidance, advocacy and counselling services in school and community settings - this is supported by a well-developed workforce.

**The team has continued to support individuals on a one-to-one basis, along with running groups and community projects.**

**During the last academic year,  
25 young people were supported  
on a one-to-one basis.**

**These young people are often in precarious housing situations, and support is based around navigating appropriate information, advice and guidance from other services to help provide some stability and to enable them to improve their housing situation.**

**Groups continue to be facilitated with young people in alternative school settings accessing opportunities and provision.  
This includes a group linked to having difficulties in a mainstream setting (and a group at the SEBD provision), in total 38 young people have engaged.**

**This has continued to develop, with ongoing relationships with partners growing and understanding of routes and support available locally expanding, overall becoming more efficient and effective.**



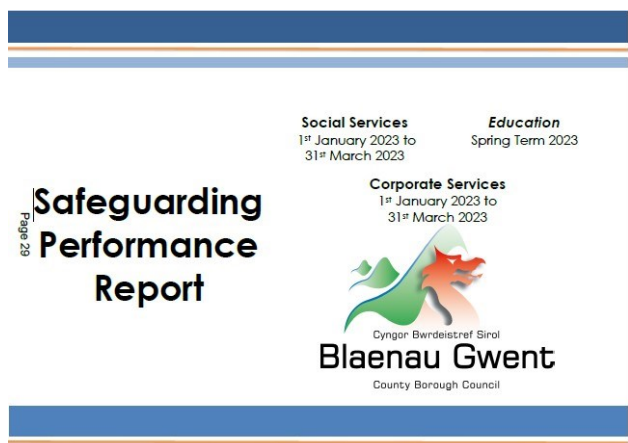


Safeguarding processes are well established in the Youth Service and are fit for purpose. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, with robust records kept on all safeguarding matters including Duty to Report (DTRs) Referrals to Social Services, feedback and staff training. Termly meetings are held between the Youth Service and the Safeguarding in Education Officer, and any areas of concern outside of child protection are escalated through this process. All Youth Service staff have received training in Prevent and actively use this understanding to identify any concerns in youth settings. Staff are giving regular opportunities to attend other training to identify, support and report safeguarding issues which include child exploitation, domestic abuse, emotional wellbeing support.



**Safeguarding** is a corporate responsibility and is an important aspect of the Education Directorates service delivery.

Between September 2022 and August 2023, **44 referrals (DTRs)** were made to Social Services and more detail relating to these are included in the Joint Safeguarding Report.



Right click here and open hyperlink to view our most recent Safeguarding Performance Report



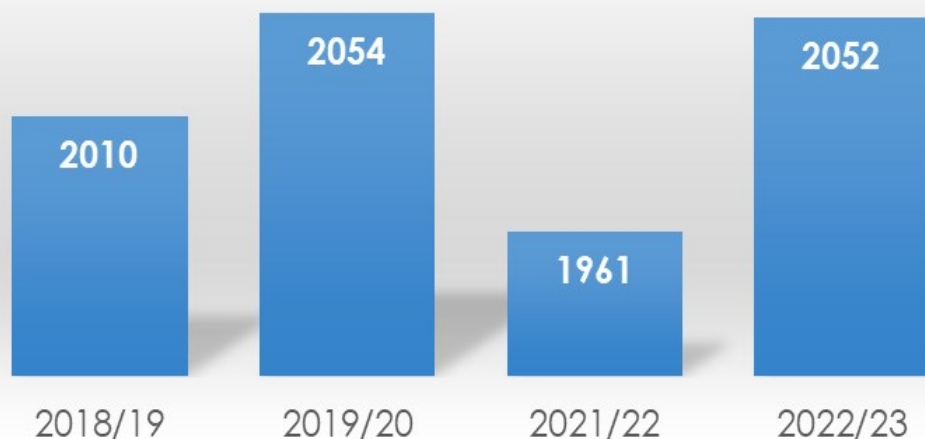
The Youth Service operates a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure which sits underneath The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Education Directorate Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy and includes the procedure for Youth Workers who work out of hours and the procedure for Safeguarding Adults at Risk.

All youth service staff, students, counsellors, therapists and volunteers receive **safeguarding training**. Depending on the role, staff also attend additional training in specific areas such as child exploitation, substance misuse and Prevent to ensure **effective identification and reporting** of safeguarding concerns.





### Number of 11-25 year olds supported by the Youth Service

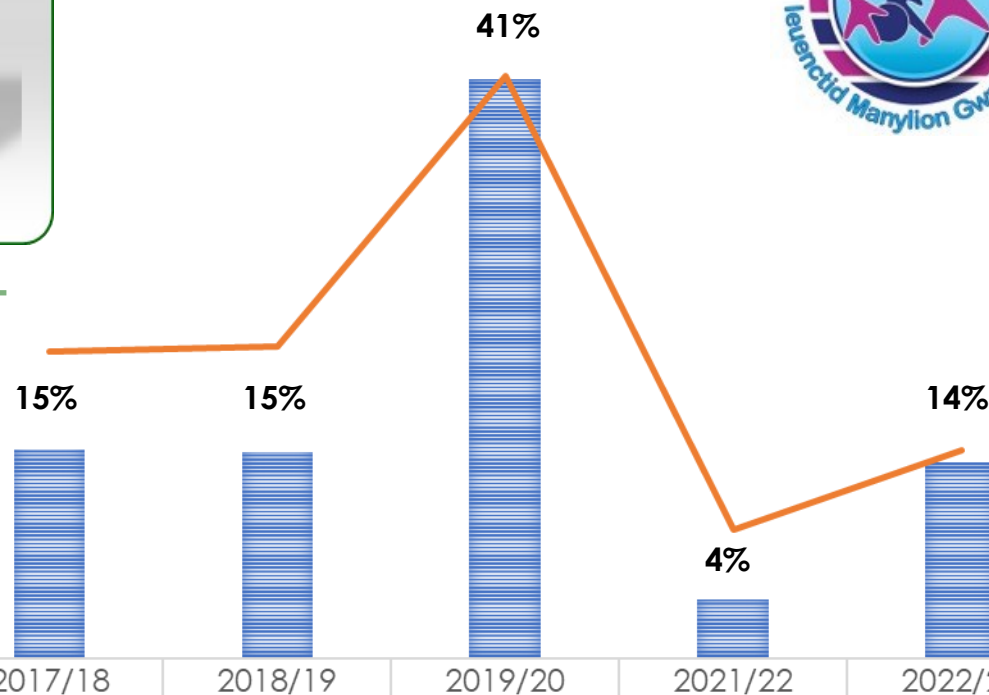


The **number of 11-25 year olds supported by the Youth Service** during 2022/23 is 2052 (Reach of 19%). The reach is 2% higher than the 2021/2022 data and shows that the reach has almost returned to pre-pandemic levels.



Page 963

Out of the 2,052 11-25 year olds supported by the Youth Service above, **14% (287 young people) have gained 340 nationally recognised qualifications.** Any achievements are made voluntarily and completed during the young people's spare time.



	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2021/22	2022/23
Number of young people supported (11-25) that gained accredited qualifications	306	301	847	86	287
Number of qualifications achieved	448	456	851	188	304



**The number of additional contacts made with anonymous young people (not registered with the service)**

through the 11-25 Counselling Service, detached youth work, outreach and out of school activities and events with some online activities offered.



(one contact is between 1-3 hours long)



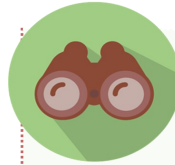
**Prevention** - The service is led by the needs and interests of young people, and as we returned to face to face delivery accreditations were not the focus of the work, as needs being presented by young people have been mostly around **emotional well-being** where different approaches have been needed. Dependent on the project, the outcomes for each programme are now measured on participation, improved wellbeing as well as improvement in either school attendance or behaviour, rather than accreditations. Despite this a significant number of young people still undertook an accreditation .





Over the last year, both core and external funding has been secured to continue a variety of projects to meet identified needs which include :

- SPF 11-25 Youth and Community programmes;
- Youth Homelessness;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing;
- Duke of Edinburgh;
- Detached and Outreach Youth Workers;
- Positive Futures (ASB programmes);
- Open for Youth Nights;
- Youth Clubs;
- Youth Information Service;
- Young Ambassadors (YAMs);
- the 11-25 Counselling Service;
- the Young Reps Volunteering Programme; and
- the school holiday programme.



Funding was secured via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) from 1st April 2023 until 31st March 2025 to continue the successful delivery of both Inspire 2 Achieve and Inspire 2 Work. The SPF programme has been planned and developed based upon learning from Inspire and youth workers within the SPF project continue to support young people aged 11-25 who are at risk of becoming or are NEET.

The programme will again support young people within learning settings and in the community. The programme aims to support 900 young people within its duration and key outcomes include development of life skills, employability skills, achieving additional qualifications and transition into further education, training or employment.

Partnership working will remain and continue as a key function of the programme in both 11-16 and 16-25 support pathways, ensuring young people receive the appropriate access to a wide of support without duplication.

Ysbrydoli  Gyflawni  
Inspire  Achieve



Inspire  Work  
Ysbrydoli  Weithio



## Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services



The Council's Workforce Strategy 2022-26 aims to build on existing good practice and is continuing to promote the Council as a good place to work – **developing a workforce that feels connected to and can meet the current and future needs of our community.**

The Directorate recognises the critical need to communicate and engage staff in service delivery, transformation, change, new commercial thinking and financial efficiency. This is currently undertaken through a number of methods: • Regular one to one performance coaching • Annual performance review • Team meetings • Staff meetings • Management team meetings • Staff Surveys • Engagement in financial planning

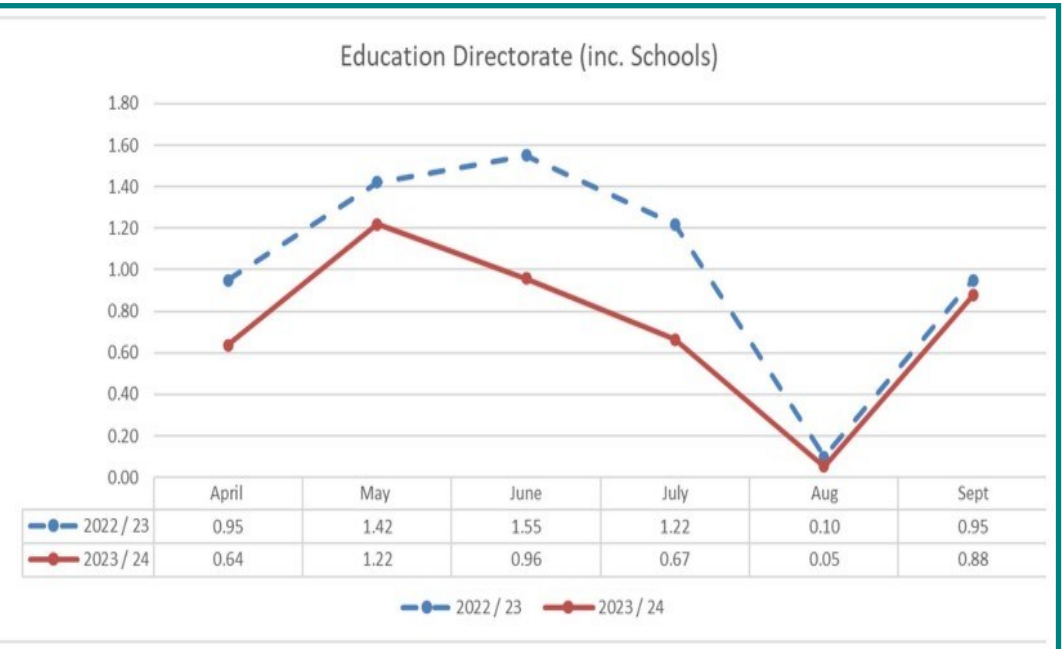
Close work with Organisational Development continues and includes monitoring of staff attendance rates.

	Quarter 1 (Cumulative) 2022/23	Quarter 2 (Cumulative) 2022/23	Quarter 2 - 22/23 Target	Quarter 1 (Cumulative) 2023/24	Quarter 2 (Cumulative) 2023/24	Quarter 2 - 23/24 Target	Trend
Education Directorate							
Education Transformation and Business Change	0.60	9.40	2.75	3.56	4.20	3.5	Improvement but over target
School Improvement & Inclusion	0.25	0.47	2.75	0.49	2.32	3.5	Decline but within target
Young People and Partnerships.	2.46	2.46	2.75	0.82	0.78	3.5	Improvement and within target
Senior Management	0.00	0.00	2.75	26.09	40.50	3	Decline and over target
School Based Staff (excluding Teachers)	4.98	7.87	4.25	3.28	5.18	6	Improvement and within target
Teachers	3.29	4.90	4.25	2.53	3.73	6	Improvement and within target



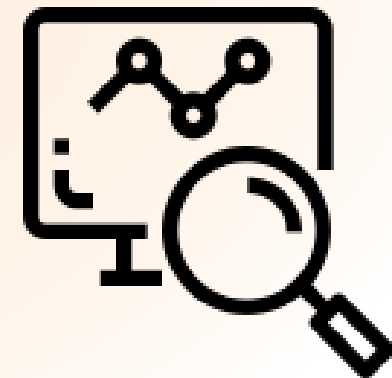
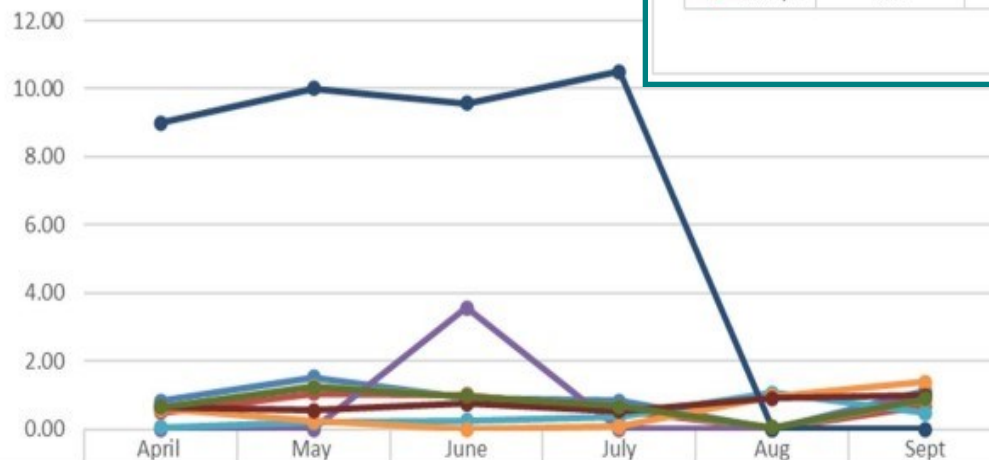
## Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services

### Education staff absence rates - Two year comparison



### April - September 2023/24 Sickness Breakdown

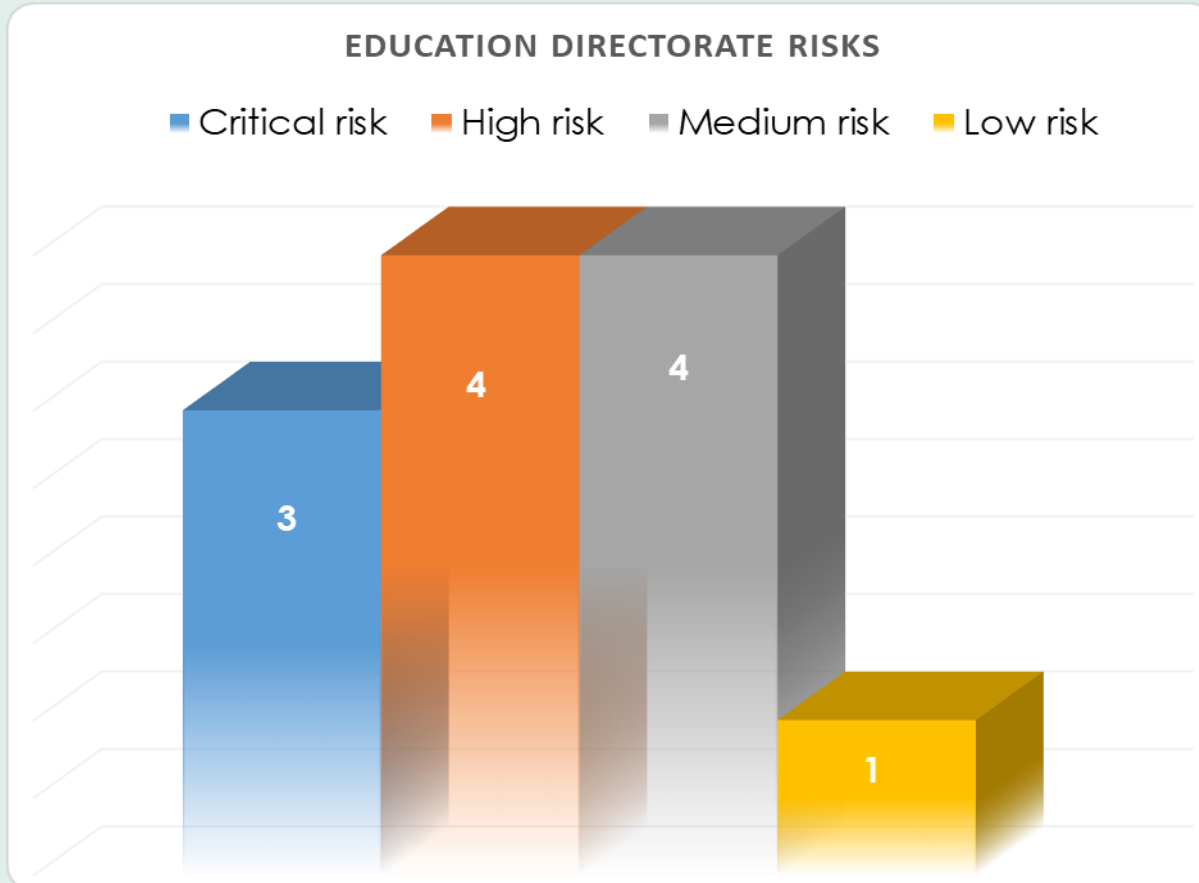
Education Directorate (inc. Schools)





**In line with the Council’s Risk Management Strategy Department Leadership Team review and challenge the risks on the Directorate Risk Register on a quarterly basis. As part of this process, they will consider new risks for inclusion on to the Directorate Risk Register and consider risks for escalation to the Corporate Risk Register.**

The Education Directorate Risk Register has 12 risks, with 3 having a critical residual status, 4 having a high residual risk status, 4 being medium status and the remaining one being of low status. Mitigating actions are in place for all risks and the critical risks are detailed below .....



- **Failure to support schools in improving pupil outcomes and wellbeing.**
- **Free School Meal (FSM) figures reported to Welsh Government have included pupils who are entitled to a FSM based on transitional protection**
- **Budget concerns**







## Ensure effective corporate leadership of Education Services



Proposals have been shared with schools in terms of Rising 3 funding becoming a lump sum of funding shared among all schools to align with the Additional Learning Needs agenda for inclusion and to provide equity among schools in being able to build capacity to meet the needs of all learners. Discussions are



The education directorates aim is to work towards developing a robust **strategic plan for partnership working** which enables opportunities for children, young people and the wider community to be maximised. This plan will ensure communication between different service areas and partners is effective , with partnership working leading to improved services and value for money. Partners know the Education Directorate's vision and strategic aims and they provide services which positively build on these.



Page 970

## Engagement with Members -

Aside from the work programmes for Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council, the Education Directorate also regularly engages with Elected Members to inform Members of key areas of the Directorate to enhance their learning and understanding.



At this stage the Local Authority has not yet received any monitoring forms, which schools are requested to return to demonstrate how the funding has been used and the impact. We are not able to evidence whether this funding has had any positive impact.



**Directorate Priority Review** - A full Business Plan review has been undertaken within the period in line with a review of each service area under the Education Directorate. This has led to new Business Plans being created based on this review, Estyn recommendations (detailed on page 12) and Corporate priorities.

**We continue to develop a clear vision for all teams based on the newly formed vision for the Education Directorate. The plan needs to be supported by clear timelines, related actions and measurable success criteria.**

**Professional Learning reviews are completed, particularly with a focus on ALN to support equity & Inclusion.**



**Improvement planning is based on sharing of key data across service areas and wider stakeholders.**

Need to build on the audit of our professional learning across service areas to promote the best opportunities for our children and young people.



A **Review** of what **commissioned services** sit within the Education Directorate has been undertaken and these include:-

- GEMS - Gwent Education Minority-ethnic Service
- SENCOM - Sensory and Communication Support Service
- YOS – Youth Offending Service
- IPS - Inclusive Practice Service
- SNAP Cymru
- EAS - Education Achievement Service



Regular contact has been maintained between the Local Authority and these commissioned services, with a clear vision shared for engagement and measurable, purposeful success criteria aligned to our bespoke priorities for our learners and schools in place.



A system for reviewing the current governance arrangements of each of these commissioned services has been created in preparation for review in quarter 3.





## People, Partnerships and Engagement

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



During quarter 3 we are aiming to develop a strategy for community engagement - linked to Community Focused Schools.

Page 972

The Education Directorate recognises the importance of **effective partnership working** in maximising opportunities to support children, young people and the wider community.

It is key to the vision for the directorate:

*Empowering our communities to be ambitious, ethically-informed Life-long learners who lead full and healthy lives*

Some examples of **existing partnership working** are **demonstrated by the following icons** shown throughout the report and examples include:-



Integrated working with all other directorates within the council / a focus on the education of children looked after with Social Services and preventative services / A focus on the development of Educational facilities ensuring that they are fit for the future with the Environment Directorate, such as HIVE and sustainable communities for learning.



Collaborative working with partners such as the Education Achievement Service / Aneurin leisure trust / Health Board - school place planning .

# Case Study - Education Minister visits Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

Welsh Minister for Education & the Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles MS, visits Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg to see remodelling work funded by Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, creating both internal and external spaces to improve the teaching and learning environment.

The Minister said: "Well-designed buildings and pleasant surroundings are so important to supporting learners and staff, delivering high standards and aspirations for all. I want our schools to be inspiring places to learn and to teach, for our pupils to thrive, and Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg shows how this can be done."

Page 973



Being creative in the media suite



Quiet time in the library



Enjoying the outside space

# Case Study - Glyncoed Primary New Build

Works are progressing well on the new build to provide a 360 place primary school and separate childcare facility in Ebbw Vale. There are also close links with the Hive (STEM) Project in Blaenau Gwent. A project team continue to meet regularly. Good progress has been made by Morgan Sindall, the contractor and works on the school are half way completed with occupation is scheduled for April 2024.



Cymunedau **Dysgu** Cynaliadwy   
Sustainable Communities for **Learning**



# Case Study - Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM)

## Secondary Schools in Blaenau Gwent have received grant funding of over £66,000 from the Welsh Government's Tech Valleys programme to purchase new equipment to enhance the teaching of science, technology, engineering and maths.

Twenty schools across Blaenau Gwent and three across Merthyr successfully bid for Welsh Government funding of up to £3,000. The successful applications were awarded funding for a range of equipment from autoclaves and Raspberry Pi computers to on-line post-mortem sessions and chocolate 3-D printers all designed to help bring authentic work experiences into the classroom. The applications were judged by a panel which included representatives from the Education Advisory Service (EAS), Industry Wales, the Tech Valleys STEM Facilitation Co-ordinator and Welsh Government.



These grants to schools are part of the much wider Tech Valleys STEM Facilitation activity, a **commitment of £570,000 over four years by the Welsh Government**. The aim of the project is to increase the uptake of STEM GCSEs at Key Stage 3 and maintain that interest at Key Stage 4.

## Blaenau Gwent Council – STEM Facilitation Project has reached the final of the Wales STEM Awards 2023

and has been named as one of the 55 companies and individuals shortlisted in the Awards, which is sponsored by Cardiff Metropolitan University. The Wales STEM Awards is back for the third time to shine a spotlight on the organisations and individuals raising the profile of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Wales. All finalists from across a total of 13 categories will now be considered by an industry-leading panel of judges, with the winners being announced at the awards ceremony at the Mercure Holland House Hotel on **13th October**.

**Councillor John C Morgan, Cabinet Member for Place and Regeneration and Economic Development said:**

### Curriculum Reform -

**STEM** The focus going forward is at a strategic school level for Recovery and Renewal, with an emphasis on Curriculum Reform e.g. STEM activity.

### Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, and

STEM Schools focus on these subjects to help our nation's youth gain the skills required to succeed in today's challenging world.



# Case Study - Blaina school becomes first Prem Aware School in Wales

The Smallest Things charity has presented Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary School with their Prem Aware Award! By completing additional training and steps to become a Prem Aware School teaching staff at Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary will have a better understanding of the learning needs some children born prematurely may have, will be able to identify needs earlier, and will be able to provide timely and targeted support.



## **Lauren Cairns, Headteacher, at Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary said:**

*"Having taken the pledge earlier this year, we are ever so proud at Coed-y-Garn to become the first school in Wales to achieve The Smallest Things Prem Aware Award. As a school, we are committed to improving wellbeing and supporting learners, and having an improved understanding of the impact that being born prematurely can have on an individual will be beneficial in supporting our learners and our families."*

## **Congratulating the steps taken by Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary School, Catriona Ogilvy, Founder and Chair of The Smallest Things said:**

*"The Smallest Things is delighted that Ysgol Gynradd Coed-y-Garn Primary School has joined our growing list of Prem Aware schools across the UK. In doing so they have shown their commitment to meeting the needs some pupils born premature may have. With an average of two to three children in every classroom being born prematurely, we know that teachers can play a crucial role in supporting and improving the long term outcomes for this cohort of children. Having trained teachers who know what to look out for and how to help pupils born prematurely will have such a positive impact on the children's educational journeys."*

The Smallest Things Prem Aware Award scheme promotes use of the 'Preterm Birth Information for Educational Professionals', a free online training resource developed by Professor Samantha Johnson and her colleagues in the PRISM (Premature Infants' Skills in Mathematics) Study Team. The online resource outlines the impact premature birth can have on a child's development and learning, and offers practical ways to support children born prematurely at school.

While pupils born extremely prematurely (before 28 weeks' gestation) are most likely to need extra support,



# Case Study - Telephony in Blaenau Gwent Schools and the wider Council

In line with the Digital Teams review of telephony across the council, Education are collaborating with the team to review and provide telephony solutions for schools. This is one of the key projects of the Council's Digital Programme which contributes to the Bridging the Gap programme in aiming to reduce our Third Party Spend and maximising the use of core digital systems. Education's involvement is vital in this project in order to engage and co-ordinate with schools. It has already been established that 9 schools are using the current corporate telephony provider (Avaya).



Avaya platform is at "End of Life", and the Council are due to cease the contract. In addition, the PSTN analogue lines are due to be switched off nationwide in December 2025. A number of schools are also experiencing severe issues with alternative providers and there is a risk to safeguarding should these systems fail. Microsoft Teams telephony has been identified as the corporate solution, and to mitigate the potential risks and issues that schools are facing, there are aspirations to move all schools to Teams telephony.

Education recently met with Head teachers to understand current systems, individual requirements, and work towards a "one council approach" for telephony. Including schools in this corporate approach will ensure that communications are modern and fit for purpose. It will enable us to better manage the telephony estate, licenses and call plans. It will help deliver services in the most effective way. A single solution will reduce inefficiencies, duplication, and licence costs.

Page 977



Education has identified two schools who will pilot the Teams telephony product in the Autumn 2023 term. These schools have been chosen based on the level of risk that their current telephony poses. Following this pilot, all other schools will be given the opportunity to move to Teams telephony by the end of the Autumn term/ Early Spring 2024 term.



**The Education Directorate continue to work with partners, both internal and external in order to support our pupils development.**



# Case Study - Period Equity work in Blaenau Gwent

Blaenau Gwent Council is working with schools and a range of local partners to ensure that no female, whatever their age, is disadvantaged by not having access to period products and has made sure these are now readily and freely available in over 100 education and community settings.

The Welsh Minister for Social Justice Jane Hutt MS has visited Blaenau Gwent to see the pioneering work in period equity and dignity which is being delivered across the county borough, and met with residents and school pupils who have benefitted from the scheme.



Some highlights of the visit

## The Council's Cabinet Member for People & Education, Cllr Sue Edmunds says:

"We're immensely proud of the work going on here in Blaenau Gwent to tackle period poverty and promote period dignity, so it was wonderful to have Jane Hutt MS visit to find out more about our approach to this important issue. We have a very enthusiastic project team with a range of partners who are all fully committed to making sure that no female should be at a disadvantage when it comes to their period. Not only are we committed to making sure products are available, but we are also working with all our partners to break down the stigma around periods. Periods are normal and we want people not to be embarrassed to request products."



#BalchOrMislif  
llyw.cymru/balchormislif

#PeriodProudWales  
gov.wales/periodproud

# Case Study - New Welsh Medium school, Tredegar



Blaenau Gwent Council is building a new 210 place Welsh Medium Primary School, inclusive of a Welsh-medium childcare provision, at Chartist Way, Sirhowy Tredegar. The Council has secured £13.4million of capital funding via the Welsh Government Welsh Medium Capital Grant and Childcare Capital Grant schemes to progress with the school build and will also incorporate a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), a forest play area, a growing orchard and wild-flower meadows. The school will also be climate conscious with solar panels and electric vehicle charging points. A play area on the site will also be relocated as part of the project on the same site and be furnished with new play equipment.

The project has progressed to full planning and appointment of contractor in July 2023. The works on site are commencing September 2023 with the new park being erected outside the school boundary, then the main contractor will start the school build November 2023 with completion being expected early 2025.

In the interim period temporary accommodation was opened in September 23 at Bedwellty House, for pupils of Nursery and Reception age signed up for the new school , so that they can start this academic year.

There are currently 6 pupils that started in September rising to 9 in January 2024.



Ensure effective self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management



## Future Direction and areas that we feel we need to focus upon going forward

As stated at the beginning of this report our overall aim is to support delivery of our corporate objectives. Listed below are some of the areas we recognise that we need to continue to focus on improving. We recognise that even the achievements are not yet completed but remain areas for progress to be maintained and improved upon where possible.

As a council we are looking to be '**An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Further engagement and promotion to increase the 'on time' admission applications;
- Monitor Home to school transport funding issues;
- Secure external funding for the future delivery of services;
- Ensure that our vision and strategic aims for education are fully understood by other officers, elected members, school staff and external partners;
- Develop a strategy for community engagement, linked to community focussed schools;
- Progress analysis of Rising 3 funding impact;
- Develop a strategic plan for partnership working;
- Build on the audit of our professional learning across service areas to promote best opportunities for our children and young people;
- Develop clear timelines, related actions and measurable success criteria to support delivery of the new vision and business plans;
- Develop a suitable vision and strategy for the future provision of ALN; and
- Continue to improve the quality of self-evaluation, strategic planning and performance management.





## Future Direction and areas that we feel we need to focus upon going forward (continued)

As a council we are looking to '**Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report that have been delivered by the Education Directorate over this past year to support delivery of this corporate objective, we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Further analysis of reasons for decline in attendance and exclusion and mitigating actions put in place;
- Monitor NEET figures and ensure new systems and processes put in place are effective;
- Continue to monitor and improve on attainment levels;
- Focus on pupil integration back into mainstream and promotion of inclusion;
- Explore options for further engagement and promotion to increase the number of in-time pupil school applications;
- Higher levels of language acquisition and reading across the board, but particularly in our very young children in early years; and
- Focus on improving the pace of change for Schools Causing Concern (SCC) improvement journeys.





As a council we are looking to '**Empower and support communities to be safe, independent and resilient**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report that have been delivered by the Education Directorate over this past year to support delivery of this corporate objective, we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Continue to closely monitor safeguarding and use data more effectively to inform long term planning;
- Monitor timeliness and access to mental health provision along with new referral numbers;
- Monitor numbers of referrals to vulnerable learners provision; and
- Continue to improve the reach of 11-25 year olds supported by Youth and increase the number for which well-being improvements are made.



As a council we are looking to '**Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities**'. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following are areas that need further improvement:-

- Continue to effectively deliver sustainable communities for learning which are environmentally friendly;
- Further encourage nature friendly management on school grounds;
- Develop a schools Biodiversity policy and support with the integration; and
- Continue to engage all young people with the environment.

# Agenda Item 15

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 06.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**  
Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**  
Report Subject: **Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cabinet Member – People & Education – Cllr Sue Edmunds**  
Report Submitted by: **Joanne Watts – Service Manager Education Transformation**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
14.11.2023	x	07.02.24			30.01.24	21.02.24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme (formerly 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools) and agree the proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government as part of the rolling programme requirements.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 When the Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century School programme was agreed by Welsh Government (WG) in February 2019 for the period 2019/20 to 2025/26, a £19.6million programme was agreed for investment throughout the Blaenau Gwent school estate. The general Welsh Government intervention rate for Band B is a 65/35 split, in favour of Local Authorities. The Band B Programme agreed the following projects in line with the investment objectives:

- Continued secondary school re-modelling
- Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment, including the development of a new 360 primary school to replace Glyncoed Primary, which is the only category 'D' building in terms of condition within the county borough
- Remodelling of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg to address ongoing condition and suitability issues

2.2 In January 2022 Welsh Government renamed the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme to the 'Sustainable Communities for Learning (SCfL)' programme, the aim of this was to make a clear statement about their commitment towards the environment, community cohesion, and future generations.

2.3 Lessons learned from Band A, the transition into the Band B programme and post pandemic issues highlighted to Welsh Government the complexity and protracted nature associated with the delivery of a number of projects through the 'fixed' programme timelines and cost envelopes. This approach posed challenges for both the Welsh Government and Local Authorities in the management and delivery of strategic infrastructure investment for the education estate in Wales.

2.4 In November 2022 the Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced that the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme would now transition away from fixed bands of funding to a more agile rolling programme (**see Appendix 1**). With the expectation that Local Authorities would review and resubmit their new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) Programme by March 2024, in line with the following investment objectives:

- Transforming learning environments and learner experience
- Meeting demand for school places
- Improving condition and suitability of the education estate
- Developing sustainable learning environments
- Supporting the community

2.5 The expectation of projects submitted under the rolling programme are as follows:  
 Projects in years 1-3 are expected to reach full business case within the first 3 years  
 Projects in years 4-6 are being developed and going through statutory consultation  
 Projects in years 7-9 are pipeline projects

Local Authorities will then be expected to review their rolling programme at least every 3 years thereafter

2.6 The proposed Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme (**Appendix 2**) to be submitted with the Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) is summarised below:

**Years 1-3 (2024/25 – 2026/27)**

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
<b>Currently Delivering</b>		
Glyncoed Primary School & Welsh Medium Childcare Facility - New Build	£13.5m (BG match funding £3.9m)	Jointly funded Sustainable Communities for Learning & Childcare project Full Business Case Approved as part of Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment in February 2021 Contractor appointed December 2022 Scheduled for completion May 2024
Rhos y Fedwen Primary School remodelling of foundation phase, small extension with 3G pitch	£1m (BG match funding £350,000)	Full Business Case Approved Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment February 2021 Scheduled for completion June 2024
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling and development of a Resource Base	£1m (BG match funding £350,000)	Business Case approved November 2020 Project completed Summer period 2022 Ministerial opening 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
New Welsh Medium Seedling School Chartist Way - New build	£13.5m (100% WG funding)	100% WM Grant Full business case approved October 2018, delays in appointing a contractor as a result of the pandemic and market forces Contractor appointed July 2023, works have commenced on site Scheduled completion date May 2025



<b>Projects rolled over from Band B/New</b>		
<b>School</b>	<b>Anticipated Cost</b>	<b>Rationale / Current Status</b>
Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community – Secondary Phase Extension	£5.0m	A capacity review and accommodation audit highlighted that the internal footprint of the school could no longer accommodate the numbers of pupils it was built for. The school has been experiencing significant sufficiency issues since Jan 2022 Planning approval submitted in July 2023 Full business case to be submitted to WG April 2024
Tredegear comprehensive School – Extension (Subject to planning approval)	£3-£4m	A project brief is being developed with the school; this is being planned in line with anticipated sufficiency issues for September 2026 Business Case to be submitted to WG May 2024
Pen y Cwm Special School	£8-£15m	Currently undertaking an options appraisal and a forecast demand analysis to inform a business case to Welsh Government. Outline Business Case to be submitted to Welsh Government Summer 2024

#### **Years 4-6 (2027/28 – 2029/30)**

<b>School</b>	<b>Anticipated Cost</b>	<b>Rationale / Current Status</b>
Welsh Medium Primary Development	TBD	Commitment given in Blaenau Gwent's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to undertake a feasibility study once the seedling provision in Chartist Way Tredegear is opened for 3-4 years to determine if a further welsh medium provision is required
Cwm Primary School Remodelling	TBD	Rolled over from Band B Low Condition and Suitability
Faith Based School – New build potential 1 school to replace 3 schools	TBD	Formal consultation required 85% funding intervention rate, 15% (Diocese could contribute to this) Initial discussions have taken place with Diocese
WM Secondary Planning	TBD	Due to the development of a Seedling school in Torfaen, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw will no longer be able to accommodate Blaenau Gwent Learners from September 2028/2029, currently discussing on a Regional basis with Merthyr, Powys and Monmouthshire to determine a solution
Brynmawr Foundation School	TBD	Currently the lowest condition and suitability Secondary school. School not suitable for Secondary School remodelling, phased or full replacement needed. Site access issues has been the immediate priority, further discussions to resume with the school and technical colleagues in the Spring term

### Years 7-9 (2030/31 -2032/33)

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Replacement Primary School	TBD	To be determined subject to school condition and suitability assessments, likely to be in Tredegar area
Brynmawr Foundation School	TBD	Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also
WM Secondary Planning	TBD	Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also

### 3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The People Scrutiny Committee considered and supported Option 1 on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### 3.2 **Option 1:** (Preferred option)

Cabinet considers and approves the Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government in March 24 (**Appendix 2**).

#### **Option 2:** (Not Preferred option)

Cabinet considers the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government in March 24 (**Appendix 2**) and provides any comments or amendments to be incorporated 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 Education is a strategic priority for the Council and key to achieving the outcomes within the Council's Corporate Plan. the Sustainable Communities learning Programme (Formerly 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools) is an essential component to support Education in ensuring there is improved: standards, access to education, education facilities throughout the school estate.

### 5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 Lessons learned from Band A, the transition into the Band B programme and post pandemic cost escalation highlighted to Welsh Government the issues associated with the delivery of a number of projects through the 'fixed' programme timelines and cost envelopes. Welsh Government have therefore introduced the rolling programme to allow both Local Authorities and Welsh Government to plan more effectively and in line with demands, ensuring that funding is available to delivery partners when required.

5.1.2 When the Band B 21<sup>st</sup> Century School programme was agreed by Welsh Government (WG) in February 2019, £19.6million of funding was) awarded, with the Council's 35% contribution of £6.86million being secured and approved via the Council's Capital Programme. This funding is allocated in line with the programme identified in 2.6 as and when business cases are approved by Welsh Government.

5.1.3 The establishment of the Sustainable Communities for Learning rolling programme will inform the Blaenau Gwent's Capital Programme Planning and resourcing requirements

going forward, should these proposals be agreed, they will form part of the review and update of the capital programme during 2024/25.

5.1.4 The Welsh Medium Seedling Project has received 100% funding from Welsh Government and is currently estimated to be £13.5million and has been fully approved by the Minister. Other intervention rates associated with the programme are as follows:

	%
Community, voluntary controlled and foundation schools	65
Voluntary aided schools of religious character	85
Special schools and pupil referral units	75

## 5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

The historical high-level risks associated with programme in recent years has always been associated with the impact of the cost escalation resulting in resourcing and programming implications. The establishment of a rolling programme will largely mitigate this and allow both Welsh Government and Local Authorities to plan more effectively. In addition, project Groups are established for all live projects monitoring development, delivery and associated requirements. Programme Board monitor programme delivery, with a core project team (Education, Finance and Community Services) monitoring and reviewing programme resourcing, progress, timelines and financial profiles.

There are significant financial pressures on Welsh Government and Local Authorities going forward, the provisional settlement indicated general capital funding will be maintained at current levels for 2024/25. Whilst there are no indications at the moment, there is a risk that capital grant funding, could be significantly reduced going forward. The establishment of the rolling programme by Welsh Government aims to mitigate this as it will allow Welsh Government and Local Authorities to plan more effectively. In addition the Local Authority meets with Welsh Government on a quarterly basis to discuss project progress and requirements going forward.

## 5.3 Legal

The Local Authority has a duty under the School's Organisation Code v2 2018 to ensure 'it has the right schools in the right place at the right time'. There are no direct legal implications associated with this report, other than the requirement for the Local Authority to follow the statutory processes set out within the Welsh Government School Organisation Code.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no direct human resource implications associated with the report. The Education Transformation & Technical Services teams are small teams across the Council, resourcing is monitored and reviewed at both a programme and project level and planned in line with programme delivery.

## 5.5 Health and Safety

There are no direct health and safety implications associated with this report, all projects in the rolling programme are designed in line with health and safety regulations.

## 6. Supporting Evidence

## 6.1 Performance Information and Data

- 6.1.1 Market forces associated with the pandemic has caused resource and programming issues of the Band B programme. Welsh Government has recognised this as a national issue and has introduced the Sustainable Communities for Learning rolling programme to allow Local Authorities and Welsh Government to plan more effectively
- 6.1.2 Two business cases have been agreed under the Band B programme with projects either being completed or in the process of delivery
- 6.1.3 In December 2022 the Welsh Government announced the extension of the Community Focussed Schools initiative, planning for further capital investment over the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Local Authority were invited to submit expressions of interest (EOI) which would ‘invest in the learning environment of Community Focused Schools, co-locating key services, and securing stronger engagement with parents and carers outside traditional hours.’ The EOI’s were to demonstrate support for the following objectives:
- Family Engagement – whereby schools engage well with families and involve parents/carers in supporting their children’s learning in both English and Welsh language contexts.
  - Community Engagement – where the facilities of the school are used as the basis for family, adult and community learning and a range of community activities.
  - Multi-Agency Engagement – working in close partnership with universal parenting and early intervention services, like Families First. Co-location of support services, providing a single point of contact, can help ensure nobody gets left behind.

As a result, the Local Authority have been successful in securing agreement for the following projects:

School	Funding	Rationale / Current Status
<b>CFS 2023 – 2025 funding</b>		
Cwm YC Remodelling	£200,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Coed y Garn – Development of 2 Community Rooms, Remodelling & Development of Outdoor provision	£350,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Brynmawr Foundation – Development of Community Focused Home Economic area	£550,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
Sofrydd Primary – development of a community room and the development of the outdoor area	£450,000	Project proforma approved April 2023
<b>Projects still under consideration by Welsh Government</b>		
Abertillery Learning Community & Abertillery Youth Centre, remodelling to develop community focussed schools facilities	£1,100,000	Awaiting approval from WG to progress to full business case stage, if agreed business case to be submitted in Spring term 2024

## 6.2 Expected outcome for the public.

The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme will contribute to raising the standard of education throughout the school estate, promoting pupil and staff wellbeing and attainment, whilst ensuring fit for purpose teaching and learning environments.

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

The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme contributes heavily to the strategic direction for the school estate across the County Borough. The Education Transformation Programme Board has representation from across all services within the Council. There are also statutory requirements to involve stakeholders in school organisation proposals linked to the WG's School Organisation Code (2018) which is currently being reviewed by WG.

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

The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme is an investment programme that at present spans a nine-year time period, allowing Local Authorities to plan into the longer term.

### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme will take a preventative approach in line with the needs of school staff and learners', placing an emphasis on delivering a school estate that is fit for purpose and contributes to raising educational standards, which is a Council priority.

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

The Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme plays a fundamental part in improving partnership arrangements with the schools and their respective communities e.g. the community focussed school's agenda. A collaborative approach between the Council, schools, staff, pupils, parents and governors, is essential in securing effective delivery which takes account of the needs of end users.

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

The programme is being progressed and managed by a multi-disciplinary team with dedicated officers from key service areas, including (Education, Finance and Community Services).

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

The Council are committed to ensuring that all new schools buildings, major refurbishment and extension projects meet Net Zero Carbon targets. In November 2021, the Education and Welsh Language Minister announced that all new schools and college buildings, major refurbishment and extension projects, will be required to meet Net Zero Carbon targets from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, therefore all projects agreed after this date are designed in line with this objective.

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

An Integrated Impact Assessment is considered for each project individually as part of the business case submission process.

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The Education Directorate has established a Sustainable Communities for Learning board that has a strategic oversight for the programme, in line with the requirements of the Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) good practice guidelines. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme team reports to Education Department Leadership Teams (DLT) and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The People Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet monitor progress via their forward work programmes and Scrutiny are also consultees on any statutory school re-organisation consultation exercises

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Rolling Programme

Appendix 2 – Sustainable Communities Rolling Programme



## Rolling Programme

As approved by the Minister for Education and Welsh Language the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme will now transition away from fixed bands of funding to a more agile rolling programme.

As delivery partners are at differing stages through their existing Band 'B', it is expected that as and when a local authority or college is nearing completion of their Band B programme, that they submit their new Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) which would initiate the start of their rolling programme. At the latest, Delivery Partners must review and resubmit their Programme by March 2024.

This will encourage a smooth transition of each delivery partner's programme as and when the need arises, removing the stop start actions associated with a fixed term investment programme.

A 9 Year Capital Programme, including an indicative funding forecast for the 9 years, is required to be submitted to the Welsh Government for consideration towards providing a commitment and support for first 3 years along with in-principle support for years 4, 5 and 6. Years 7 to 9 will reflect your longer-term project pipeline. If appropriate, Band B projects can be included at the beginning of your 9 Year Capital Programme.

Years	Expectation
-------	-------------

<b>1, 2 and 3</b>	Projects expected to reach Full Business Case within the 3 years
<b>4, 5 and 6</b>	Projects being developed and going through statutory consultation
<b>7,8 and 9</b>	Pipeline Projects

Delivery Partners are required to review their Rolling Programme at least every 3 years, by which time it is expected that years 1, 2 and 3 would comprise those projects which formed years 4, 5 and 6 of the previous revision, subject to those projects remaining a priority for the delivery partner with a further 3 years of pipeline projects added to the 9-year plan. This will focus on a 3-year investment plan and draft budgets, alongside the Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy.

Projects identified for delivery under the Education Mutual Investment Model (MIM) delivery framework will continue to be classified as Band B projects.

All submitted Business Cases must be underpinned by a Strategic Outline Programme (SOP), which provides an overarching view of individual local authority / further education institution strategies. Individual projects can then be approved subject to receipt of a satisfactory Business Case.

Current intervention rates would be retained to support the deliverability and affordability of delivery partners' individual programmes.

Further information and guidance will be issued and published on our web site in the coming weeks.

Sustainable Communities for Learning Team  
 Education Directorate  
 Welsh Government



## Appendix 2 - Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme, Community Focused Schools and ALN projects

Year 1-3 (2024/2025/2026)

Projects in years 1-3 are expected to reach full business case within the first 3 years

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
<b>Currently Delivering</b>		
Glyncoed Primary School & Welsh Medium Childcare Facility - New Build	£13.5m	Full Business Case Approved Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment February 2021 Contractor appointed Scheduled for completion May 2024 Jointly funded by Sustainable Communities for Learning programme & WG Childcare Grant
Rhos y Fedwen Primary School Remodelling and small extension with 3G pitch	£1m	Full Business Case Approved Ebbw Fawr Primary Redevelopment February 2021 Scheduled for completion June 2024
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling and development of a Resource Base	£1m	Business Case approved November 2020 Project completed Autumn period 2022 Ministerial opening June 2023
Welsh Medium Chartist Way New build	£13.5m	100% WM Grant Full business case approved October 2018, delays in appointing a contractor as a result of the pandemic and market forces Contractor appointed July 2023, Drilling and Grouting works have commenced on site Scheduled completion date May 2025
<b>Projects moved over from Band B to the rolling programme</b>		
School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community – Secondary Phase Extension	£5m	As a result of issues raised by the school in January 2022 a capacity review was undertaken. The accommodation audit based on the capacity and admission number the school were adhering highlighted that the internal footprint of the school could no longer accommodate the numbers of pupils it was built for. Projections based on the actual footprint of the school showed that the school have been experiencing sufficiency issues since January 2022. This is in part related to the development of an ALN provision at the school in 2021 Full business case to be submitted to WG April 2024 Contractor appointment Summer 2024
Tredegar comprehensive School Extension	TBD	A project brief is being developed with the school in relation to an extension to the building (Subject to planning approval), this is being planned in line with anticipated sufficiency issues for September 2026 Business Case to be submitted to WG May 2024
Pen y Cwm Special School/ Ebbw Fawr Primary	£15m	Working with the school to develop offices into classrooms, to re-open the Bistro area and develop an outdoor classroom to facilitate learning and to develop 3 additional a sensory areas. In terms of longer term, planning currently looking at an options appraisal and a forecast demand analysis going forward to formulate a business case to Welsh Government Outline Business Case to Welsh Government - Summer 2024

**Year 4-6 (2027/2028/2029)**

Projects in years 4-6 are being developed and going through statutory consultation

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Welsh Medium Primary Development	TBD	Commitment given in Blaenau Gwent's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to undertake a feasibility study once the Seedling provision in Chartist Way Tredegar is opened for 3-4 years to determine if a further provision is required Potential for 100% WM funding if another Welsh Medium Capital round is opened by Welsh Government Welsh Government will be monitoring surplus place figures, depending on the capital funding available their focus could become - transferring schools from English medium to Welsh medium or having a dual stream school
Cwm Primary School Refurbishment	TBD	Rolled over from Band B Low Condition and Suitability
Faith Based – Potential 1 school to replace 3 schools	TBD	Formal consultation required 85% funding intervention rate, 15% Initial discussion with Diocese Diocese could contribute towards the 15%
WM Secondary Planning		Due to the development of a Seedling school in Torfaen, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw will no longer be able to accommodate Blaenau Gwent Learners from September 2028, currently discussing on a Regional basis with Merthyr, Powys Monmouthshire etc to determine a regional solution Welsh Government will be monitoring surplus place figures, depending on the capital funding available their focus could become - transferring schools from English medium to Welsh medium or having dual stream schools
Brynmawr Foundation School		Currently the lowest condition and suitability Secondary school. School not suitable for Secondary School remodelling, phased or full replacement needed Site access issues has been the immediate priority, further discussions to resume with the school and Technical colleagues in the Spring term

**Year 7-9 (2029/2030/2031)**

Projects in years 7-9 are pipeline projects

School	Anticipated Cost	Rationale / Current Status
Replacement Primary School	TBD	To be determined subject to school condition and suitability assessments, likely to be in Tredegar area
Brynmawr Foundation School	TBD	Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also
WM Secondary Planning		Depending on the outcome in years 4-6 may need to feature in years 7-9 also

# Agenda Item 16

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 06.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

Report Subject: **Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2023**

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

Report Submitted by: **Luisa Munro-Morris, Corporate Director of Education (Interim)**

Report Written by: **Debbie Hartevelde, Managing Director, EAS**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
10.01.24	11.01.24	07.02.24			30.01.24	21.02.24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides members with final outcome data for Secondary schools within the Local Authority for 2022-2023 (Summer 2023).

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 This year, for the first time since 2019, the Welsh Government are producing Key Stage 4 All Wales Core Data Sets (AWCDS) at individual school level.

2.2 Each of the last 4 years used essentially different methods for determining grades, so none are directly comparable. In 2023 national outcomes are lower than 2022, 2021 and 2020, but not as low as 2019.

2.3 Provisional outcomes were available to schools, LAs and consortia in Provisional form in mid-November 2023 (via Data Exchange Wales (DEWi)). These were then used to contribute to a school level checking process, so any errors could be addressed, before final versions were published on 20 December 2023. This report uses the final versions.

### Welsh Government published measures for 2023

2.4 These include the following points-based measures:

- The Capped 9 measure
- Literacy measure (best of Language / Literature)
- Numeracy measure (best of mathematics / numeracy)
- Science measure (best of science)
- Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure

2.5 In addition to the above 'points based' measures the percentage of learners achieving 5 or more A\*-A and percentage of learners achieving No Qualifications are also included.

2.6 As well as comparisons of All Pupils, comparisons are also made Male / Female and FSM / non-FSM for each of the indicators, but only Capped 9 comparisons are included in this report at LA level.

2.7 In terms of analysis the two main comparisons are the Welsh Government line of modelled outcomes, and a comparison with a 'family' of similar schools.

### **Families**

2.8 Schools face different challenges based on their context. The AWCDs contains comparative outcomes against similar schools – known as 'Families'. Families (of 9-10 schools) have been created by grouping on size and linguistic delivery and then ordering schools according to the values of an index of 'challenge', calculated as follows:

- 50% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- 30% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who live in an area classed as in the 20% most deprived parts of Wales using the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age subject to an Individual Development Plan (IDP) or with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who are either new to the English language (or Welsh where relevant), at an early acquisition stage or developing competence.

2.9 A three-year average of data from PLASC 2021-2023 is used.

2.10 For 2023 there are 6 Welsh medium families, numbered from 1 (the most disadvantaged) to 5 (the least disadvantaged). There are 15 English medium families numbered from 7 (the most disadvantaged) to 21 (the least disadvantaged).

## 2.11 Families with Blaenau Gwent Schools (2023)

Moved to a MORE disadvantaged Family (0 Schools)
Moved to a LESS disadvantaged Family (1 School)
14 English Medium families (7-21)

School Name	Family	Position*
St Teilo's C-in-W High School	010	1
Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School		2
Cefn Hengoed		3
Abertillery Learning Community		4
St Julian's School		5
Bedwas High School		6
Cwmbran High School		7
Ysgol Nantgwyn		8
Brynmawr Foundation School		9
BISHOP GORE SCHOOL		10
St Cenydd School	011	1
Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi		2
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community		3
MORRISTON COMPREHENSIVE		4
Hawthorn High School		5
BIRCHGROVE		6
Tonyrefail Community School		7
Tredegar Comprehensive School		8
Ysgol Cwm Brombil		9
Rhosnesni High School		10

\*This is the position of the school in the family in terms of social deprivation, not the position of the school in terms of how well they have achieved at KS4, when compared to other families.

2.12 The 4 Blaenau Gwent schools with secondary provisions are in families 10 and 11, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> most socio-economically disadvantaged families of the 15 English medium families.

### 3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The People Scrutiny Committee considered and supported Option 1 on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### 3.2 Option 1:

For members to receive the report for information.

#### 3.3 Option 2:

For members to consider the information and offer further comment on the outcomes.

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

##### 4.1 **Statutory Responsibility**

4.1.1 The Local Authority is required to monitor the standards of educations within its schools.

##### 4.1.2 **Corporate Improvement Plan**

###### **Education Aims**

- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
- Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
- An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
- Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient.

##### 4.1.3 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

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

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

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

There are no budgetary implications for either option.

##### 5.2 ***Risks including Mitigating Actions***

The risks related to future outcomes for at school level being below families and the Welsh Government modelled expectations, meaning that individual learners in Blaenau-Gwent do not achieve their full potential.

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

None for this report.

##### 5.5 ***Human Resources***

None for this report.

##### 5.6 ***Health and Safety***

There are no health and safety implications from this report.

## 6. Supporting Evidence

### 6.1 Capped 9 – all pupils – compared with the family average

6.1.1 The table below shows the Capped 9 performance of all learners compared with their individual family. Two schools are above their family, and two below, one significantly so.

School Name	Capped 9	Family Capped 9	Capped 9 - School-Family difference
Blaenau Gwent School	370.9	353.8	17.1
Blaenau Gwent School	366.7	353.4	13.2
Blaenau Gwent School	334.7	353.8	-19.1
Blaenau Gwent School	305.9	353.4	-47.6

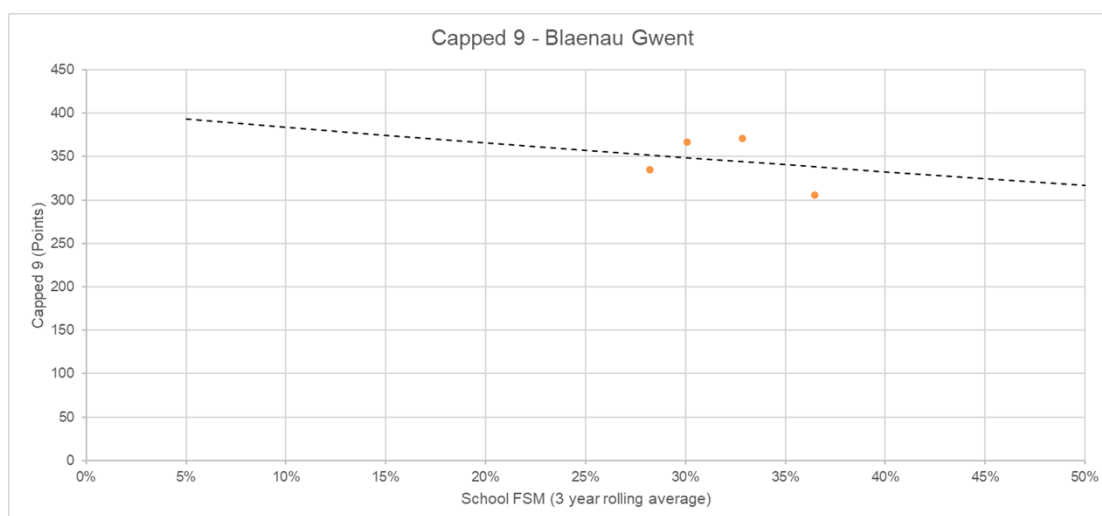
6.1.2 For all GCSE subjects the points difference between every grade is 6 points. So, for example a B is worth 6 more points than a C.

6.1.3 This means that for the Capped 9, a difference of 54 points indicates that on average, every learner in a school is performing above or below the family by a whole GCSE grade in every subject. (6 points x 9 subjects=54 points).

6.1.4 Please note that the indicative bars on the right for this table and all below are adjusted to the minimum (negative) and maximum (positive) values for each table individually and automatically. Therefore, a bar '47.6 points' long will not be consistent across each chart.

### Capped 9 – all pupils – compared with WG 'Modelled Outcome' line

6.1.5 The chart below does not compare with the family, but rather the Welsh Government 'Modelled outcome'.



6.1.6 Two schools in Blaenau Gwent are above the modelled outcome line and two below.

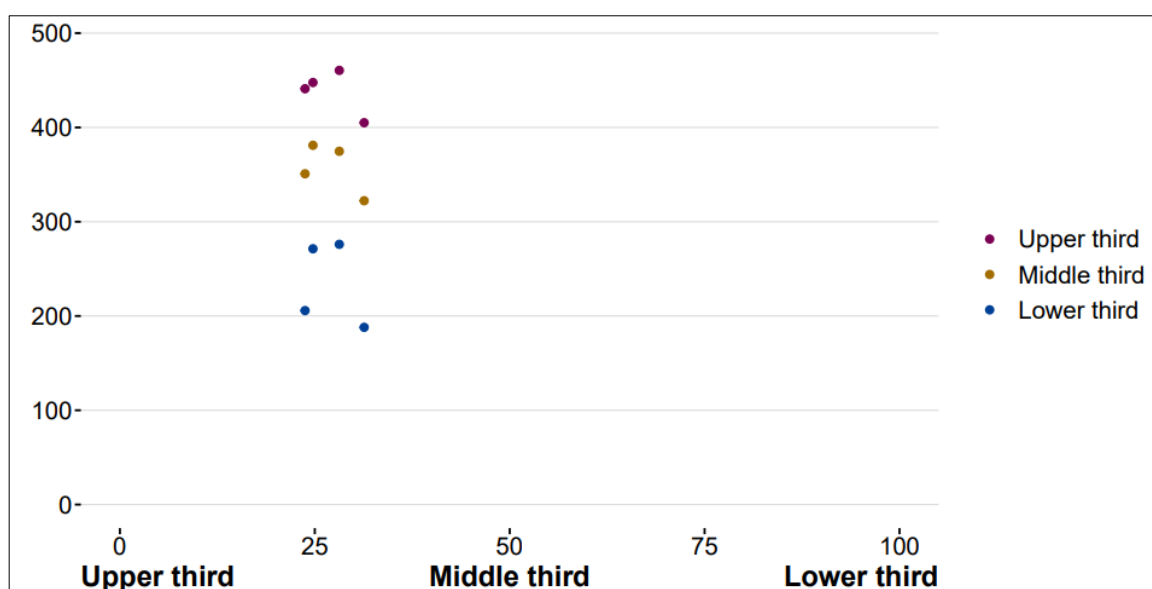
## Capped 9 – Comparison by ‘Thirds’ with WG ‘Modelled Outcome’ line

6.1.7 The chart below groups learners in each individual school into ‘thirds. For example, if 120 learners in a cohort, they would be split into three groups of 40 by their Capped 9 scores. Three averages would then be calculated for each of these groups. The table below gives the average of each third.

School Name	Upper Third			Middle Third			Lower Third		
	Achieve <sup>d</sup>	Modelle <sup>d</sup>	+/-	Achieve <sup>d</sup>	Modelle <sup>d</sup>	+/-	Achieve <sup>d</sup>	Modelle <sup>d</sup>	+/-
Blaenau Gwent School	461	446	15	375	372	3	276	239	37
Blaenau Gwent School	448	451	-3	381	376	5	271	246	25
Blaenau Gwent School	441	452	-11	351	377	-26	206	248	-43
Blaenau Gwent School	405	442	-37	322	368	-45	188	232	-44

6.1.8 For the highest achieving third, one school is above expectation, one in-line, but two below, one significantly so. For the middle third two schools are in-line, but two below, both significantly so. There are however two positive differentials for the lowest thirds, which are significant.

6.1.9 The same data represented around 3 regression lines based on eligibility. This shows the relatively low level of variance for Blaenau Gwent in the outcomes for each school in each third.



## Literacy Measure – compared with the Family average

6.1.10 To put these charts in perspective a difference of +/- 6 points is the equivalent of a GCSE grade difference for every learner. +/- 3 points would therefore be a half a grade difference.



School Name	Literacy Measure	Literacy Measure - Family	Literacy Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	40.4	38.2	2.2
Blaenau Gwent School	40.2	38.3	1.9
Blaenau Gwent School	39.2	38.2	1.0
Blaenau Gwent School	31.6	38.3	-6.7

6.1.11 Three schools are above the family average for the literacy measure, but one school is significantly below, by over a GCSE grade per learner.

6.1.12 The table below gives the individual contribution of each of the GCSEs that contribute to this measure.

School Name	English Language	English Literature
Blaenau Gwent School	34.7	39.8
Blaenau Gwent School	37.9	37.4
Blaenau Gwent School	36.6	39.0
Blaenau Gwent School	30.4	31.5

6.1.13 Three schools have a higher contribution made by literature rather than language.

#### **Numeracy Measure – compared with the Family average**

School Name	Numeracy Measure	Numeracy Measure - Family	Numeracy Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	34.0	31.1	2.9
Blaenau Gwent School	31.6	31.1	0.5
Blaenau Gwent School	32.8	32.4	0.3
Blaenau Gwent School	22.5	32.4	-10.0

6.1.14 For the numeracy measure two schools are in line with the family average, one above (by an average of half a grade), but one significant below the family average, by over 1.5 grades per learner.

6.1.15 The differences between the individual numeracy GCSE and mathematics GCSE are relatively small for each school, except one school where the difference is more than a grade per learners. Both are relatively lower than similar schools.

School Name	Numeracy	Mathematics
Blaenau Gwent School	34.0	36.0
Blaenau Gwent School	31.6	33.0
Blaenau Gwent School	32.8	34.7
Blaenau Gwent School	22.5	29.3

### Science Measure – compared with the Family average

School Name	Science Measure	Science Measure - Family	Science Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	37.9	33.7	4.2
Blaenau Gwent School	36.2	36.0	0.2
Blaenau Gwent School	33.4	33.7	-0.3
Blaenau Gwent School	28.7	36.0	-7.3

- 6.1.16 Two schools are approximately in line with families, with one above, by approximately half a GCSE grade per learner and one below, by over a whole GCSE grade per learner.

### Welsh Baccalaureate Measure – compared with the Family average

- 6.1.17 It is this measure which has the greatest variance, with some family averages across Wales particularly low.

School Name	Welsh Bacc. Measure	Welsh Bacc. Measure - Family	Welsh Bacc. Measure - Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	32.0	25.5	6.5
Blaenau Gwent School	39.3	36.1	3.2
Blaenau Gwent School	35.9	36.1	-0.2
Blaenau Gwent School	18.0	25.5	-7.6

- 6.1.18 Two schools are approximately in line with family averages, with these averages being as expected. For the remaining schools, their family comparators are both low, with one being well above and then one well below those 'low' averages.

### No Qualifications – compared with the Family average

- 6.1.19 Please note the reversed colour coding on the bars to indicate that a negative difference from the family is positive.
- 6.1.20

School Name	No Qualifications (%)	No Qualificaitons (%) Family	No Qualificaitons (%) Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.4	-0.4
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.4	-0.4
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blaenau Gwent School	0.0	0.0	0.0

- 6.1.21 All 4 schools in Blaenau Gwent have no learners leaving without a qualification. The reason for the positive difference compared with the family is that the family average for their family is 0.4 (it is the same family for both schools).

### 5+ A\*-A – compared with the Family average

School Name	5+ A*-A (%)	5+ A*-A (%) Family	5+ A*-A (%) Difference
Blaenau Gwent School	16.9	13.5	3.4
Blaenau Gwent School	15.3	13.5	1.8
Blaenau Gwent School	14.7	15.0	-0.2
Blaenau Gwent School	6.3	15.0	-8.7

- 6.1.22 Two schools 5+ A\*-A percentage are in line with the family, with one above. One school's rate is less than half that of the family average. This will be linked to the lower relative performance of the Upper Third of learners on the capped 9 for this school.

### Local Authority Aggregate Data

#### Key measures – Compared with Wales

- 6.1.23 Please note that these measures are not contextualised but compare with the Wales average.

Title	2023 - Blaenau Gwent	2023 - Wales
Capped 9 points score (interim)	340.2	358.1
WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator – points score	31.9	31.6
Literacy indicator – points score	37.2	39.7
Numeracy indicator – points score	34.5	37.1
Science indicator – points score	33.8	36.9
No qualifications - % of pupils	0.5	1.4
5+ A*-A or equivalent	13.2	20.3

- 6.1.24 For nearly all measures the Blaenau Gwent average is below the Wales average, except the Skills Challenge Certificate indicator and also no qualifications (where a lower rate is positive).

#### Key measures – Compared with 'Modelled' by FSM

- 6.1.25 Modelled expectations for each indicator are all above expectation indicated by Free School Meals. Please note that each table number is from the original data pack, not this report.

Title	2023 - Capped 9 points score (interim)	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	346.4	355.5	-9.1

- 6.1.26 The Capped 9 Points Score is 9 points below the modelled expectation. The equivalent of approximately 1/6<sup>th</sup> of a GCSE grade per learner.

Title	2023 - WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	32.6	33.1	-0.5

6.1.27 The Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator score is approximately in line with expectation.

Title	2023 - Literacy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	37.9	38.8	-0.9

6.1.28 The Literacy Indicator score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/6<sup>th</sup> of a GCSE grade per learner.

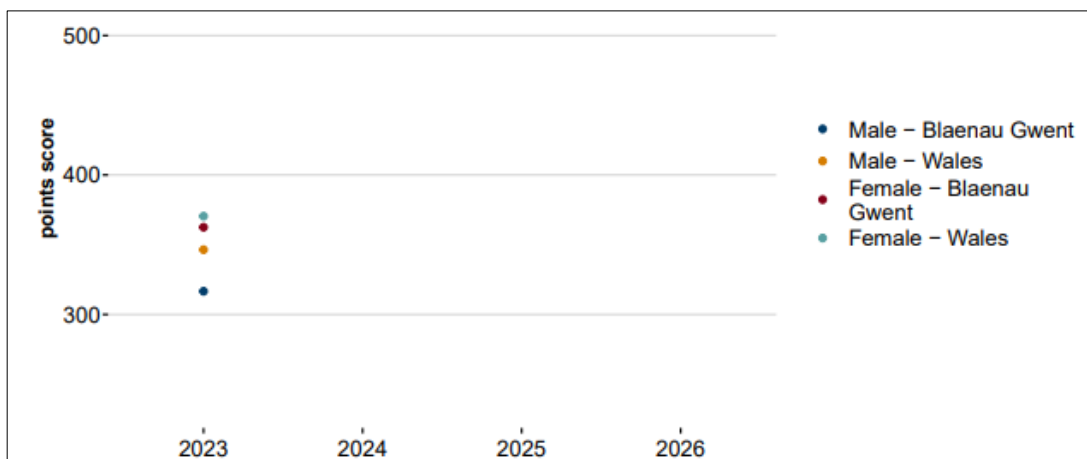
Title	2023 - Numeracy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	35.1	35.9	-0.9

6.1.29 The Numeracy Indicator score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/6<sup>th</sup> of a GCSE grade per learner.

Title	2023 - Science indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Blaenau Gwent	34.4	35.3	-0.9

6.1.30 The Science Indicator score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/6<sup>th</sup> of a GCSE grade per learner.

### **Capped 9 – Males and Females**



Note: The y axis does not start at zero in this plot.

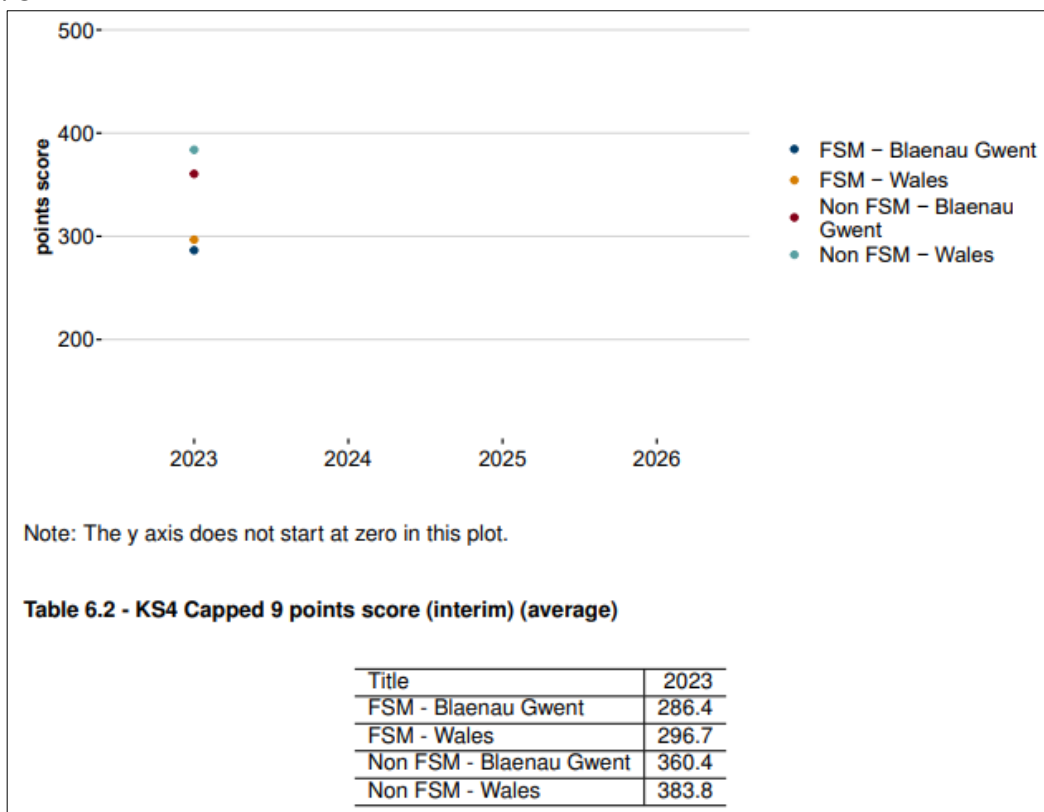
**Table 3.2 - KS4 Capped 9 points score (interim) (average)**

Title	2023
Male - Blaenau Gwent	316.6
Male - Wales	346.4
Female - Blaenau Gwent	362.6
Female - Wales	370.5

6.1.31 Both Males and Females in Blaenau Gwent perform less well than their peers in Wales, however the difference between boys in Blaenau Gwent and boys in the test of Wales is approximately four times larger than the corresponding gap for girls.

### Capped 9 FSM – non-FSM

/Overleaf



6.1.32 Both FSM and non-FSM learners in Blaenau Gwent perform lower than their peers in Wales.

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

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

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

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

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

Monitoring school outcomes is key element in ensuring that schools are known well by the Council so that appropriate support and intervention can be directed towards areas of greatest need. Constant monitoring of school performance facilitates

early intervention to ensure that schools maintain high quality outcomes in the longer term.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

A key element of the Council's work is to monitor settings and ensure appropriate support to secure continuing high standards. Review of schools' outcomes reflects the extent to which settings and Local Authorities have been effective in achieving this.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Educational improvement in Blaenau Gwent is delivered on a regional basis through the South East Wales Consortium in collaboration with Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau-Gwent Councils.

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

Ensuring that schools deliver high quality education provision to secure high pupil outcomes relate to the Council's high-level outcomes within the Corporate Improvement Plan that children's and young people's learning and achievement levels are maximised. These overarching outcomes and objectives permeate the work of a range of Council departments and partners. Effective monitoring, evaluation and intervention are fundamental to the Council's wellbeing objectives.

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

No specific impact related to this report.

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

Not required for this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 As part of existing arrangement.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

None – information included within the report.

# Agenda Item 17

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.12.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 14.12.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

Report Subject: **Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2023/2024 (Quarters 1 and 2).**

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

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Officers	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	People Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	23.11.23	06.12.23			30.01.24	21.02.24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to present the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, covering the quarter 1 and 2 period (April to September 2023) attached at Appendix 1.

## 2. Scope and Background

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

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

## 3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The People Scrutiny Committee considered and supported Option 2 on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

### 3.2 Option 1

Members are asked to consider the detail contained in the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2023/2024 (quarters 1 and 2) and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate comments.

### 3.3 Option 2

Accept the report as provided.

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

It is a statutory responsibility of the Director of Social Services to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Social Services and produce an Annual Report. The

Annual Report contributes to and forms part of the Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF).

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

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

The Director's Report includes budgetary information and identifies the pressures and budgetary implications for 2023/2024.

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

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

### 5.3 **Legal**

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

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no staffing implications related in this report.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

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

Detail is provided within the Director's Annual Report 2023/2024 (quarters 1 and 2)

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The work undertaken by the department looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having an active rather



than re active approach to service planning can also help with planning resources and not spending as much on services in the future.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

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

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

The purpose of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2015 (SSWBA) is to foster integration between Health and Social Services. The report enables the department to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where it needs to be in the future to support a sustainable and viable service.

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

The workforce who delivers the functions of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2015 (SSWBA) have adopted the agile working policy of the council which will have a positive impact on car emissions as staff are now able to work from home to undertake paperwork and do not have to travel to the office.

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

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

6.9b ***Equality Impact Assessment***

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

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

7.1 The Annual Report for 2023/2024 (quarters 1 and 2) will be monitored via six monthly monitoring reports to the People Scrutiny Committee.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Report of the Director of Social Services

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# The

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

# Director of Social Services Annual Report

2023/24 Mid Year Snapshot

# Contents

Chapter	Section	Sub Section	Page No.
Chapter 1		Directors Summary	3
Chapter 2	Context / Introduction	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	5
		<b>What are the eight quality standards</b>	6
		How people are shaping our services - <b>Engagement</b>	7
		How people are shaping our services – <b>Complaints and compliments</b>	8
		Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help - <b>Priorities</b>	9
		<b>Infographic</b>	10
Chapter 3 (a)	People	<b>Quality Standard 1</b> – All People are equal partners who have choice, voice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them.	11
		Quality Standard 1 – <b>Case Studies</b>	14
		<b>Quality Standard 2</b> – Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.	15
		Quality Standard 2 – <b>Case Studies</b>	18
Chapter 3 (b)	Prevention	<b>Quality Standard 3</b> – The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best outcomes for people are achieved.	22
		Quality Standard 3 – <b>Case Studies</b>	26
		<b>Quality Standard 4</b> – Resilience within communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively supporting people who need care and / or support including carers to learn, develop and participate in society.	27
		Quality Standard 4 – <b>Case Studies</b>	30
Chapter 3 (c)	Partnership & Integration	<b>Quality Standard 5</b> – Effective partnerships are in place to commission and fully deliver fully integrated, high quality sustainable outcomes for people	32
		Quality Standard 5 – <b>Case Studies</b>	34
		<b>Quality Standard 6</b> – People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners	37
		Quality Standard 6 – <b>Case Studies</b>	39
Chapter 3 (d)	Well-being	<b>Quality Standard 7</b> – People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect and any other types of harm.	41
		<b>Quality Standard 8</b> – People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible	44
		Quality Standard 8– <b>Case Studies</b>	46
Chapter 4	Other information	How we do what we do - <b>Structural arrangements that provide good governance and strong accountability / Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability</b>	47
		How we do what we do - <b>Audit &amp; Inspection Progress</b>	48
		How we do what we do - <b>Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles</b>	50
		How we do what we do - <b>Effective partnership working through Regional Partnership Boards</b>	51
		How we do what we do - <b>Our Financial Resources and how we plan for the future</b>	52
		How we do what we do - <b>Risks</b>	53
		How we do what we do - <b>Complaints</b>	54
Chapter 5		Looking Forward – <b>Areas for Progression</b>	55
Chapter 6		<b>Accessing further information and key documents</b>	56

# Chapter 1 - Directors Summary

The first 2 quarters of 23/24 have seen the continuation of the interim arrangements for the Director and Head of Childrens services. This has not impacted on the directorates ability to continue robust delivery of services, alongside service development and improvements.

We continue to see an increase in demand for services and an increase in the complexity of presenting need by the people of Blaenau Gwent. The Directorate has continued to meet this demand and complexity however, this has led to budget pressures particularly in relation to our children looked after. We are hopeful the development of our first children's home in the spring/summer of 2025 will look to improve outcomes for our children looked after, plus provide some easement to the budget pressure in this area.

Our workforce continues to be our greatest asset to ensure we deliver the best services possible. The workforce strategy developed in 2022 continues to run until 2025 with progress being reviewed on a quarterly basis through our business planning process. This mid-year report provides good evidence of the positive impact this strategy is having on how well supported staff feel and attendance rates across the directorate.

The second part of the year will not only continue to provide challenges in relation to meeting demand for services but also bring the need to cut services to enable the council to maintain a balanced budget. Social Services are not exempt from these cuts, but every effort will be made to mitigate against the impact these cuts will inevitably have.

Despite the challenges, we have continued to progress service developments and improvements. Some of the things we have achieved in the first two quarters of this year are;

- Our 14 plus team won a Social Care Accolade in the category of Building Brighter Futures for Children and Families
- The Independent Living PODS at Augusta House have been opened.
- We have purchased a property to develop our first Blaenau Gwent Childrens home.

Continued on the next page

## Directors Summary - continued

- We have had positive feedback from a social Services Staff Survey
- We have 5 of our children looked after progress to university.
- An increase in attendance at work across the whole Directorate
- A positive inspection of Cwrt Mytton
- Increased support for carers due to grant funding
- Commencement of work to improve service delivery at Lakeview.
- Exploring working with partners to increase the use of the hydrotherapy pool at Bert Denning
- Significant increase of social activities within Cwrt Mytton to improve the wellbeing for those who live there.
- Two schools achieve the Children Looked After Friendly Schools Quality Mark
- Extensive work to improve facilities at our Cwm and Sofrydd Flying Start Hubs
- Our Families First Young Carers project have been nominated and shortlisted for a Social Care Accolade



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



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

# Chapter 2 - Context / Introduction

## Purpose of report

Welcome to the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Social Services six month snapshot of the Annual Report 2023/2024. Over the past few years the Department has been developing these reports to highlight the key areas of improvements and challenges that have been faced.

This report has been developed in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, referred to as 'the Act' throughout this document. The Act aims to provide the most radical change to the way in which Social Services is provided since 1948. It focuses on improving the well-being of people who come to Social Services for support. It is person centred and focuses on prevention and reducing the need for care and support. It recognises that responsibility lies not only within Social Services Departments, but also within the wider Local Authority and with partners (particularly Health and the Third Sector).

The Act shares similar principles with a number of key national/regional strategies that are being implemented throughout the Council, in particular the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which is legislation which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The vision of this legislation is expressed in the seven National well-being goals.

The Well-being Act also puts a duty on public bodies to apply the sustainable development principle which states they 'must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The sustainable development principle is made up of the following five ways of working, pictured here:



Throughout this report some areas of performance that meet these ways of working are demonstrated by these images.

The Director of Social Services has a statutory requirement to publish an annual report in relation to the delivery of its functions, to evaluate its performance and also include lessons learned. A key aspect of the report is showing how the [eight Quality Standards have been implemented in relation to well-being outcomes \(see page 6\)](#).

This format is also used within this mid-year snapshot report and provides a strategic overview of the work undertaken throughout the first 6 months of 2023/2024 and what plans are in place to move forward. Further supporting information can be found from page 53 of the report. Both this report and the annual report includes evidence of where Social Services have worked collaboratively with partners.

Experiences and learning from service users has been considered as part of the development of the report. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) findings, Audit Wales (AW) findings, case studies, complaints and compliments and quarterly reporting have all been considered as part of the development of this report and evidence from these has been used to inform future learning.

Both the mid year and annual reports are used internally to monitor performance, identify areas where improvement is needed, recognise successes to take forward and demonstrate accountability to citizens and service users. As part of this process and the meet the statutory requirement, the annual report will be presented to full Council for ratification before it is published on the Council's website and will then be sent to Welsh Ministers. The annual report will be available on line bilingually and will be shared with partner agencies in order to share good practice, learning and experiences.

## What are the eight quality standards?

The quality standards are linked to the seven well-being goals as set out in Section 4 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>) and linked to the Page 9 of 18 definition of well-being as set out in Section 2 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/anaw/2014/4>

The standards aim to ensure that all people who need care and carers who need support are able to access the right support at the right time from the right place, and that there are appropriately experienced and / or qualified professionals in place to deliver this. Pages 11 to 43 of this report demonstrate progress over the past six months against these quality standards which forms part of our ongoing internal evidence and research to support existing service provision and provide improvements.

The Quality Standards			
People	Prevention	Partnerships and Integration	Well-Being
All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them.	The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented, whilst ensuring that the best possible outcomes for people are achieved.	Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people.	People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm.
Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.	Resilience within our communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively encouraging and supporting people who need care and support, including carers, to learn, develop and participate in society.	People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners.	People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own informed decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible.



## How people are shaping our services

### Engagement -

The Social Services Directorate is committed to providing high quality services to its citizens and uses various engagement methodologies in order to understand if the service is achieving the intended outcomes, or if amendments to service delivery needs to be considered. The service ensures that the voice of people is used to inform and improve the service moving forward.

Staff ensure that users to the service are heard and listened to by having the what matters conversation to establish the personal outcomes each individual wants to achieve and the support networks they may already have in place to rely on to meet those outcomes.

Throughout April 2023 to September 2023 a variety of engagement events have taken place and some examples of these are included throughout the body of the report.



## How people are shaping our services

### Complaints and Compliments -

Sections titled ‘What you told us...’

can be found throughout the document and performance **detail** in respect of all complaints received during the reporting period can be found in chapter 4, page 51 .

As an Authority we concentrate on not only the statistics, but how we have utilised the information, analysing any discernible trends and considering what changes and improvements we have made, or propose to make, in response to these complaints and investigations.

The chart here details the complaint themes received during the reporting period and what actions have been put in place, or are recommended to be put in place in order to better our service provision for the future.



## Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Those We Help - Priorities

The Corporate Plan 2022/27 is the Council's 'road map', setting out the vision, values and priorities of the Council, and the business plans within Social Services Directorate are aligned directly to this Plan. The Social Services priorities are shown below and the Quality Standards, (detailed over pages 11 To 42), demonstrate where improvement has been made, challenges have been addressed and where outcomes have been achieved.

Departmental Priorities 2023/24	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own well-being                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work with people to make sure they have a say in achieving what matters to them                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• To work with our communities and partners including Aneurin Bevan Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support</li> <li>• Ensure we have an appropriately skilled, motivated and supported workforce with clear career development pathways in place that support our service delivery                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm</li> <li>• To develop a partnership approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of poverty</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Children's Services Priorities 2023/24	Adult Services Priorities 2023/24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all children are safeguarded</li> <li>• Ensure we have an appropriately skilled, motivated and supported workforce with clear career development pathways in place that support our service delivery</li> <li>• Ensure all teams deliver an outcomes based approach to practice and service delivery</li> <li>• Ensure that we provide / commission modern, flexible, cost effective high quality support services that meet both current and future well-being needs of children</li> <li>• Ensure that preventative support is available for children and their families, that promote early intervention and prevents needs from escalating.</li> <li>• Manage the Children's Services budget to ensure expenditure comes within budget                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2020 – 2025 actions are regularly monitored and reviewed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure outcomes for children looked after continue to improve through the implementation of the Corporate Parenting action plan</li> <li>• Review the way in which children's services operates and decide if a change is necessary in order to manage demand and workload.</li> <li>• Children's Services contributes to the Sustainable Development Principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all adults are safeguarded</li> <li>• Ensure we have an appropriately skilled, motivated and supported workforce with clear career development pathways in place that support our service delivery</li> <li>• Ensure all teams deliver an outcomes based approach to practice and service delivery</li> <li>• Ensure that we provide / commission modern, flexible, cost effective high quality support services that meet both current and future well-being needs of vulnerable adults and their unpaid family carers</li> <li>• Ensure that preventative support is available for adults and their unpaid carers, that promote and maintain personal independence</li> <li>• Manage the Adults Services budget to ensure expenditure comes within budget                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a review of the current model of Community Options</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adult Services contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles</li> </ul>

Population of Blaenau Gwent is **66,900**

based on 2021 Census data

**69** reablement packages completed

April - September 23 down from 210 in the same period previous year.

**83** children on child protection register

increase of 21 from the end of previous year (March 23)

**207** Children looked after after

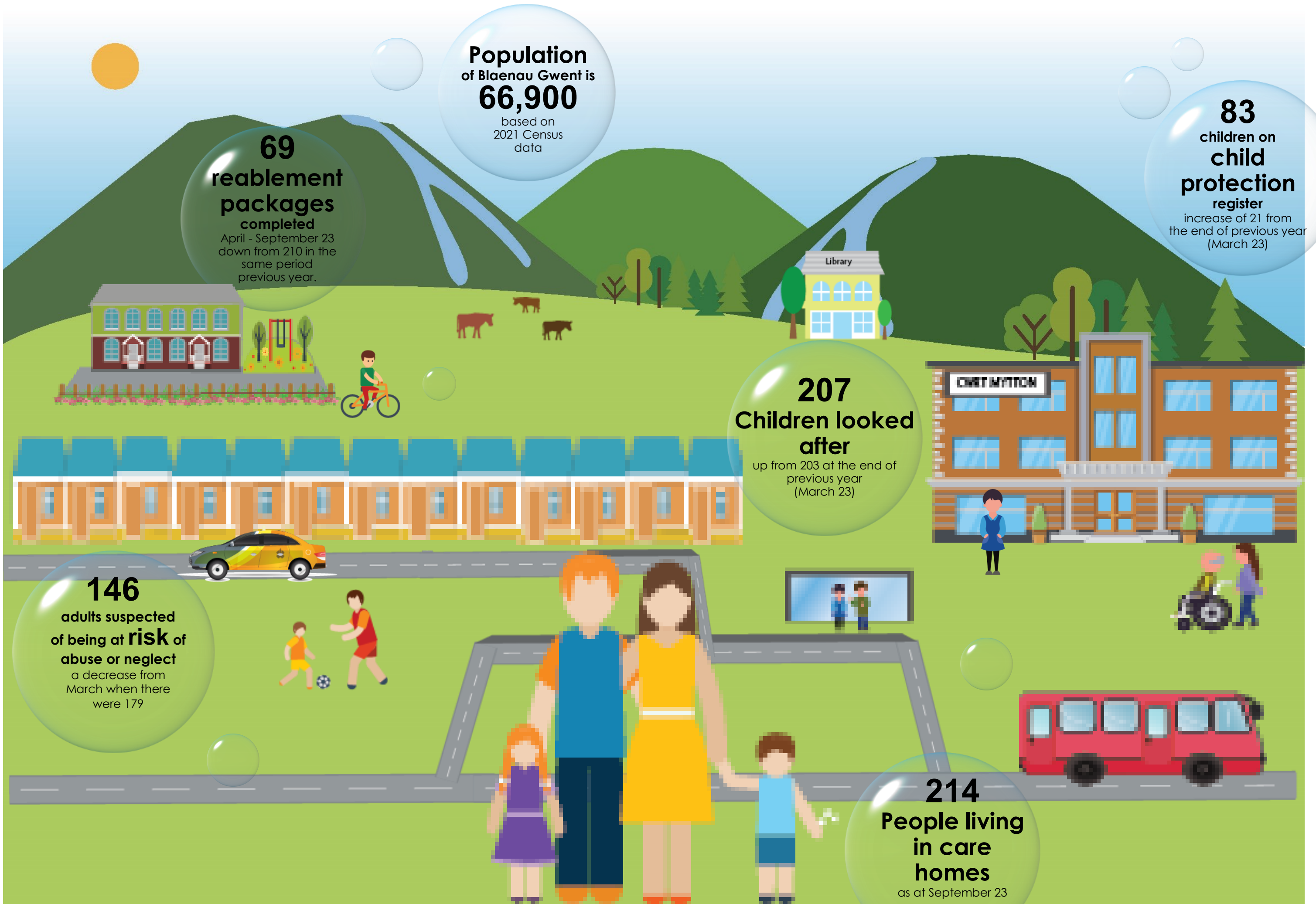
up from 203 at the end of previous year (March 23)

**146** adults suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect

a decrease from March when there were 179

**214** People living in care homes

as at September 23



# Chapter 3 (a) - People

People are at the centre of our services with our whole focus being on what matters to them and achieving the outcomes they wish to achieve.

## Key Activities

The Children and Community Grant (CCG) board continue to oversee and evaluate the **St David's Day grant expenditure**. This is an arm of the CCG grant and is an annual allocation.

The fund is to support young people who are or have been in local authority care to access opportunities that will lead them towards independent and successful lives.

This includes acting as a "bank of mam and dad" for care experienced young people as well as providing funding for an Aspire mentor which coordinates and supports care experienced young people in accessing corporate traineeship placement opportunities within the council.

**This year the allocation is £99,013** broken down as follows:

- **St Davids Day (support to children leaving care fund) - £58,856;** and
  - **Aspire Mentor - £40,157 .**

During the first six months of this year, the utilisation of the above has enabled the 14+ team to provide wonderful opportunities for our Children Looked After and care leavers in line with their desired outcomes, and to support them in becoming more independent. Some examples of these are shown in the case study on page 14.

## Quality Standard 1

• All people are equal partners who have choice, voice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them

**We ensure people have a strong voice and control over what they receive (with advocacy where appropriate).**

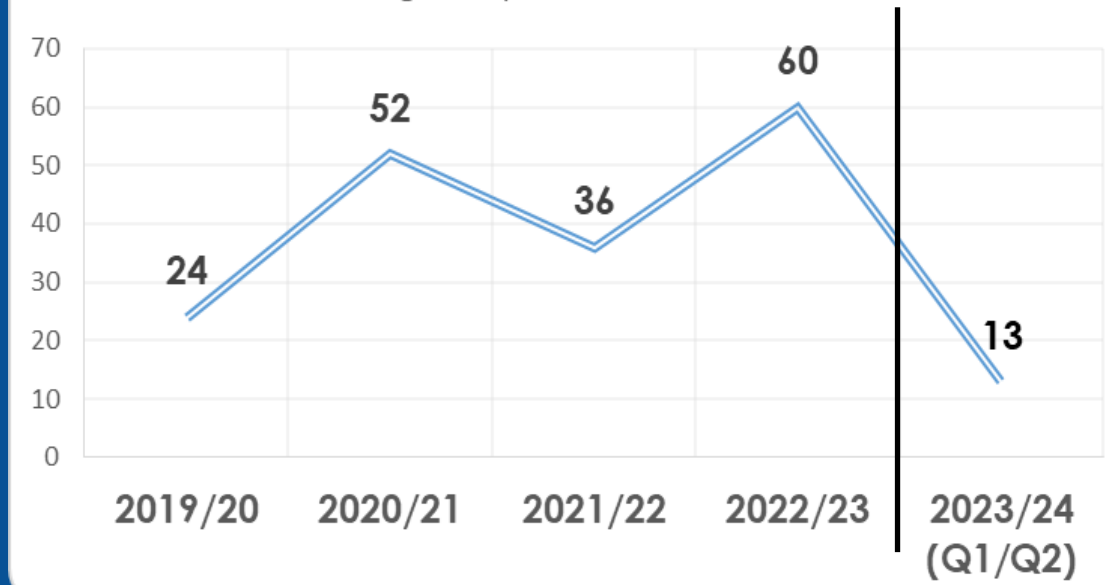


'What Matters' meetings have been

implemented and used regularly in practice with multi-agency participation and high scrutiny of all Child Protection plans.



The total number of "Active Offers" of advocacy for children during the year



*In all cases above an Independent Professional Advocate was provided.*



## Key Activities

All people are equal partners who have choice, voice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them

In order to support the demand in IAA we have developed an action plan following due consideration of what is working well, not well and how we can provide new support to meet this demand. An action plan is now in place and will be reviewed monthly through supervision.



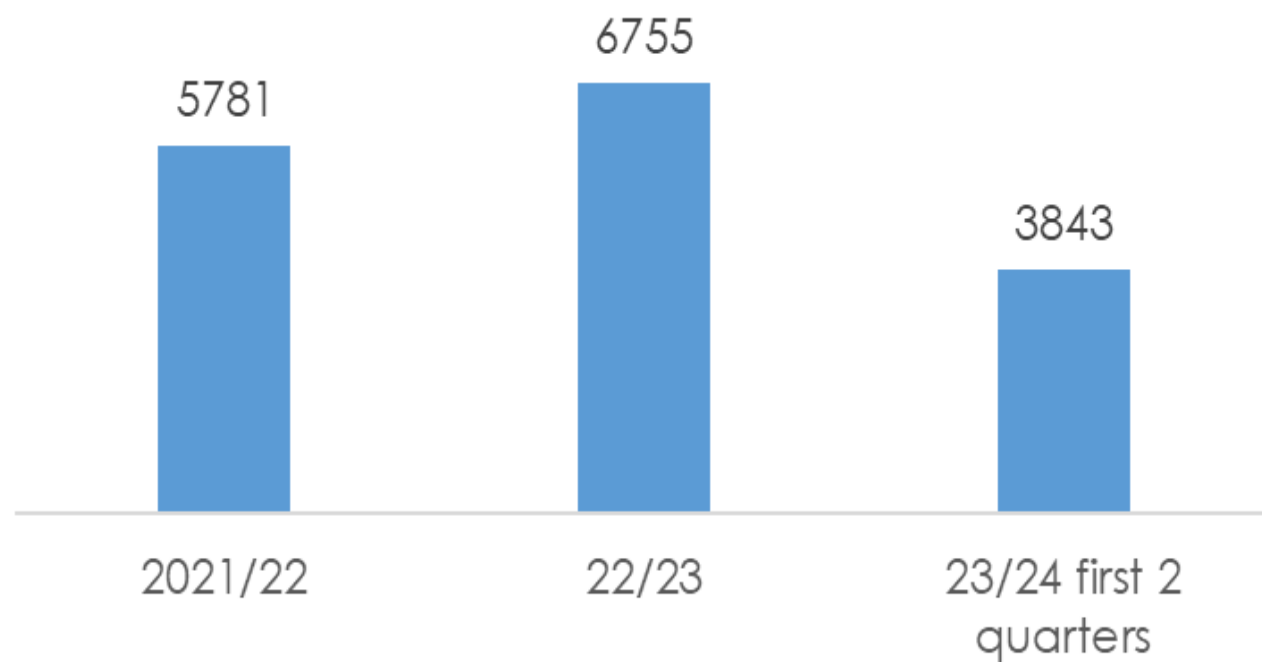
### Information, Advice & Assistance (IAA)

The Council has dedicated Adults and Children's Services Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) hubs which provide the first point of contact for people who wish to ask for information, advice or assistance or, with their permission, for a relative or friend. Contact with the hubs can be made in person by phone, letter or e-mail. These methods are also the first point of contact with Social Services by other agencies, such as Health, Education, Police and Housing.

### Referrals into Adults Services IAA data collation started in August 2021, therefore previous years are not yet comparable.

Of the 2284 enquiries during the period April to September 2023, **54% were resolved at IAA** (made up of those enquiries signposted, closed down before progressing to assessment and those that led to an IAA). Whereas 60% were resolved at IAA during 22/23

The number of enquires received at 'front door' - Childrens IAA



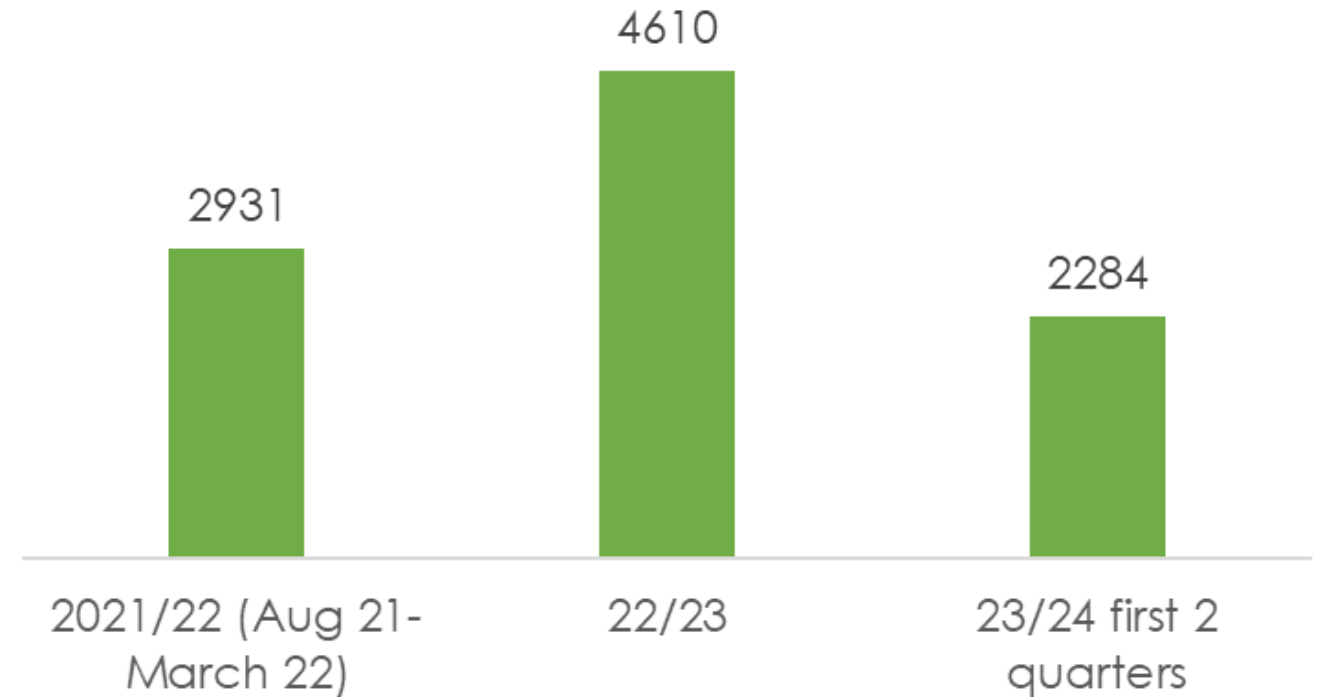
Referrals into Children's Services IAA continues to increase.

The number in quarter 2 in 23/24 is significantly higher with approximately 1927 compared to 22/23 which were approximately 1568.



Of the 3843 referrals in the first half of this year (April—September 23) **374 (10%)** were referred to preventative services (Families First), compared to 6755 referrals in the full year 22/23 with **772 (11%)** of them being referred to preventative services (Families First).

The number of enquires received at 'front door' - Adults IAA



**PREVENTION** - Probation and Cyfannol remain part of the IAA hub to ensure that referrals are supported correctly to avoid the need to allocate for statutory assessment. The service manager for IAA and YOS regularly correspond to ensure referrals are made to REACH where support can be offered for prevention support to young people who offend.

## Key Activities

All people are equal partners who have choice, voice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them

What you told us...

"I have seen a massive difference in my mental health. When I first met you, I was a mess, I felt that no one was there for me and that my world was crashing down. I now feel more confident and feel that I have the skills and knowledge to cope better. I enjoyed the walking groups and loved walking Pen Y Fan with the other dads. I will be forever grateful to you".

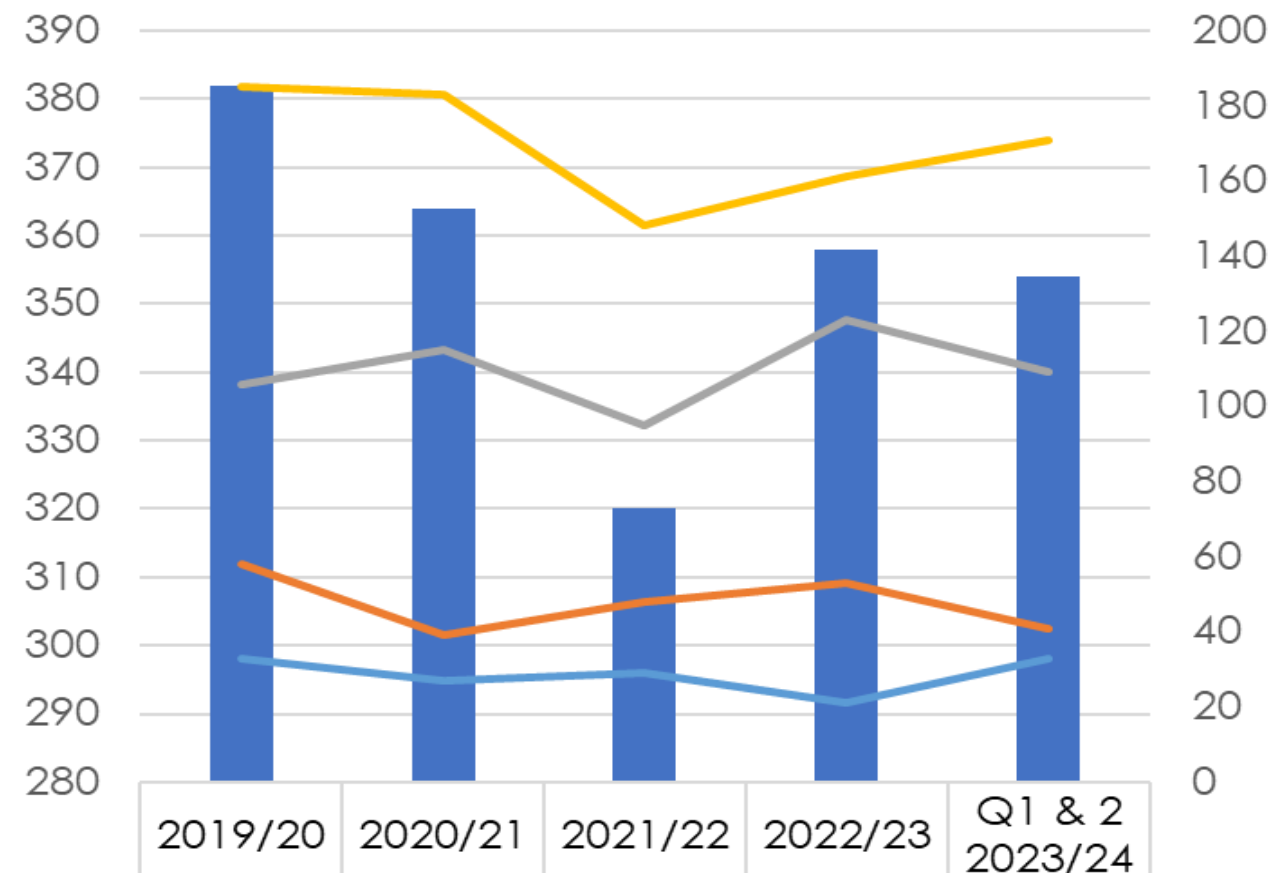


We encourage and support the use of an individuals own strengths and resources to help promote their own well-being,



Families First recruited a new Ethnical Minority worker who will be engaging with gypsy and more recently relocated Nigerian communities.

The number of adults receiving Home Care (snap shot at the last week of the period):



■ Total number of adults receiving Home Care	382	364	320	358	354
— less than 5 hours	58	39	48	53	41
— 5 -9 hours	106	115	95	123	109
— 10 - 19 hours	185	183	148	161	171
— more than 20 hours	33	27	29	21	33

**COLLABORATION** - Mentors group this year is focusing on the sharing of assessment tools to aid collaborative working with families to focus on priority risk, strengths, safety planning and co producing plans.



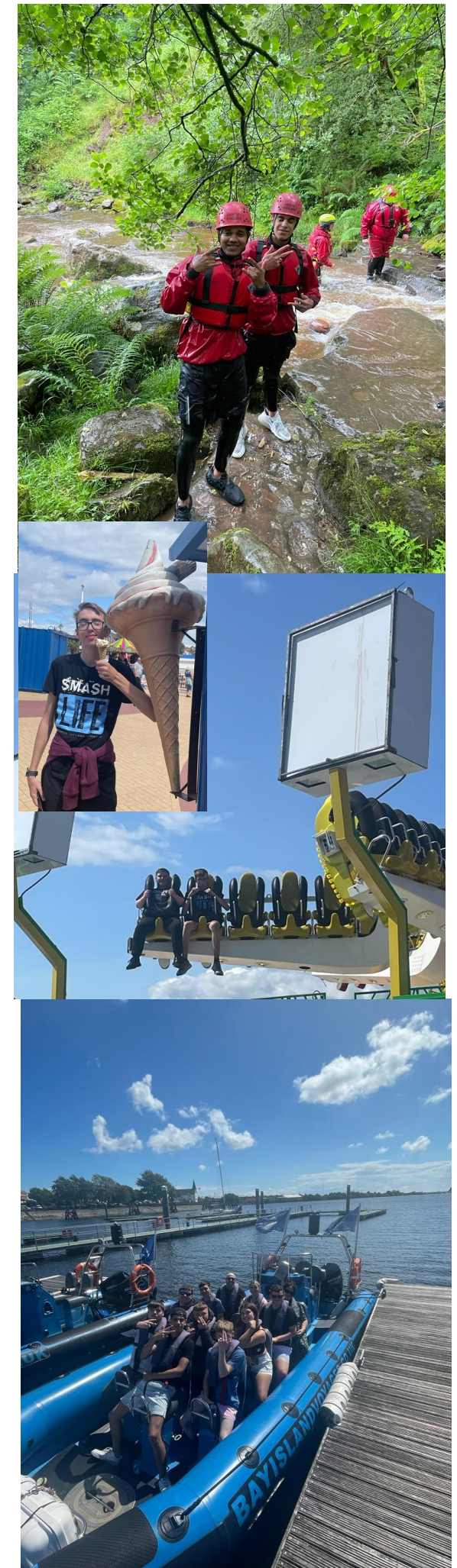
# Case Study – Supporting care leavers to form independent and successful lives



So far this financial year the 14+ team have provided social opportunities such as:

- Gorge walking;
- Theatre visit;
- Paddleboarding;
- Summer BBQ with rodeo bull;
- GCSE celebration event;
- Attended the national Voices from Care - care leavers forum;
- Beach trip to Barry Island;
- Independent living skills group;
- Easter event; and
- Animal petting opportunity at the office.

The opportunities provide experiences for care leavers including, socialisation to support in developing and sustaining friendships, life skills to support the transition into adulthood, supporting positive wellbeing and emotional health, promoting self esteem and pride, and providing the opportunity to voice their views on services in order to contribute to positive change.





## Quality Standard 2

- Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.

### Key Activities

The social services function is well-led and supported at a service, corporate and political level.



Our leadership team recognise the importance of engagement with staff. During the reporting period a **survey** has been carried out to gather **staff views** on a few issues ranging from how supported staff felt in work and what they felt about levels of communication.



There was a **32% response rate** to the survey. **91 responses from adult services** and **111 responses from children's services**



The average score for how **rewarding** you found the job you are doing was **8 out of 10**.



The average score for how **supported** you felt by your senior manager was **8.57 out of 10**.



The average score for how **supported** you felt from your colleagues was **8.96 out of 10**.



The majority of those who responded had **supervision** and participated in **team meetings** in the last 12 months.



Over half of those who responded were **not aware** of the council's **volunteering policy**.



Only **half** of those who responded were **clear about the department's vision/priorities** and changes in the department.

### ACTION

**Next Steps** -As a leadership team we will now develop an action plan to work towards making these improvements and we will be repeating this survey next year to measure the progress that has been made. One of the first things we will do is generate a regular Social Services newsletter to keep staff informed of what is going on across the directorate.

Overall, responses painted a positive picture for staff working within the social services directorate particularly about the way in which staff were supported in their jobs. That said there are areas where we can improve on.



Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision



Workforce stability is a key consideration within Social Services as some teams are facing **staffing shortages**, however, it is acknowledged that this is a Wales wide position and there is no simple solution. The department continues to look at **innovative ways of managing the workload** within teams as well as developing recruitment and retention strategies to address workforce pressures. Despite these significant pressures the existing staff and providers of services have continued to ensure **children and adults needs are met, risks are managed, and safeguarding issues dealt with.**

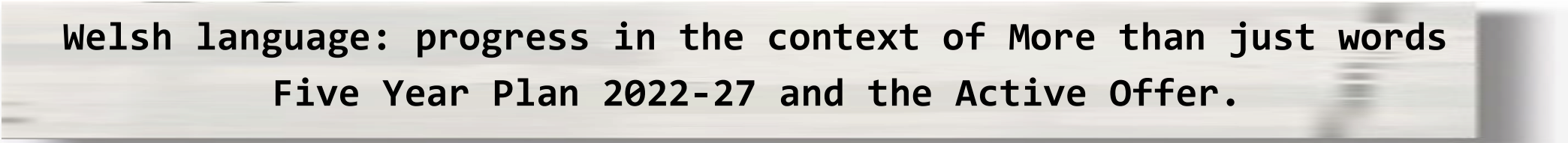
TYPES OF POST	STATUS OF EMPLOYEES IN THE POSTS					Total
	Permanent	Fixed Term	Secondment	Temporary	Relief	
Vacancies	17	48	0	0	0	65
Occupied Permanent posts	461	6	6	0	0	473
Occupied Fixed Term posts	0	117	9	0	0	126
Occupied Temporary posts	0	0	0	12	0	12
Occupied Secondment posts	0	0	3	0	0	3
Occupied Relief posts	0	0	0	0	99	99
<b>Total posts in Social Services</b>						<b>778</b>

**Figures do not include agency staff**

only 61% of staff are currently permanent

Key Activities

Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision



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. This is aligned to the Council’s strategic responsibility for Welsh language as outlined in the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-07/more-than-just-words-action-plan-2022-2027.pdf>

As a department we continue to monitor compliance with our responsibilities within **‘More Than Just Words’** and the Active Offer. We continue to ensure that when citizens contact both our Adult and Children Services Departments, that they are **offered the opportunity to communicate in the language of their choice**. Our assessment tools within our Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) system specifically asks the question “Do you require this conversation / assessment to be carried out in Welsh?” The form is then attached to the person’s referral.

The ‘More Than Just Words’ **action plan has progressed**, there is liaison with the local Welsh language champions and **promoting the wide resources and opportunities available is now standard**. Our commissioned providers work in partnership with us to promote the Welsh Language and this is reflected in our contracts and service level agreements.

What you told us...

Census Data (measured every 10 years)	2011	2021
% Blaenau Gwent residents described their health as "very good"	40.7	41.5
% Blaenau Gwent residents describing their health as "good"	30.7	32.7
% Blaenau Gwent residents describing their health as "very bad"	2.7	2.3
% Blaenau Gwent residents describing their health as "bad"	8.5	7
% Blaenau Gwent residents (aged five years and over) reported providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care each week	6.6%	4.2%



## Key Activities

Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision

Practitioners and managers ensure that practice and supervision are grounded in up-to-date knowledge and evidence-based practice.



Our induction policy is being amended to include a mandatory introduction with team mentors so that new team members can immerse themselves in practicing in an outcome focussed way from the beginning of their career journey.



A new joint mentor scheme for staff with Caerphilly County Borough Council is being explored in order to extend our learning and development opportunities.

Commissioned providers have been notified of



care fees and all have accepted increases offered -

**feedback from care homes and domicare was extremely positive and complimentary around the process and engagement** - A further review will be undertaken later in the year to assess the impact in view of the current cost of living and inflationary pressures.

A **2 day mentor training programme** was **delivered** in June 2023 which was well attended by all children's services teams.



The newly trained mentors will be responsible for **continuing to embed outcomes practice in their respective teams** and report back to mentors group on a 6 weekly basis.



**INTEGRATION** - Close working with Workforce Development continues, delivering specific training programme for newly appointed senior social work practitioners to develop skills such as decision making, supervision skills, managing staff, having difficult conversations, basic coaching skills. We have commissioned additional SCW / balancing rights and responsibilities and collaborative conversations training for all staff.

## Key Activities

Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.

**The Directorate has a clear workforce strategy in place, which is having a positive impact on recruitment and sickness rates across the directorate.**



Improvement in staff attendance rates are shown below and demonstrate why the status of one of our directorate risks (shown on p50) has been reduced to a medium.

### Quarter 1 progress (April - June 2023)

	Quarter 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 1 23/24 Target	Trend
	22/23	23/24		
	Outturn	Outturn		
<b>Adult Services</b>	4.79	2.38	2.75	↓
<b>Provider Services</b>	9.09	5.26	5.5	↓
<b>Childrens Services</b>	3.54	2.25	2.75	↓



Our budget position for the reporting period is shown on page 49.



Bridging the Gap proposals have been developed for Corporate Leadership Team / member consideration.



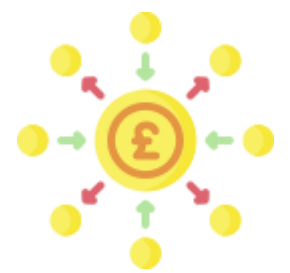
Check and challenge sessions planned for September / October with wider Corporate Leadership Team.



Meetings have taken place with Gwent Directors / Heads Of Service to review potential efficiencies via collaborative working.



A list of potential proposals are being scoped.



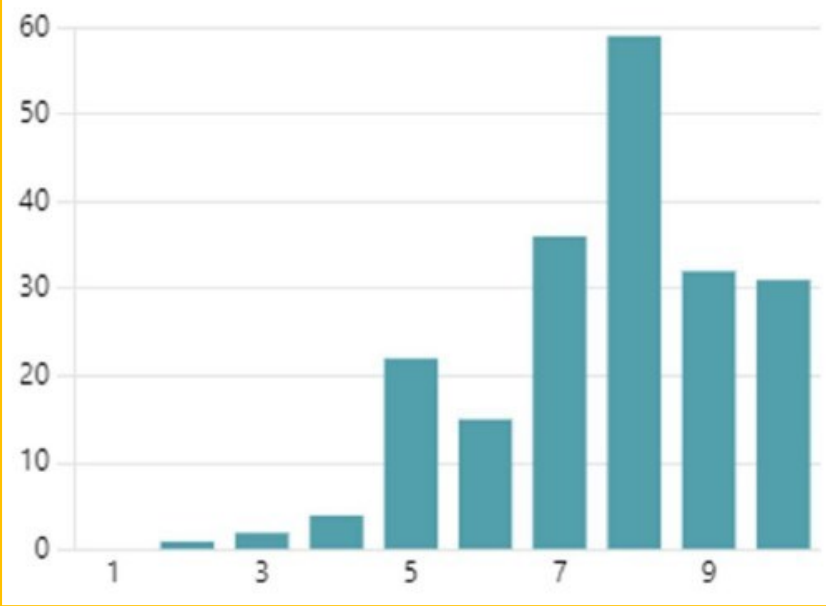
Staff in the teams within the service area have regular/monthly formal supervision, which has a pre-established agenda and is recorded. All managers are aware to include discussions on staff' wellbeing and career progression and development within their formal supervision.

# Case Study – Staff Survey

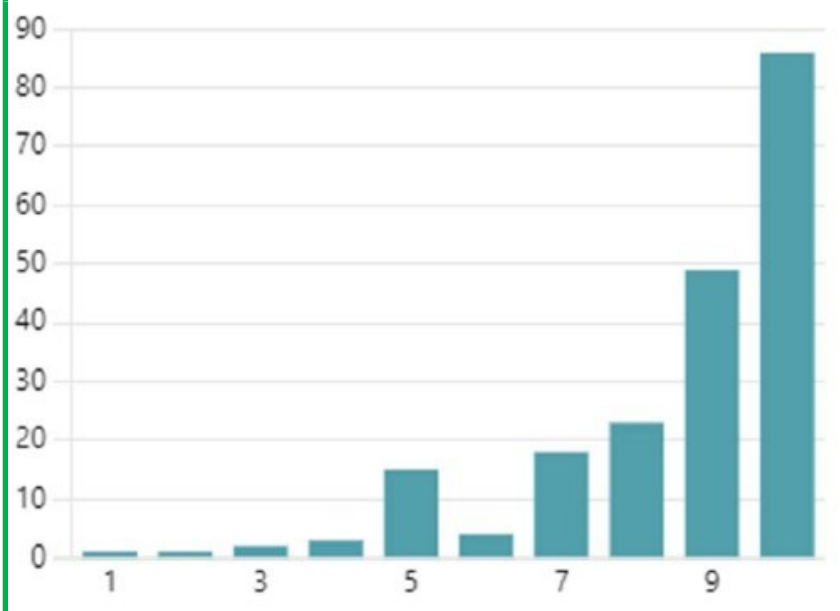
As detailed on page 15, during the reporting period a staff **survey** has been carried out to gather **staff views** on a few issues ranging from how supported staff felt in work and what they felt about levels of communication.

A full breakdown of responses will be analysed and include the following:-

When asked how staff feel about the support offered to them by the Local Authority as a whole the average response rating from 202 staff was 7.65



When asked how staff feel about the support offered to them by senior management (including Team Manager) the average response rating from 202 staff was 8.57

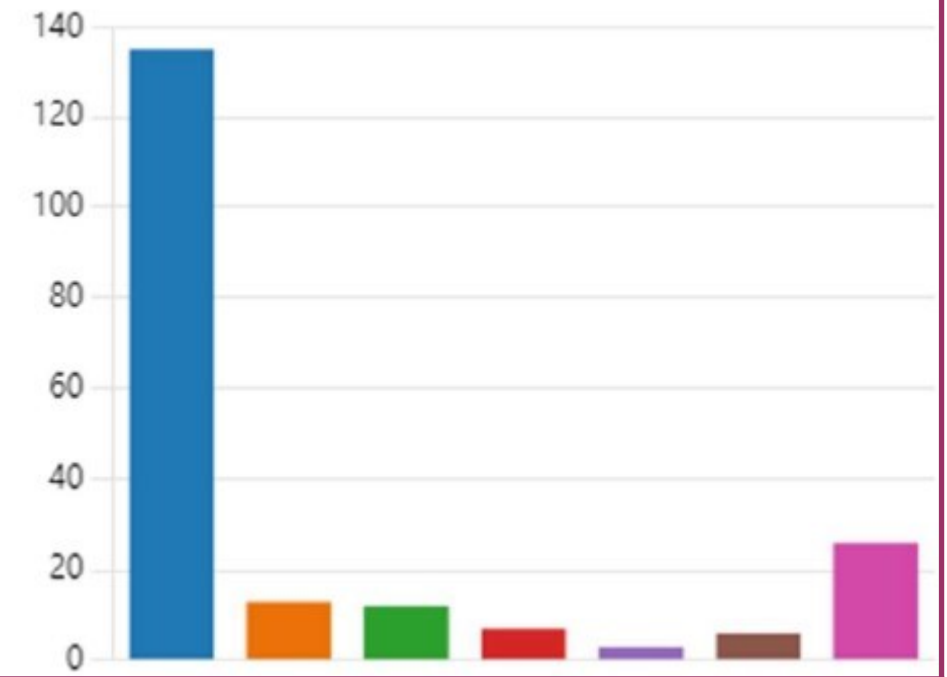


When asked How often they have had supervision/ 1-1 meetings with their line Manager in the last 12 months

the responses from 202 staff were broken down as below

- Monthly
- Bi-Monthly
- Quarterly
- Six Monthly
- Annually
- Never
- Other

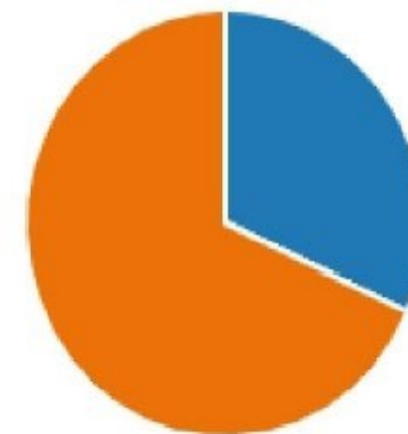
- 135
- 13
- 12
- 7
- 3
- 6
- 26



When asked were there any additional areas of training that would help them in their role

Out of 202 staff 64 said yes and 138 said no

- Yes 64
- No 138



Responses are currently being analysed and necessary actions implemented to ensure any required improvements are delivered.

This survey will be carried out annually and monitored accordingly

# Case Study - Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection of Cwrt Mytton Care Home



A recent inspection by Care Inspectorate Wales of our residential care home Cwrt Mytton has resulted in a positive overall review stating ....

People receive a good quality of care and support at Cwrt Mytton. The environment is homely, clean, and decorated to a good standard. People told us they are happy living there; we saw people settled and at ease in their environment. Visiting relatives told us they are happy with the support provided. Activities, levels of engagement and stimulation require improvement to enhance people's well-being. Care staff are compassionate and respectful. The service has systems to ensure care and support is of a good standard. People benefit from individualised and current personal plans which are now reviewed regularly. The production and review of plans do not evidence people's involvement. Management is well-regarded and visible in the running of the service. Policies and procedures are in place to help protect people from harm or abuse. Staff recruitment process is not sufficiently robust. Care staff receive formal supervision and feel supported in their work. The service has auditing systems and meets the legal requirements in relation to Responsible Individual (RI) visits and quality of care reviews.



## Recommended areas for improvement:-

Increase the number of activities and engagement on a day to day basis, to provide stimulation and a feeling of well-being for every person.

New 35 Recruitment system is not sufficiently robust.

New 15 Personal plans do not identify personal outcomes and how these can be achieved or evidence peoples involvement in the production and review of plans.

The full report can be viewed here



# Chapter 3 (b) - Prevention

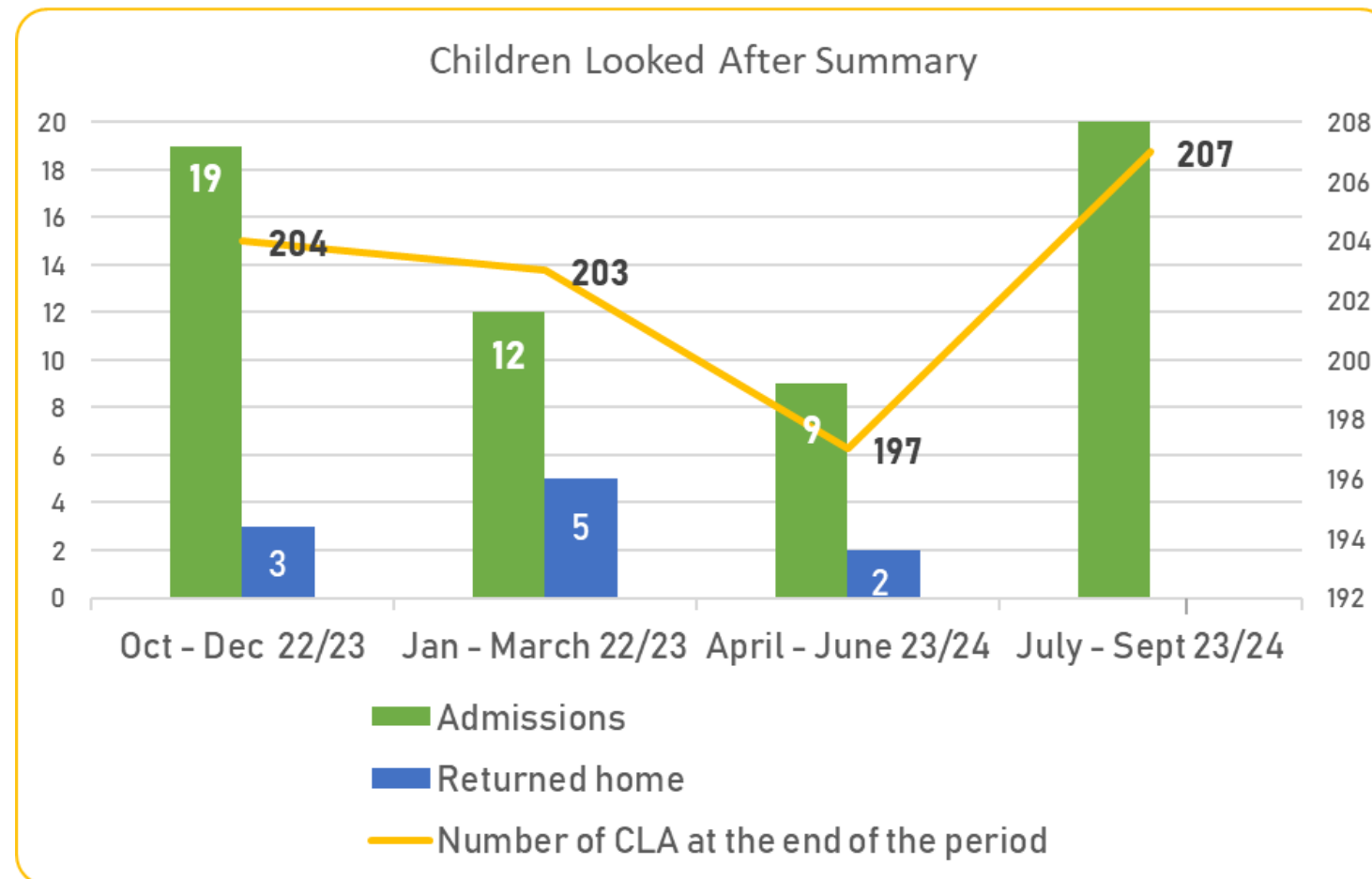
We use preventative and integrated approaches, ensuring the right care and support is there at the right time to delay or avoid the escalation of need

## Quality Standard 3

• The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best outcomes for people are achieved

There continues to be ongoing monitoring of **Children Looked After** numbers.

New children are still coming into care but there are also children looked after who have returned home.



Families First continue to work intensively to prevent cases escalation into statutory services with:

- **304 cases active at the end of September 2023;**
- **387 cases being discussed at Wellbeing panels in the last two quarters (April - September); and**
- **A variety of group, community work and events have been delivered throughout the reporting period.**



• During the Quarter 1 period (April to June) 95% of Child Looked After statutory visits completed.



• During the Quarter 2 period (July to September) 87% of Child Looked After statutory visits completed.

**118** young carers open to the service **benefited** from a variety of activities such as crafts, outdoor activities, games, cooking, Ninja Warrior, Fire sessions (south wales fire) YC's festival, Caerphilly adventures and Youth Club.





The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best outcomes for people are achieved

## Key Activities

We support citizens with Housing Support Grant (HSG) Funded Services with the aim of **preventing homelessness** and helping people develop and maintain the necessary skills to **live as independently and self-sufficiently** as possible.

However, the **future of the HSG funding remains a significant concern** with Welsh Government announcing a standstill Housing Support Grant budget for 2023/24, despite Support Providers indicating their costs are rising considerably and their current contractual value no longer covers the costs of providing the service. This is having a detrimental impact on the delivery of current services and will also impact upon future commissioning of services.

**Foster Wales Implementation of learning and development framework** included the following events:

- RDM arranging regional events for staff regarding the process and foster carers regarding the policy;
- Dates for national learning events for staff have been circulated and are currently taking place;
- Promoting foster carers input for Life Journey work, attendance at workshops and training.



Learning picked up from the outcome of the Learning and Development Review:

- More flexible learning opportunities needed;
- Raise awareness of the framework as a whole;
- Greater understanding of expectations of SSW's and foster carers;
- More confidence to recognise other forms of learning;
- Develop systems that support seeking learning opportunities;
- Develop systems that ease recording plans/tracking learning;
- Gaps in some areas of learning for foster carers.

**INTEGRATION** - Ongoing partnership working with Supporting People enables the use of local cost effective semi-independent placements for those young people aged 16+ which require an out of home provision.



The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best outcomes for people are achieved

## Key Activities

**Residential placements for Children Looked After has remained stable during the reporting period. There is regular attendance at residential meeting by 14 + team manager to enable wider scrutiny of care planning for those children in residential placements.**

Outreach remains popular and is delivering positive outcomes for users of the service. <https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/resident/health-wellbeing-social-care/services-that-are-provided-by-the-council/day-services-provision-day-centres/>

Modernisation refurbishment at Bert Denning office space and Lake View has commenced to integrate Community Meals, which are delivered via electric vehicles as of July as part of the Councils strategy to deliver a sustainable service and reduce carbon emissions. .



Statutory Assessment Team continue to work hard to manage demand for placements through robust assessments of children and families with only a minimal number of children requiring accommodation within their period of intervention.

During the reporting period (April–September) there were **810 new assessments completed** for children.

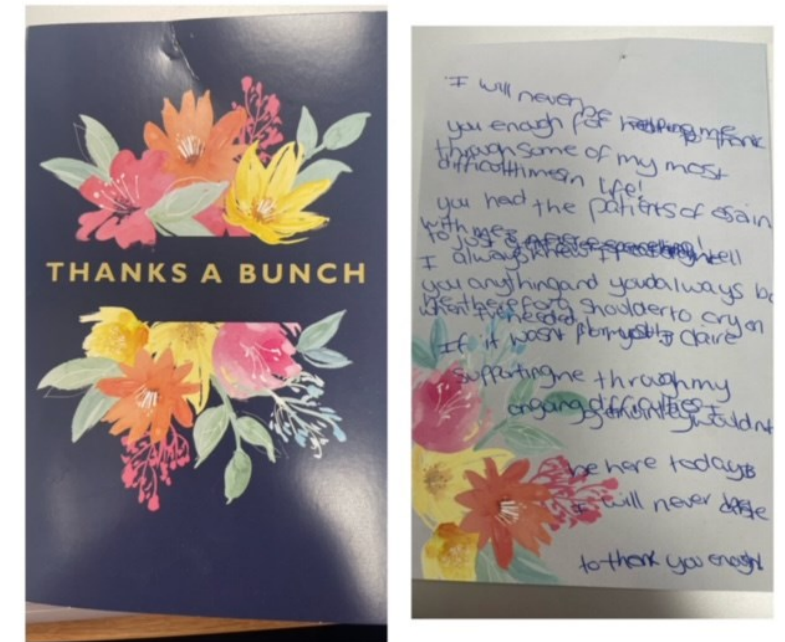


The mediation service has proven invaluable as a preventative service, preventing family breakdowns and reducing the number of children requiring out of home placements either via Children Looked After route or experiencing homelessness. Both mediation posts are fixed term via Supporting People and Regional Innovation Fund grant money and there is no identified resource at this juncture to make these roles permanent.



## What you told us...

Thank you both for your support with TM and the excellent joint working and communication.



I'm only contacting to say thank you so much for your hard work and support throughout this difficult time and id like to say I'm very sorry for saying id never forgive you for saying neglect at the conference, I've already forgiven you. You're an amazing social worker and I'm glad and grateful for you coming into our lives and kicking me up the bum, means the world to me.

The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best outcomes for people are achieved

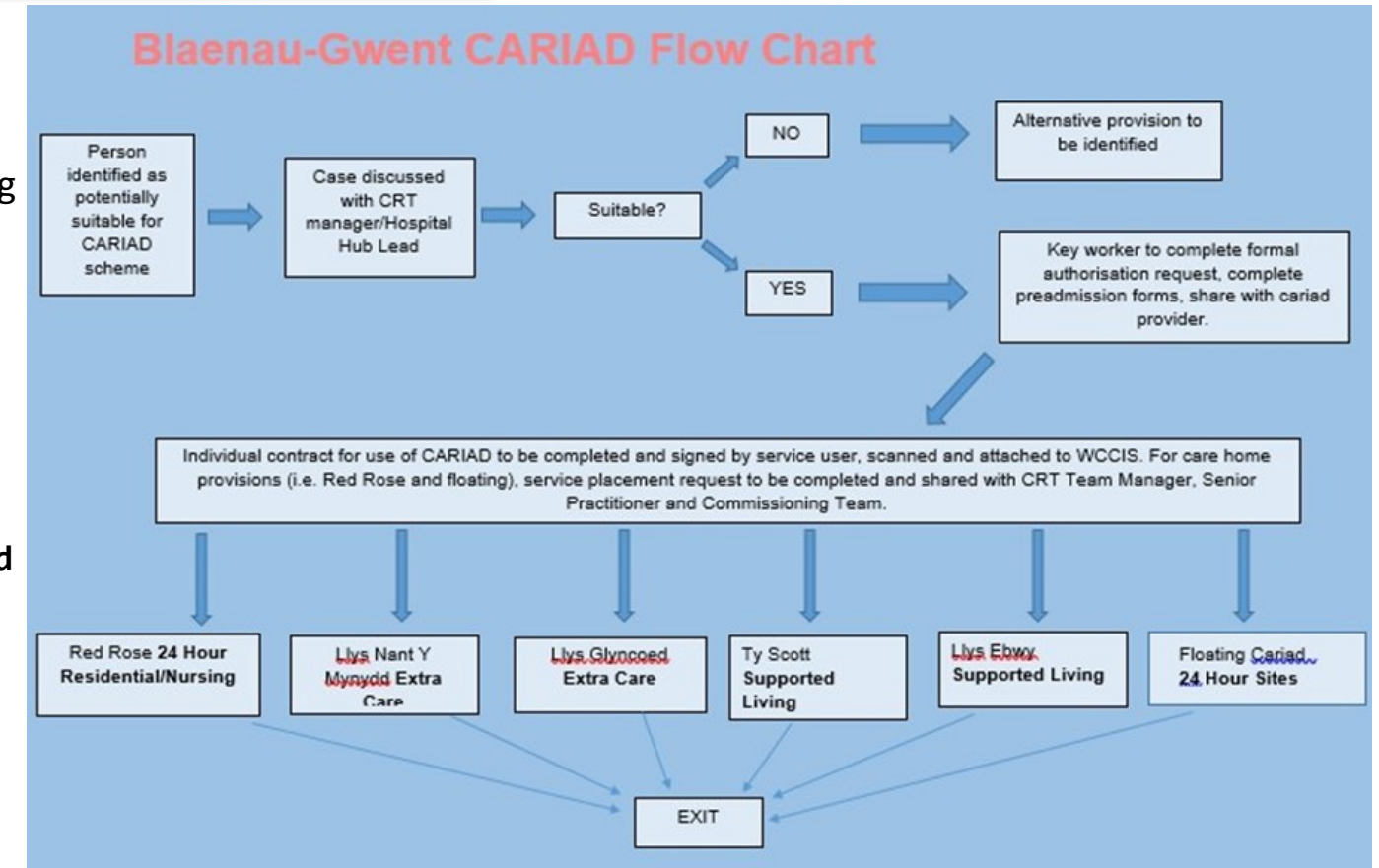
### Key Activities



CARIAD (Collaborative Assessment Reducing Interventions, Admissions and Delayed transfers of care) scheme (sometimes referred to as the step up/step down scheme) is a way of enabling people to ‘step-down’ from hospital when their treatment has finished and they no longer need to be there, but may require a further period of assessment in an alternative setting. Similarly, in order to avoid admission to hospital, the CARIAD scheme can also be ‘stepped up’ from their homes to be cared for in a different setting with additional support.

This CARIAD process and bed provision has been reviewed and is being managed by Senior social work practitioner in the Hospital hub Community Resource Team. The flow chart here has been shared with wards at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan for ease of reference.

**CARIAD usage has improved and is working effectively as part of our hospital discharge pathways.**



Page 1035

My Support Team (MyST) involvement with a number of 14+ young people to consider residential step down or residential avoidance is ongoing -

this is reviewed through monthly meetings between MyST and 14+ managers, monthly meeting between Service Manager and MyST Manager as well as MyST steering group. Quarterly data is provided on cost saving and avoidance. And the table here shows figures for the period April 2023 to September 2023.....

Year to Date
<b>Blaenau Gwent Total Savings</b>
£677,870
<b>Blaenau Gwent Cost Avoidance</b>
£261,524



**LONG TERM - Generic MyST foster carers are yet to be recruited to act as realistic options for step down placements for complex children or as avoidant placements for those children who may escalate to residential placements.**

What you told us...

Just popping you a quick message, to say thank you so much for all your kindness towards me and Maya she has definitely found a real happiness in group.

# Case Study – Residential provision for Children Looked After within Blaenau Gwent



Currently the Local Authority is dependent on residential care through neighbouring local authorities if space is available, but predominantly through private providers. This means placements can be out of county and takes young people away from family, school and social networks.

In its Programme for Government, Welsh Ministers made a commitment to ‘eliminate private profit from the care of looked after children by the end of the Senedd term.’ To help with this, the Health and Social Care Integration and Rebalancing Capital Fund was set up by the Welsh Government which can be used to invest in local authority residential homes to ensure they are able to meet individuals more complex needs closer to home.

**Following a successful bid to this Welsh Government Radical Reform grant, Blaenau Gwent was provided with money to purchase two detached 5 bedroom houses, at a cost of approximately £900,000 along with a further £700,000 for refurbishment costs.**

The houses are located next to each other on a private lane on Picton Road in Dukestown, Tredegar and following the necessary works will be **fit for purpose buildings providing a residential home that will house a maximum of 4 children**. The home will have no age restrictions and it will depend on match/suitability/assessment of risk etc. The **2nd house will be for 2 emergency beds and 3 independent living units** (these will be **specifically for our Local Authority Young People who want to try independent living**).

Now that the houses have been purchased, a local residents committee has been set up and plans drawn up for the refurbishment works. The development of this residential provision is now ongoing with the approval / sign off of building adaptations to ensure regulation compliance and progression to tender and procurement for the works which will be completed by a private provider as the scale of works will require a project manager.

This exciting project, which is **planned for completion by April 2024**, will ensure we are well placed to meet requirements following the eliminate agenda ( It will become law from 2026 that LA’s cannot place children looked after in for profit care providers) and Blaenau Gwent will house **an appropriate, cost effective property within the borough to provide, safe, high-quality care for our local children.**

# Quality Standard 4

Resilience within communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively supporting people who need care and/or support including carers to learn, develop and participate in society

Page 1037

Our preventative measures include wide-scale measures aimed at the wider population as well as targeted interventions for individuals



A longitudinal study we commissioned to be undertaken by Worcester university has started with meetings arranged with families, children, young adults and carers open to the Disability Team and who are going through transition services.

The study involves researching a cohort of about 15 children and young adults (aged 14-24) open to the Disability (0-25) Team and following them over the next 5 years through the transition process, during their teenage years, and beyond into adulthood (until 25).

The purpose of the study is to gather data on services available for this cohort, challenges and opportunities in order to inform our service delivery in the long term.

The study is progressing well, with initial contact being made by the team with the families and sessions being arranged to mop out those



Provider managers have commenced engagement with Coleg Gwent (Ebbw Vale Campus) Health and Social Care students and will be offering work based placements to approximately 11 students during the 2023/24 academic year. This will enable our tenants / residents to engage with the students and in addition we are planning for students from the Hair and Beauty courses to provide sessions at our Care Homes.



South East Wales Adoption Service  
Achieving More Together  
Gwasaneth Mabwysiadu Deddwyrain Cymru  
Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd I

Understanding the child days and trauma nurture timelines are completed for children ages 18 months + this provides adoptive families with enhanced analysis of the impact a child's early year may have on them which assists in the preparation for parents and informs support planning.

The aim is that all children will have a trauma nurture timeline prior to adoption but currently unable to meet this timeline.



## The focus for our work with carers

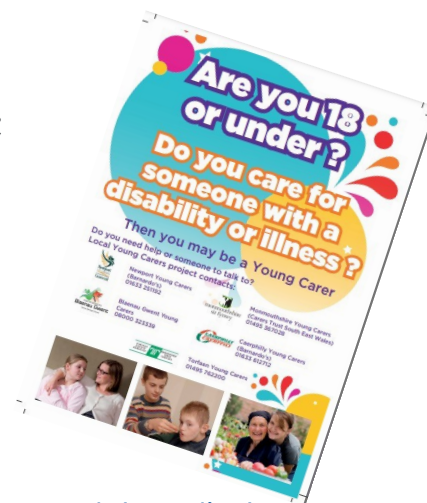
Blaenau Gwent and its partner organisations continue to work together to achieve the following outcomes:

- Carers will be respected as care partners and will have access to the services they need to support them in their caring role.
- Carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role.
- Carers will be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.
- Carers health and well-being will be promoted to assist them to stay mentally and physically well and their dignity respected.
- Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, to enjoy positive childhoods and to optimise their abilities.

## The delivery of activities specifically for young carers has continued during the reporting period and include the following .....



- Weekly Youth Club;
- Young Carers Forum;
- Driving lessons; and
- Duke of Edinburgh.



[https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/media/giym2kzb\\_blaenau\\_gwent\\_young\\_carers.pdf](https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/media/giym2kzb_blaenau_gwent_young_carers.pdf)



**Children Looked After (CLA) mentors continue to ensure Personal Education Plan's are up to date.**

Resilience within communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively supporting people who need care and/or support including carers to learn develop and participate in society

Support is offered to promote successful transitions between key stages. Exclusion and destinations of school leavers continue to be monitored alongside academic achievements. Children Looked After education team will report on this years learners destinations, attainment and exclusions in December and will be recorded in the end of year report.



The Local Authority celebrated 5 care leavers who secured their places to study at University following receipt of their A-Level results in August..

What you told us...



*I can't thank you enough for all you do. In my parent assessment they asked me to name people I trust and I said you. You never judge me, and I can be honest with you. However big or small my problems are I feel so much better when I've spoken to you. Thank you for helping me.*



**Currently there are more children waiting than adopters available.**

**Recruitment of adopters is an area of improvement needed for the service.**



As a directorate we continue to contribute to the safe reduction of looked after children strategy -As at end of September 2023, there were 17 children subject to placement with parents and 3 in kinship placements in the 14+ team.

This demonstrated a reduction since the beginning of the year.

The team are actively working on progressing two discharges of Care Order's to Special Guardianship Order's - a sibling group placed with Independent fostering agency carers. This is in partnership with the Special Guardianship Order team.

In addition to this, the 14+ team are involved with the Eliminate profit Task & Finish which has recently sent letters to Independent Fostering Agency carers who are caring for our Children Looked After children currently to consider whether they would consider an application for a Special guardianship order.



Delivery of services and outcomes are proportionate, targeted, and sustainable, and supported through the promotion of social enterprises, co-operatives, user-led services and the third sector.

Resilience within communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively supporting people who need care and/or support including carers to learn develop and participate in society



The pace of the cycles of the National Transfer Scheme are increasing meaning **Blaenau Gwent is assuming responsibility for UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) children more frequently.**



**APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2023**  
**= 8 CHILDREN**



**APRIL 2022 - MARCH 2023**  
**- 7 CHILDREN**

There are no independent placement options for these children which means we are relying on Internal Fostering Agency placements often considerably out of county (Nottingham, London, Birmingham).

**Post 18 planning will be significantly impacted by the placement of these children.**

As an authority we recognise that the support provided by unpaid carers is vital in allowing some citizens to continue living independently at home and we continue to provide support to ensure that the carers wellbeing is also maintained.....

The opportunity of **free training** is offered to all unpaid carers who want to influence decisions or organisation on behalf of carers in their local area.

Blaenau Gwent provide **free carers wellbeing groups** allowing carers to meet with like-minded peers, where they can form support networks and also learn new skills

**carers WALES** **gofalwyr CYMRU**

**Speak up for unpaid carers!**

**Represent carers in Wales training**  
by Carers Wales

Free training for all unpaid carers who want to influence services, decisions, or organisations on behalf of carers in their local area, region or Wales-wide.

- How to get involved
- How to be influential in meetings
- The policy developments you need to know about

Regular training offered at introductory and advanced levels

Sign up on **Eventbrite**  
or email [info@carerswales.org](mailto:info@carerswales.org)



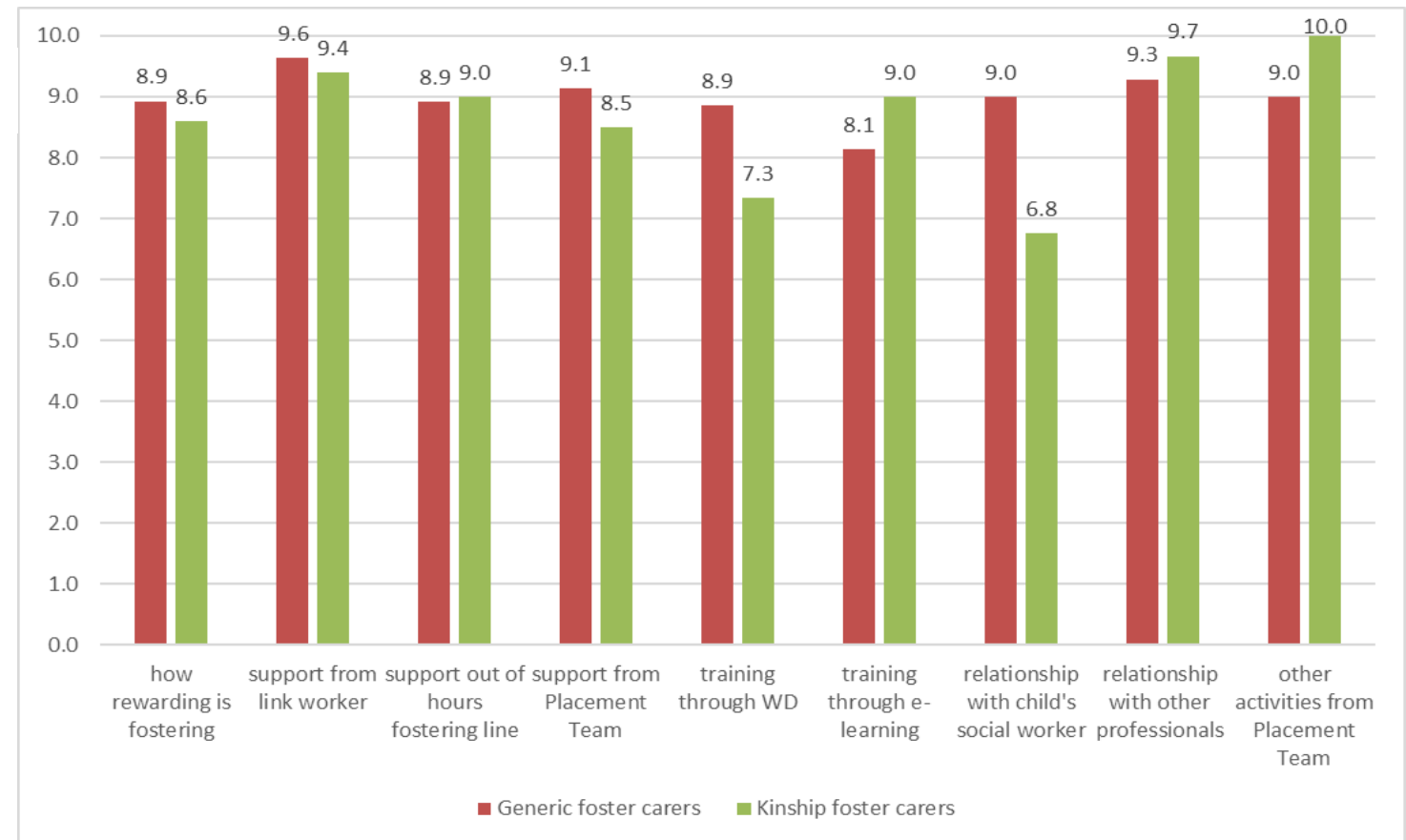
<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/events/blaenau-gwent-free-carers-wellbeing-groups-1/>

**What you told us...**

Foster carer, offered her thanks for the diligent work done in relation to contact and was thankful that was always punctual in contacting her about arrangements and confirming when family members were to attend etc. 'She is always friendly and professional in her approach to carers and family members. Would you please pass this on to her and offer our thanks for making family time run smoothly'

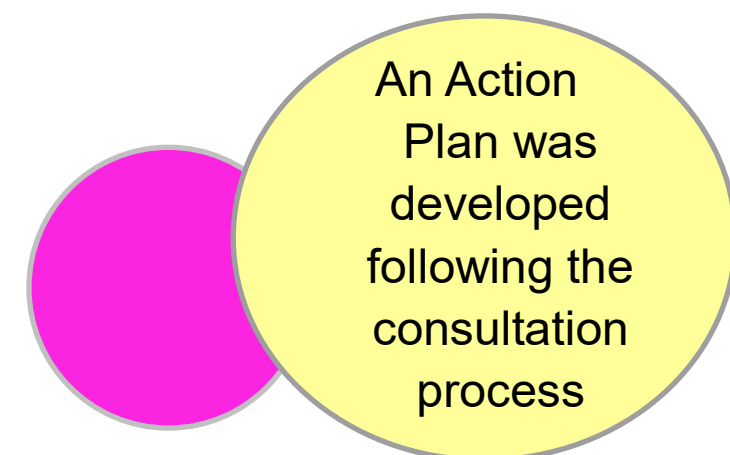
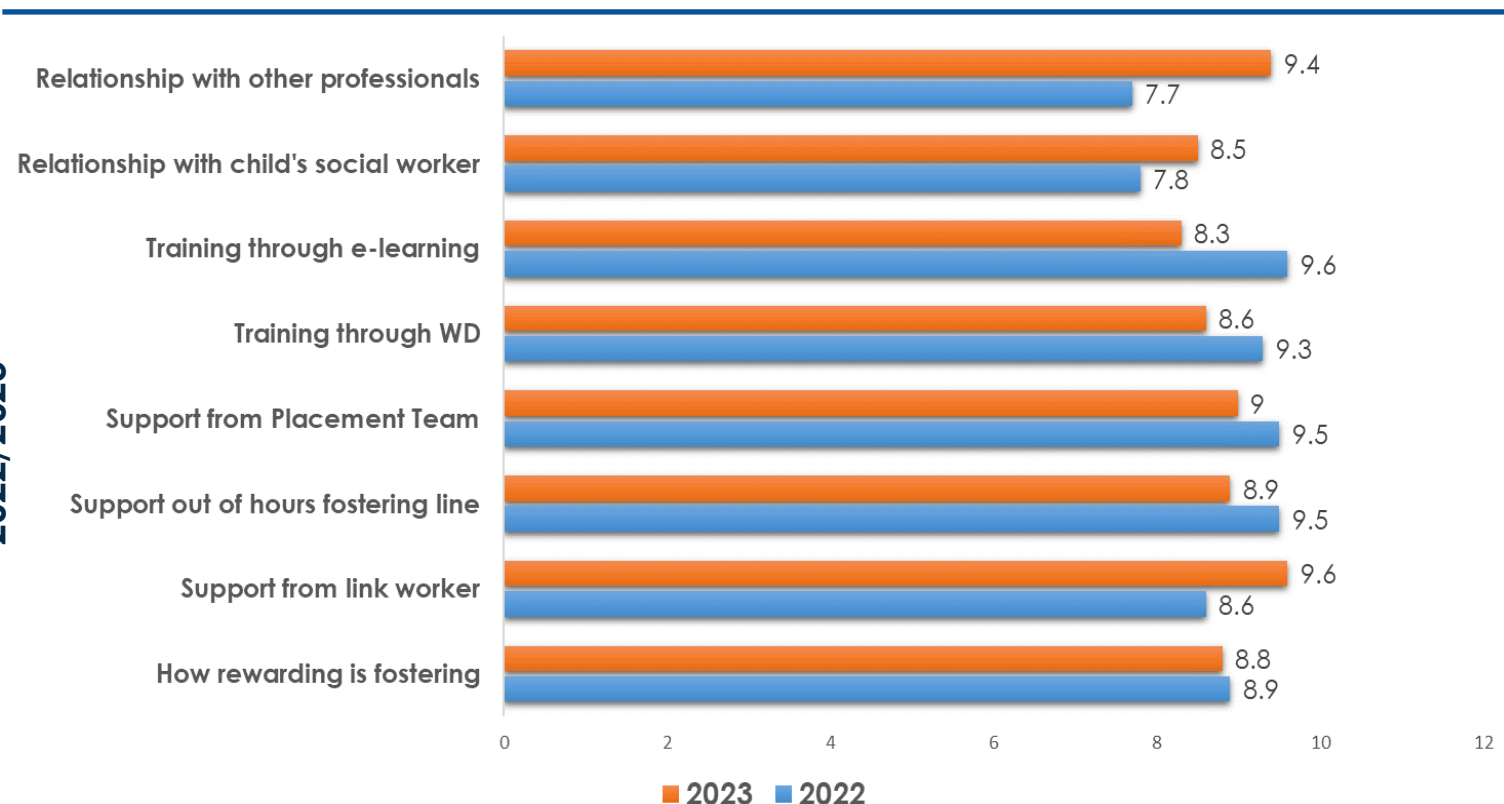
# Case Study - Foster Carer Consultation

A **consultation process** is carried out annually from which feed-back informs **future improvements/changes to the fostering service**. On 31st March 2023 in Blaenau Gwent there were 44 generic foster carers households and 24 kinship foster carers households (with children in placement). All foster carers were sent a letter (and email) from the service manager with a questionnaire and were invited to respond anonymously either completing the hard copy of the questionnaire or the survey developed in Microsoft Forms. In total we had a **28% response rate** of which 14 questionnaires ( **32%** ) were off **generic foster carers** and 5 ( **21%** ) questionnaires from **kinship foster carers**. This response rate is an improvement on the previous two years when it was 11.4% in 2022 and 16.9% in 2021. **The responses as a whole are positive, as it can be seen in the graph to the right:**



The lower average scoring of **6.8** for kinship foster carers in terms of satisfaction of relationship with the child's social worker is given by a low scoring of 1 (out of 10) from one individual. The scoring was followed by the following comments: *"I have rated this very low due to low communication and people skills and very poor decision making. Lack of knowledge when dealing with kinship families. I must add that I have a new social worker since end of December so cannot comment on this relationship and communication at present"*. As the foster carer gave her name these comments are being looked into.

Comparing data from consultations 2022/2023





# Case Study – Supporting Adults with disabilities in The 'Stute Café'



Social Services have recently launched the opening of a **Community Café based at the Blaina Institute, High Street Blaina.**

The department have been working in partnership with Blaina Community Institute Limited, to develop a catering enterprise within our Community Options Service (day service).



**The café will support adults with disabilities to have placements as part of their day activity offer - giving the catering students an opportunity to develop invaluable life, social and future work skills within the world of catering and hospitality.**

It will also give us an opportunity to showcase the delicious cakes and other goodies that are produced by our talented Social Care team as part of our existing Community Meals light snacks and afternoon tea service – which already provides nutritious and tasty treats to the most vulnerable and isolated people in Blaenau Gwent. The Café offers both sit in or takeaway service and has access to free Wi-Fi.



The Café opened for the first service on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September with a formal launch opening party planned in early October 23 as a way of thanking all our Blaenau Gwent Corporate colleagues, Blaina Community Institute Ltd and Aneurin Leisure Trust who have supported the team at Community Options Social Services to get our latest venture finally open.



# Chapter 3(c) - Partnership & Integration

## Quality Standard 5

Effective partnerships are in place to commission and fully deliver fully integrated, high quality sustainable outcomes for people



Effective collaboration and partnership working assists us in identifying existing needs and shape and commission future sustainable services.



Barnardos has delivered the following during the reporting period with funding from the Local Authority:

- Young Person healthy relationships – 6 weeks,
- Young Person confidence club – 4 weeks,
- Young Person 'My Voice, My Choice' programme – 4 weeks,
- Family sensory play – 4 weeks,
- Parent nurture programme – 10 weeks and
- a 'Big Breakfast' event to celebrate carers week.



Teams work tirelessly within multi agency partnerships to manage some challenging young people who are embroiled in anti social and criminal behaviour. Plans of support are being managed at multiple layers of intervention to work to reduce the likelihood of further prosecution of these Children Looked After children.

We are exploring options for Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and Children Services to access hydrotherapy pool etc at Bert Denning Centre.

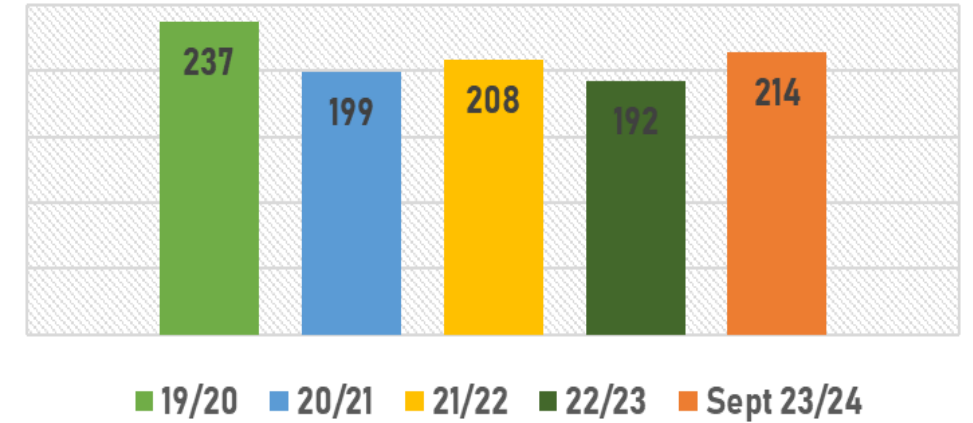


Discussions have been held with Torfaen County Borough Council to consider joint working with Bettercare Occupational Therapy to support Blaenau Gwent Community Resource Team with Bettercare discussions and decisions.

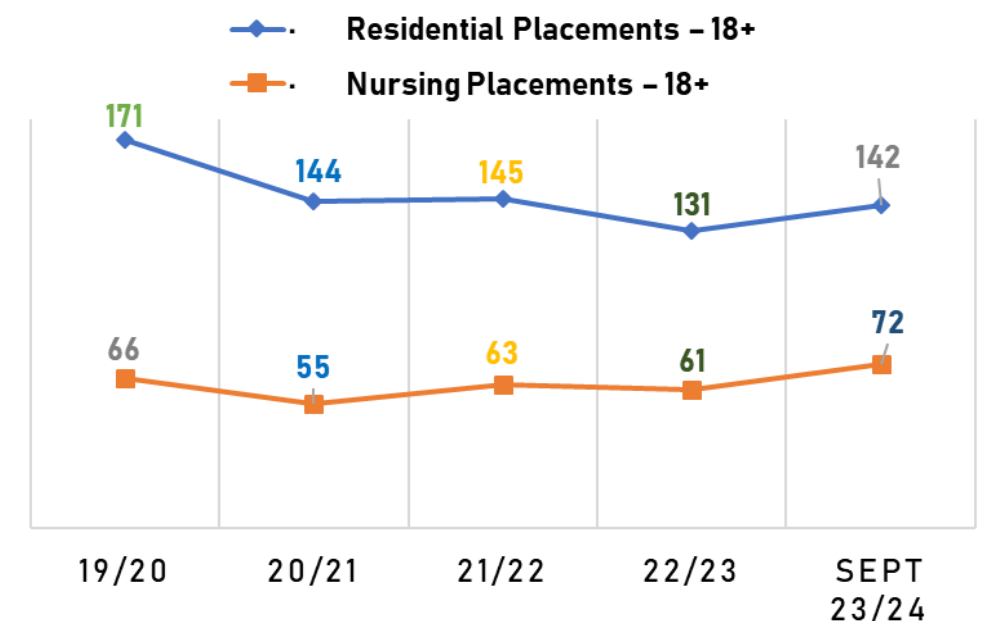
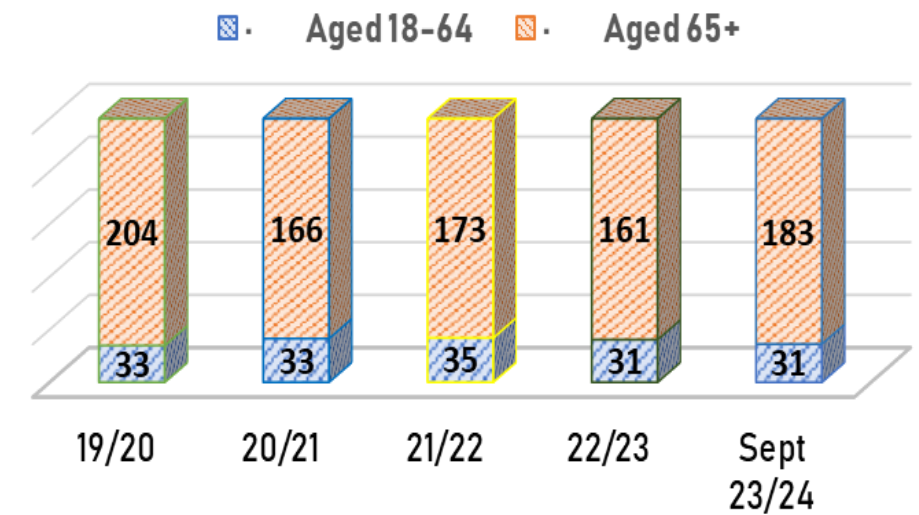


Effective partnership working delivers high quality care & outcomes for our adult clients in residential & nursing home care

The number of adult clients in residential & nursing home care (as at):



AGE RANGE OF THE ABOVE



Effective partnerships are in place to commission and fully deliver fully integrated, high quality sustainable outcomes for people

What you told us...

A **Gwent Dementia Action Plan** has been **developed** and aligns to the 20 All Wales Dementia Pathway of Standards which will also include performance measures.



Workstream subgroups have been developed to take forward this programme of work which includes the following workstreams:

- Engagement;
- Memory Assessment Service/Dementia Connector role;
- Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter; and
- Education/Workforce and Measurement/Performance.


The recruitment of 2 support officers with Alzheimers UK is also in progress.

Developments at **Cwrt Mytton Residential Care Home** have now began with architects visiting - looking to develop a **centre of excellence for dementia care**. As part of this process there are plans to visit similar facilities in Wales who share similar plans/visions and priorities as us and learn from them on what works well.

Just wanted to say how grateful we are for the professionalism, care & compassion you showed to X on her discharge from hospital. You made a difficult time so much easier for both of us and Mam



Identified lack of move on accommodation in the community for single persons is impacting on affordable housing options for care leavers. This is also negatively impacting on young people remaining within supported accommodation longer thus reducing the movement within these supported living schemes. To alleviate this issue there is an accommodation task and finish group which sits under the Corporate Parenting Action Plan

 – we have tried to work with Registered Social Landlords and housing strategy as well as our housing department.

The complex issues being identified with some young people (risk taking, challenging behaviour and Mental Health needs) are also acting as significant barriers to accessing supported/ semi-supported accommodation options in the borough currently.



A Gwent wide 'whole-system' approach is in operation to support people who are experiencing a mental health crisis and includes:

- Mental Health 111- point of contact live 28th November, this provides a point of contact that is accessible for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis or emotional distress within Gwent - also for family/friends and carers
- Emergency Department support service has been introduced at Grange University Hospital Emergency Department, peer support workers provide support to those in emotional distress, preventing escalation and improve quality of mental health support services. Alternatives to hospital
- Mental Health Shared Lives service continues to be successful in minimising those in crisis being admitted to psychiatric units and also supporting earlier discharge. Citizens report improved satisfaction.
- Crisis Support House, Ty Cynol for those who meet requirements of a safe stay

# Case Study - Partnership and Integration delivering positive outcomes.

## Schools recognised for work with Children Looked After

Children's services have led on the development and launch of the Children Looked After friendly schools initiative which is being more widely recognised with 2 schools now gaining the status.

This initiative aims to promote good practice within schools and educational settings for work with pupils who are in the care of the Local Authority. As a service we provide a supporting toolkit, working and consulting with partners in education and schools.

To achieve the quality mark, schools need to demonstrate evidence of their Children Looked After friendly practices, which is verified through visits to school and listening to learners and staff. Children's Services (CLA Education/ Safeguarding in education) lead on this verification process following a school request to be considered for the award. This involves listening to learners, discussions with school leaders and representatives from the wider staffing group and consultation with the wider children's services team (social workers, Independent Review Officers, Team managers). Findings are shared with education directorate colleagues prior to schools achieving the award.

We also support schools with any aspects of their development when starting to use the Children Looked After friendly school self-evaluation tool, including the provision of a training presentation suitable for whole school staff to develop their understanding of children looked after. We regularly refer to the initiative and share examples of good practice during the termly Children Looked After designate forums.

Well done to Tredegar Comprehensive and Ebbw Fawr Primary who have become the first schools to be awarded our Children Looked After Friendly Schools Quality Mark. The schools have been presented with plaques in recognition of this achievement.



Feedback from Gwent Attachment Service on the work the childcare staff have completed with them...



*'Hope you and the Flying Start team are doing well. I wanted to get in touch to share that the Attachment Service have been invited to present at the Flying Start/ Families First conference this year and are hoping to share some of the amazing work the childcare team have partnered with us in so far. Our thoughts were to share how our service model relates and can offer support to staff within the early years sector, followed by an overview of the incredible journey the team have been on with us over the past 2+ years. We recently held a 1 year post-training focus group with them and the feedback on how they have implemented and learned from the training was fantastic, something we think will really showcase the value and impact of attachment and trauma informed training for staff in this sector and the fantastic work of the team to embed this approach and benefit the families they work with. We envision this as a true celebration of our hugely successful partnership with the team, one that we hope to continue into the future'*

# Case Study - Foster Care Fortnight May 2023

Foster Wales has supported regionally with events for the Fostering Fortnight including-

- Video of local care experienced young people;
- Digital Ivan featuring video driving around the region during the bank holiday weekend;
- Boosted social media ad of the video;
- approaching local businesses with specially created Foster Wales paper chain people asking them to lend their support and become a 'Fostering Friendly' employer -making it easier for their employees to combine fostering and working.
- Video of staff in those businesses holding up the chains was created and promoted;
- Social media tiles including localised content from foster carers;
- Radio advert on Capitol Radio;
- National 3 peaks challenge;
- 2 regional press releases.

The events triggered a higher number of fostering enquiries with **10 Foster Care enquiries followed up by 5 home visits and 1 new fostering household approved by the Panel during quarter 2.**

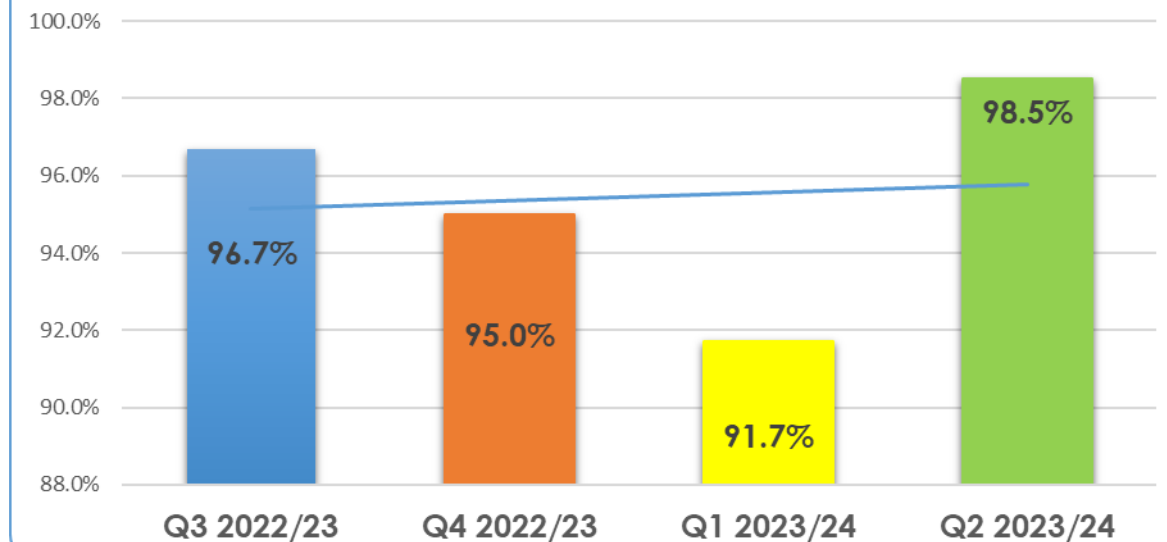
Right click and open hyperlink - foster wales calls on welsh employers to support foster carers.....



At the end of the reporting Period (April–September) we had **73 approved foster carers**, 29 of which were kinship carers.

This equates to the same number as at the end of 22/23. However during the reporting period **10 foster carers were newly appointed and 10 foster carers de-registered.**

Percentage of Foster Carers that have an up to date review.



# Case Study - Partnership working with schools, Cwm Sensory Garden & Hub open day & Sofrydd Flying Start.

The Cwm Sensory Garden and hub open day held provided an opportunity for children aged 0-5 and their families residing in those areas to explore the sensory garden, engage with staff, and see what activities, programmes and support is available at the hub.

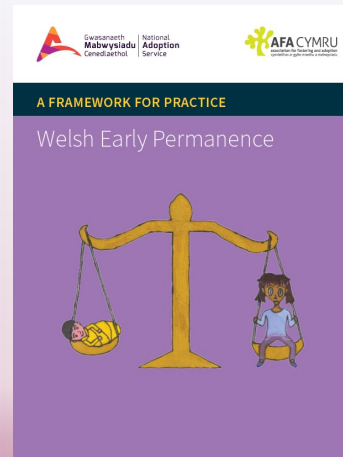


Extensive building work has been carried out at Sofrydd Flying Start Hub including an extension. These improvements raise the standard to now align with other Flying Start hubs.



# Quality Standard 6

• People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners



Welsh Early Permanence (WEP) is the care planning option that provides a child with a secure base as early as possible, when weeks and months really do matter; it enables healthy brain development and attachment through safe, predictable relationships with sensitive adults, and minimises the distressing moves that cause further trauma. WEP is the umbrella term given to the practice of placing children, with foster carers who are also approved as prospective adoptive parents. The WEP carer supports the child in the same way as other mainstream foster carers, undertaking all fostering tasks, including facilitating contact. If the child's care plan becomes that of adoption, WEP carers have the capacity to go on to offer that child a long-term permanent home.

**Welsh early permanence** is now being considered within care planning processes in Blaenau Gwent. **First WEP adopter was approved** in this period with a potential link with a Blaenau Gwent child.

**Life journey work** coordinator is providing therapeutic sessions to a Blaenau Gwent placed child - this is proving beneficial to the success of what is a second adoption placement for this young person. This specialised training has been invaluable for this specific family.

More widely the coordinator is **sharing her knowledge and skills with the adoption support team** so the ideas, skills and techniques can be used in their work.



Life journey work coordinator also held **training for family time workers** in July and this was well attended across the 5 South East Wales Adoption Service Local Authorities and included 2 workers from Blaenau Gwent. The coordinator also ran **putting the puzzle together training** in the period.

Blaenau Gwent had 5 children matched for adoption in the reporting period and **100%** had their **life journey material available within timescale.**

**Need to identify a life journey work champion for Blaenau Gwent**



We are now collating data regarding contact that is set up for adopted children, this data is manually collated and further **work is needed to support childcare social workers to complete agreements in a timely manner**

Earlier conversations at matching stage for children with adopters are taking place regarding potential post adoption contact with an **emphasis on promoting contact with siblings**. Contact agreements now reflect this.

There has been a **11 meetings for birth parents with prospective adopters** during the reporting period, an increase which evidences the change in

SEWAS continues to utilise **in house psychology support provision** for any additional needs outside those that the team can meet. This along with referrals to Pathways provision run by adoption UK funded by Welsh government investment grant **enables families to access specialised support** avoiding a need to source external provision wherever possible.

<https://www.adoptcymru.com/> - NAS

<https://southeastwalesadoption.co.uk/> - keeping it local - SEWAS

People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners

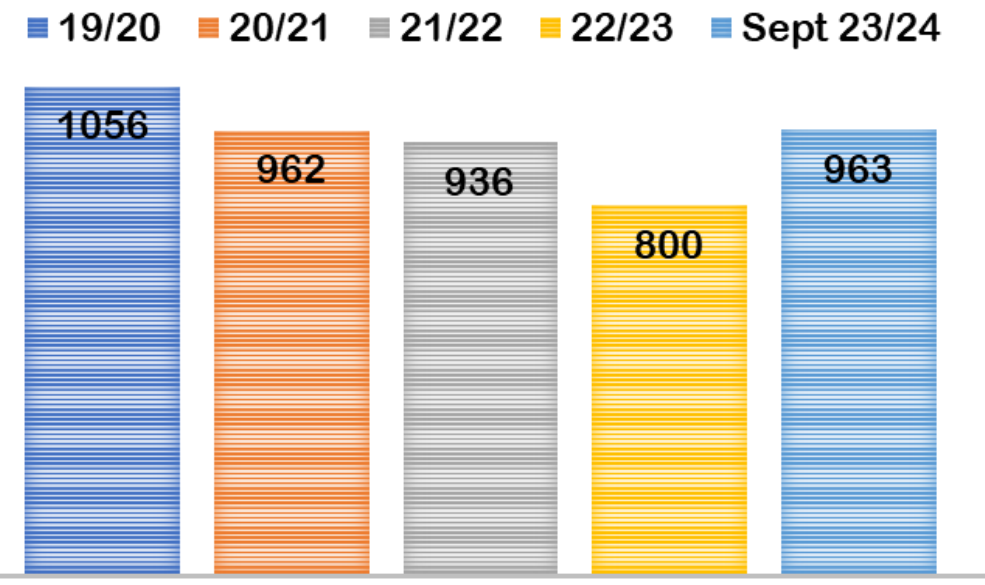
Our **new Promoting Independence pods** at Augusta Respite Centre are developing well following an allocation of funding from the Welsh Government Regional Integration Fund (RIF) grant. They are due to open in the Autumn of 2023 and will provide opportunities for people with a learning disability to experience independent living in a safe environment. Final orders of furniture / assistive technology etc has been completed and we are now awaiting delivery.



Short Breaks, sometimes called respite, provide parents and carers with a break from caring for a few hours in the day or an overnight stay. Short breaks can help prevent family breakdowns and ease the stresses of everyday family life. We provide a range of short break services in collaboration with partners.

Whilst there is no formal respite/short breaks strategy in place for children with disabilities, we have provision of regular respite for 7 children :-

-  1 with Local Authority foster carers
-  1 with commercial residential Placement
-  6 with Augusta House.



The number of adults with a Care & Support Plan

What you told us...



To Tracey  
 Thank you so much for supporting me + Freya over the past few weeks.  
 THANK YOU  
 also thanks so much for teaching me new techniques to battle Freya's meltdowns  
 Love  
 Tyler + Freya

PIC-COLLAGE



# Case Study - Coronation Weekend

The Early Years Childcare and Play Team invited children and parents to Blaina Integrated Children's Centre for a garden party to celebrate the Kings Coronation on 4th May. 25 children and parents enjoyed sensory play, stories, arts and crafts and outdoor games followed by a picnic outside in the play area. Lots of fun was had by all and families were able to take their crafts home to decorate their own houses and gardens ready for the Coronation weekend.



# Case Study - 14 Plus Team Win Social Care Wales Accolade Award

Our Children's Services 14 Plus Team have won the prestigious **Social Care Wales 2022 Accolade Award** in the category of 'Building brighter futures for children and families'.

The Award was won by the team for showcasing an excellent example of social care practice for a project titled 'A Place to Grow'.

This is a great achievement and recognition of the team's commitment for high level of support and services being delivered to this cohort (currently 123 young carers identified and registered by the service).



L-R) Simon Burch - Social Care Wales Board Member, Nicola Williams, Alison Ramshaw, Beth Thomas; Aimee Evans, Hannah Watts & Sue Evans - Chief Executive of Social Care Wales

The project is aimed to:

- Provide a safe space for Children Looked After, care leavers & children in need of care & support;
- To empower and help develop sustainable life skills;
- Be a part of the local community;
- As well as giving them a safe space to visit and enjoy as their own.



*The award has recognised the 14 Plus project as an excellent example of social care practice; keeping a person-centred practice at the very heart of their work and improving outcomes for our children, young people and their families.*



# Chapter 3(d) - Well-being

## Key Activities

The well-being of people needing our care and support and carers needing support is paramount to service delivery and this includes respecting their culture, beliefs and other personal characteristics, and respecting their wishes and feelings

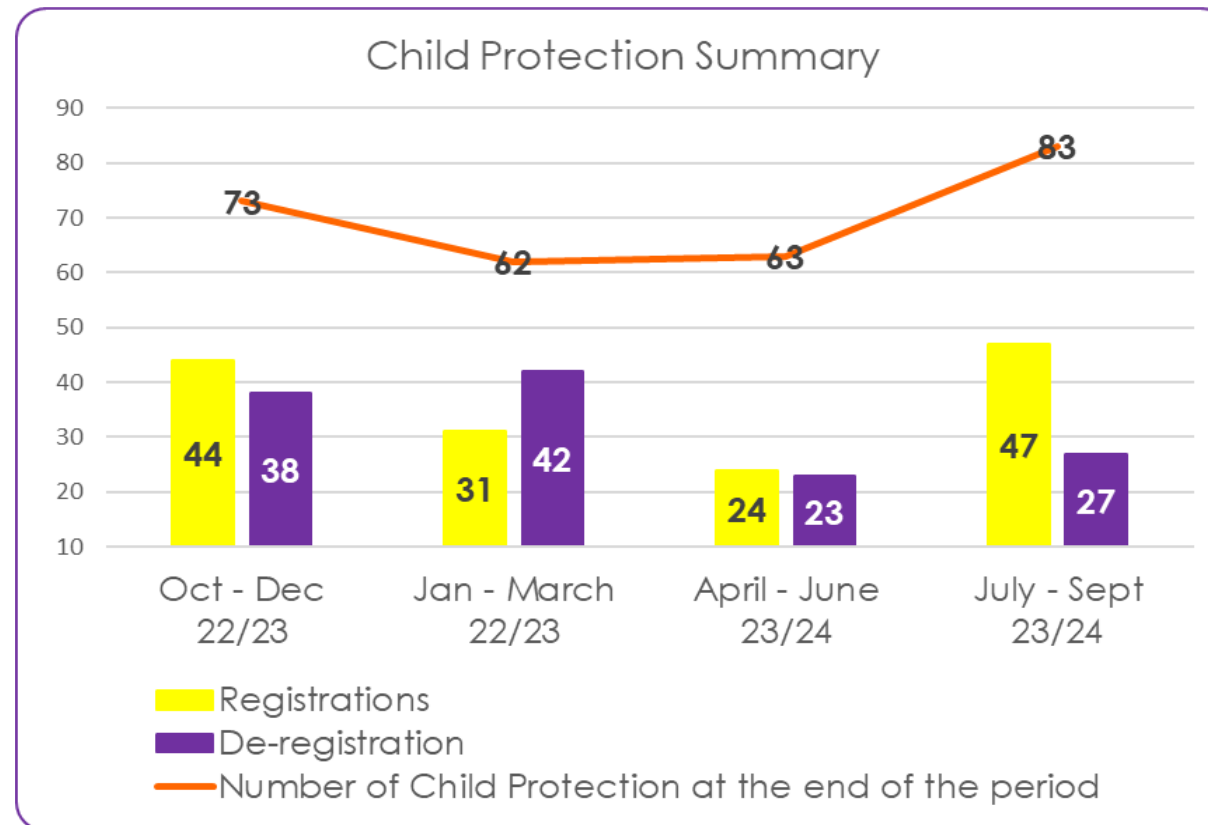


The Department recognises the importance of having robust and sustainable **Safeguarding Teams across both Adult and Children Services** to ensure we not only meet our legislative requirements, but that we are also able to protect our most vulnerable citizens.

## Quality Standard 7

• People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect and any other types of harm

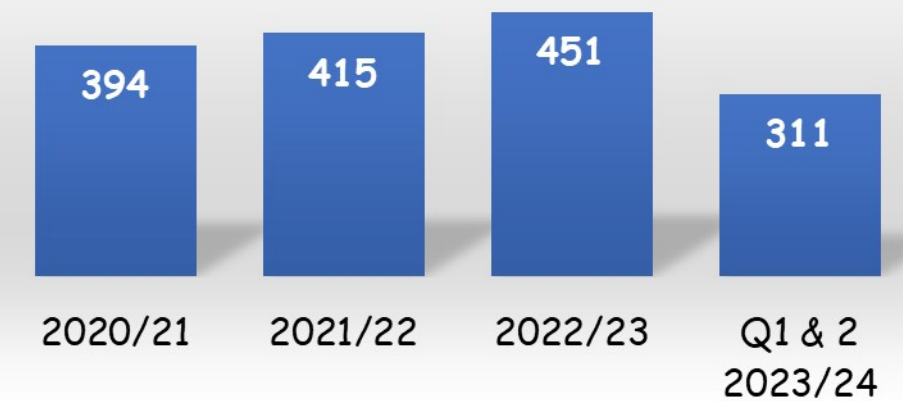
Safeguarding Manager continues to provide quarterly Child Protection reports to quality assure Child Protection performance. Q1 & 2 Child Protection reports identified that 100% Initial Child Protection Conferences were held in timescales.



As at end of Quarter 2 there were 83 children on the Child Protection register in comparison to 63 children as at end of Quarter 1. Analysis of this data will be considered as part of Q2 Child Protection report by Safeguarding manager.

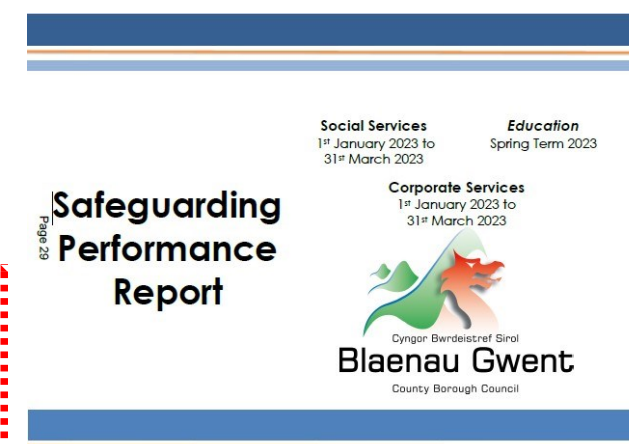
There is further work to be completed in respect of child protection conferences being more strongly aligned with outcome focussed practice which will be considered later this year with Safeguarding Team.

### Number of adults suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect reported



We have seen an **increase in adult safeguarding referrals** during 2023/24 compared to the same period of 2022/23.

**April—September 2023 = 311**  
**April—September 2022 = 246**



Right click here and open hyperlink to view our most recent Safeguarding Performance Report



## Key Activities

Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are continually reviewed and improved

All newly appointed Council staff are informed of the Council's safeguarding arrangements as part of their induction programme.



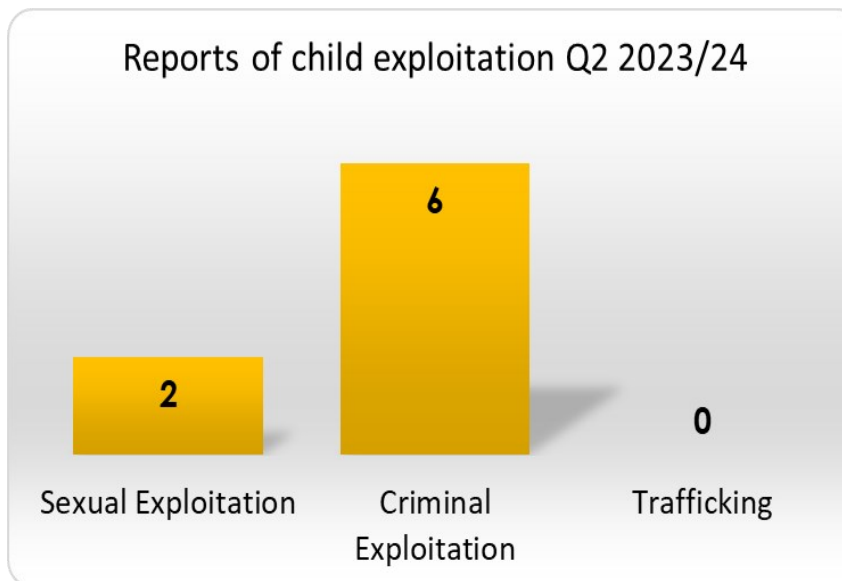
The Safeguarding Education Manager undertakes a programme of visits to all schools over a 3 year period for **Safeguarding Quality Assurance (QA)**.

All schools have now been completed during the academic year 2022-23 (September 2022—July 2023).

There is also a Safeguarding QA process in place for education services used by Blaenau Gwent to cover out of county independent settings and alternative provisions. 3 of these provisions underwent a QA visit in the reporting period (April 2023 - September 2023).

People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect and any other types of harm

**Safeguarding performance** is good, **100%** of newly registered children were **visited within 10 days** of being registered.



For children on the child protection register, the average number of days they have been registered is **124.9**



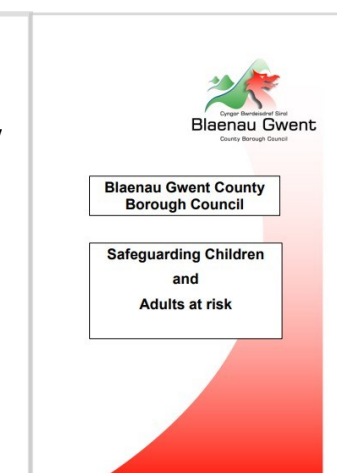
Prevention/Long term - Safeguarding Education Team continue to work closely with educational establishments to meet the educational needs of children looked after. The team have appointed 2 education support workers via the Virtual Schools Grant to further enhance the educational support available to our CLA children.



Integration - 14+ and SAT team continue to utilise Family Group Conference service within Supporting Change Team where this is appropriate and required. This has been particularly relevant for Statutory Assessment Team when considering the requirement for safeguards for families within enquiry periods.

All safeguarding referrals continue to be managed in line with the **Wales Safeguarding Procedures** and statutory requirements.

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



What you told us...

We moved into our new house today, we are only here today because of your help. Thank you so much.

No complaints, assessment went as was told and completed on time. nice and friendly all round, only minor thing was I was not informed we were under review, and not told that a meeting had been arranged by the duty team. thanks for all the support.

## Key Activities

An audit framework for the Safeguarding Team to work to over the next 2 years has been proposed in order to satisfy ourselves on our practice across



The Safeguarding Manager has developed an Independent Review Officer (IRO) **good practice standards action plan** during this period to act as a framework to benchmark the IRO roles and responsibilities against. Progress against the action plan will be reported on with the annual IRO report.



As an Authority we continue to examine opportunities to deliver our S.16 responsibilities to promote Social Enterprises. As a directorate currently, we commission some social enterprises in Adult Services (Vision 21 etc) and have been working on a regional and national level to look at opportunities for social enterprise models to meet health and social care needs (Gwent micro carers / national subsidiary model for domiciliary care etc). Plus we have discussed as part of the catering enterprise model we are developing in Blaenau Gwent opportunities to develop in to either a social enterprise or Local Authority trading company as part of our commercial and income plans. The self assessment tool has been put on the November Directors meeting agenda for the suggestion of this tool to be used on a regional basis to give us a Gwent picture and enable us to progress this area of work further.



People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect and any other types of harm

A Section 47 enquiry means that Childrens Social Care must carry out an investigation when they have 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.



The majority of S47 investigations are being completed by our SAT team. Those S47 investigations in SAT or 14+ that require an extended enquiry timeframe are approved by the service manager. The IPC S47 recommendations Task & Finish Group continues to meet to ensure the recommendations are being implemented, this is chaired by the Safeguarding lead.

**All staff within teams have completed the relevant level of safeguarding training.**



**Other Training includes: -**

- training on Circle of Security parenting programme
- Non-violent resistance which is a specific way of working with children when they are angry and violent
- Attachment training and substance misuse.
- Medication training

## What you told us...

When I had a phone call saying I was having a support worker I was very anxious about not knowing what was going to happen. The support worker came to my house she explained step by step how a support worker works. This made my mental health feel better that I went to the doctors to get it sorted. In the short amount of time of coming out she's been amazing and has given us the help we needed and everything that needed doing has now been achieved. She has made me feel so comfortable and has been so supporting and been so helpful with everything.

# Quality Standard 8

• People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible

We consider and build upon people's personal circumstances, capabilities, networks and local Communities when providing care & support.

**Digital Switchover** - A TEC Position Statement which includes a project plan in relation to the digital switchover and was presented to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in April 23 and a financial impact report has now been completed ready for submission to Senior Leadership Team in Quarter 3. The Gwent Regional Team are also in the process of developing a region paper in relation to the financial impact on the Gwent Local Authorities which is also due to be completed in Quarter 3.



TEC Cymru is looking to hold a Gwent wide event in November inviting providers of digital lifeline alarms to attend to showcase their equipment. Following the outcome of both the SLT and regional report a **project plan will be drafted to take forward the digital switchover in Blaenau Gwent.**



A cultural change is needed to consider assistive technology as a solution that enables people to achieve their outcomes and live independently and helps prevent/delay costly health and social care interventions. The development of the smart flat assists with this by further promoting assistive technology to professionals, individuals and their families/carers.

There are significant financial implications in the switchover to digital which is due to take place in 2025. It is critical we fully understand these implications on the local authority so we are able to continue to provide a service that meets the needs of the citizens of Blaenau Gwent.

Financial challenges have been identified in relation to some of the new technologies we are piloting especially if an annual subscription cost is attached. Care Providers are less likely to accept this type of technology due to the annual charge. This element has been included in the Position Paper which was presented to Senior Leadership Team in April 2023.

**Varied care and support packages are provided for our carers.....**



A new Bridging the Gap Flexible Time Out Service is being piloted across the Gwent Region, the pilot is in its early stages but already there has been a number of carers who have benefitted from the service, one of the Blaenau Gwent carers who has been successful with their application has been able to get some quality time out to visit family in London knowing the person they look after has been well cared for by a participating care agency.



People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible

We continue to work with people to develop solutions which support their individual needs

### THE NUMBER OF ADULTS PROVIDED WITH ELECTRONIC ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DURING THE YEAR



### Number of Disabled Facilities Grants Completed



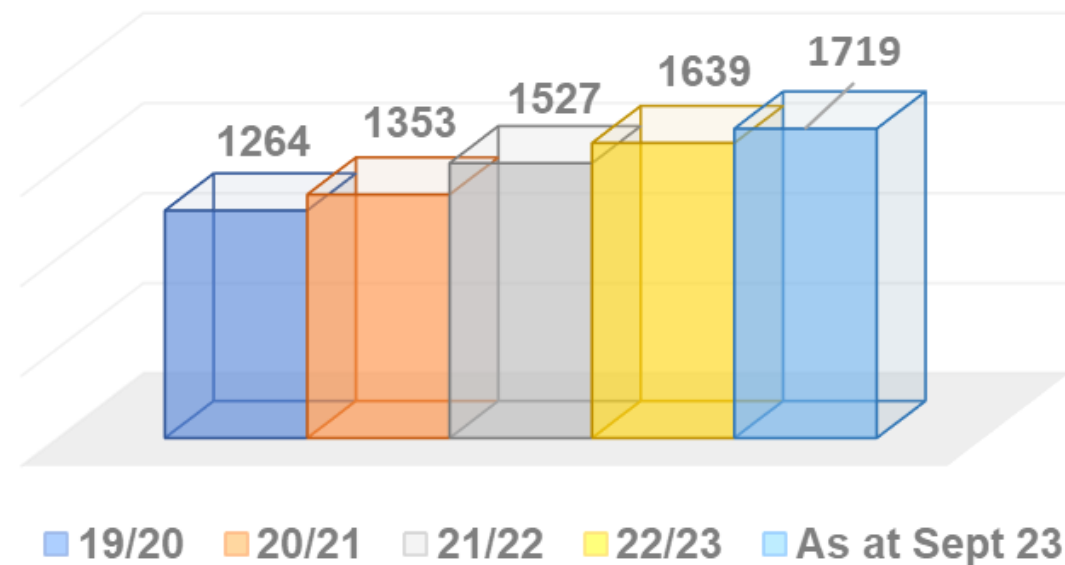
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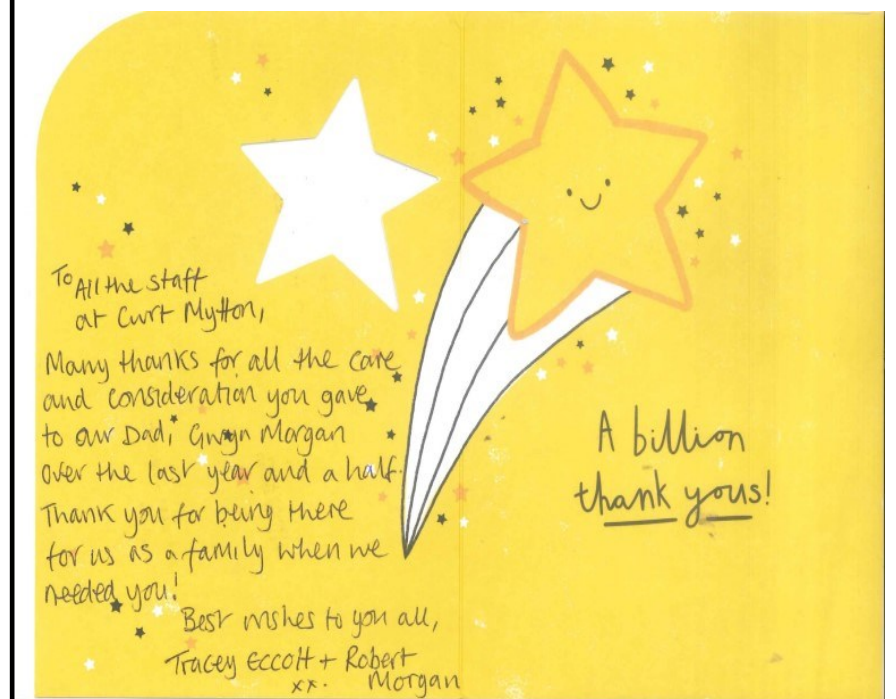
Further work needs to be done around this to ensure that all those that are no longer in receipt of equipment are ended on the system



### The total number of adult clients currently in receipt of electronic assistive technology



### What you told us...



# Case Study - Supporting our carers

Blaenau Gwent and its partner organisations make sure that carers are treated with dignity and respect. This involves ensuring that they are recognised as people first, with the same rights as everyone else to have choice and control, quality of life, and aspirations in their own right, separate to those of the person being cared for.

We actively support and empower our carers, engaging with them regularly, taking time to listen and provide carer centre focussed events.

- We held our **annual event to celebrate Carers week** on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June at Brynmawr Rugby Club, it was a great success and it was truly wonderful to see so many of our unpaid carers attend, it's our way of just thanking our unpaid carers so much for all the invaluable work they do. Its fair to say those who attended were entertained from start to finish with local performers including local magician Adam Reeves and local singing artists Sara Ashley Davies and Elvis Tribute Act Rick Jenkins, there was a raffle and a lovely buffet also provided.



Photos here are from the Carers Week event held at Brynmawr rugby club and another from the Carers Singing bowls group session which was run for our Parent Carers of Children with Disabilities.

*"The carers who attended shared how they loved their time out from their caring role and would love these type of events/session to take place on a regular basis".*

This year we also run an Unpaid Carers Cost of Living Grant which was extremely popular and successful, the grant offered those carers who were financially struggling an opportunity to apply for a one off grant of up to £500 to pay for emergency costs for things like white goods, food bills and household goods. The grant also offered carers wellbeing opportunities like counselling courses, gym memberships and hobby activities, along with driving lessons and driving test costs.

*One of our carers who's grant application for driving lessons was successful responded by saying - "Good afternoon Tania, this is amazing news! Can you please thank everyone on the panel, this will make such a difference to mine and my sons life. I cried happy tears receiving your email as our luck has been terrible for a good year and a half now and I honestly can't thank you and your team enough. I really can't thank you enough, this will be life changing".*





# Chapter 4 - Other Information

## How we do what we do

Structural arrangements that provide good governance and strong accountability / Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

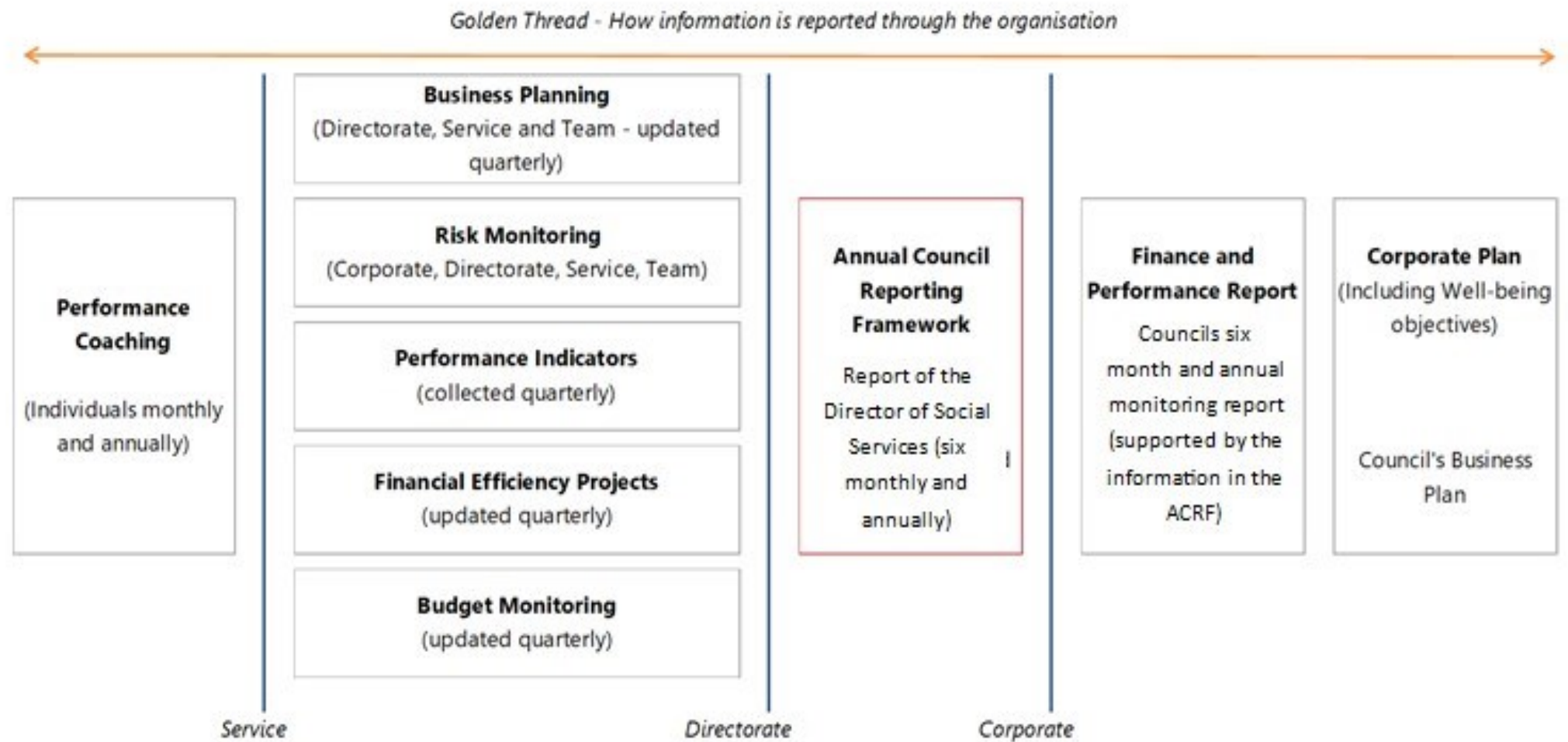
The structure of the Social Services Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. The Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create a 'golden thread'. This framework is

complied with by Social Services who also have additional monitoring requirements as part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Corporate Director of Social Services is a member of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, whereby all Council Directors meet on a weekly basis to consider and make strategic and operational decisions, although some decisions need to be considered by Scrutiny and then ratified by Cabinet or Council.

In 2023/24 the Directorate has one Executive Member with Portfolio responsibility for People and Social Services and is scrutinised by the People Scrutiny Committee, with safeguarding information also reported to this Committee. Regular liaison meetings are held with the Directorate, the Cabinet Member and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Social Services Directorate is subject to audit, inspection and review by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). On a quarterly basis the Director of Social Services and/or Heads of Adult and Children's Services meet with CIW to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. CIW also undertake an annual review and evaluation of the Directorate's performance.



### How we do what we do - Audit & Inspection Progress

#### Care Inspectorate Wales

No new Social Services CIW Inspections have been instigated during the reporting period that were specific to Blaenau Gwent. However, A **National** study 'Rapid Review on Child Protection Arrangements' was instigated and details are below. Also, in response to previous audits carried out by CIW, recommendations for improvement were made which are then monitored as part of the corporate business planning process until fully delivered upon.

**Report title:** Rapid review of child protection arrangements  
**Local or National Report:** National  
**Completion date:** Published September 2023  
**Report Link:** [Full report - Rapid Review of Child Protection Arrangements FINAL FOR PUBLICATION \(hiw.org.uk\)](#)

**CIW made recommendations for improvement which will be reviewed and a decision taken by CLT on whether they need to be monitored as part of the corporate business planning process.**

#### Audit Wales

No new Social Services Audit Wales Inspections have been instigated during the reporting period that were specific to Blaenau Gwent. However, in response to previous audits carried out by Audit Wales recommendations for improvement were made which are then monitored as part of the corporate business planning process until fully delivered upon. Ongoing recommendations are:-

**Report title:** Corporate Safeguarding Follow-up  
**Local or National Report:** Local  
**Completion date:** Published November 2022  
**Report Link:** [https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/bg\\_safeguarding\\_follow-up.pdf](https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/bg_safeguarding_follow-up.pdf)

**Recommendation - 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.**

**Report title:** Springing Forward  
**Local or National Report:** Local  
**Completion date:** Published November 2022  
**Report Link:** [https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/bg\\_sf.pdf](https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/bg_sf.pdf)

**Recommendation - Identify the costs of delivering the assets and workforce strategies and incorporate these into the medium-term financial strategy // Collaborate with public sector partners across Gwent to evaluate the potential benefits of developing a strategic long-term approach to a single public estate. / Build on existing examples of collaborative working by developing a more systematic approach to collaboration / The Council should seek to**

**Report title:** 'Time for Change' – Poverty in Wales  
**Local or National Report:** National  
**Completion date:** Published November 2022  
**Report Link:** [https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/Time for %20Change %20Poverty English.pdf](https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/Time_for_%20Change_%20Poverty_English.pdf)

**Recommendation - Councils optimise their digital services by creating a single landing page on their website  
 Creation of a single gateway into services**

Continued on next page .....

## How we do what we do - Audit & Inspection Progress

Audit Wales Continued ....

<p><b>Report title:</b> unscheduled care review  <b>Local or National Report:</b> National  <b>Completion date:</b> Awaiting publication</p>	<p>Awaiting final report</p>
<p><b>Report title:</b> Social Enterprises  <b>Local or National Report:</b> National  <b>Completion date:</b> Published December 2022  <b>Report Link:</b> <a href="https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/A_missed_opportunity_Social_Enterprises_English_0.pdf">https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/A_missed_opportunity_Social_Enterprises_English_0.pdf</a></p>	<p>Recommendation - Ensure the local authority delivers its S.16 responsibilities to promote Social Enterprises we recommend that it reports on current activity and future priorities following the evaluation of its Action Plan including the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services</p>



**Arolygiaeth Gofal  
Cymru  
Care Inspectorate  
Wales**

### How we do what we do - Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

Having a skilled and motivated workforce is essential in order to provide high quality services. As part of this, the Council has a Joint Workforce Development Team with Caerphilly County Borough Council with responsibility for delivering a training and development strategy that supports development opportunities for staff at all levels in Social Services.

A full programme of learning is provided for the whole social care sector. All statutory, legislative, and registration linked requirements are planned and accounted for. The offer includes developmental opportunities for the workforce and support for resilience and well-being.

Legislative change and Welsh Government guidance has provided numerous priority themes such as More Than Just Words, Dementia Standards, reacting to the pause in the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards, and new preferences for assessments from the Family Judiciary.

The challenges for the workforce to fully embrace learning opportunities remain high. The current recruitment environment has a major impact on the sector and forces harsh choices that without doubt impact on the capacity available to fully embrace development opportunities beyond the essentials.

The way the workforce wants to learn has changed, they expect choice and flexibility. Various initiatives within the organisation are in place to support improving digital confidence and access to digital learning. The authority underpins its approach with the recognition of barriers that exist for parts of the social care workforce, so the offer includes the traditional classroom route. Classroom activities use digital devices to provide safe space learning with facilitator and peer support:

**The authority has co led the All-Wales project on securing an organisational level, fit for purpose, future proof, digital learning platform that will meet the needs of the whole sector, communities and volunteers. The authority, one of three in the first phase, continued to demonstrate nationally the power to the workforce of sharing across boundaries. The approach has encouraged all 22 local authorities to confirm their interest along with several other public organisations. The learning delivery model includes blended learning approaches, a choice of digital or face to face, and hybrid delivery. Hybrid, where participants can simultaneously join either in the classroom or virtually has been welcomed as a very supportive option by the frontline workforce.**

The engagement from the workforce with new ways of learning is exceptional and they continue to reward the community with their ongoing resilience and determination.

Benefits continue to be realised for and by the workforce through the scale of opportunity possible due to the joint workforce development service model hosted by us in partnership with Caerphilly. When comparing the performance of the collaborative approach to other workforce development services in Gwent some key headlines from 2022/23 include

- Supported 63% of the internally sponsored social work students in Gwent
- Hosted 56% of the university direct entry social work students in Gwent
- 9 members of internally sponsored staff qualified as social workers
- The social care workforce in the area had access to the largest training offer provided within Gwent

Workforce stability is a key consideration within Social Services as some teams are facing staffing shortages, however, it is acknowledged that this is a Wales wide position and there is no simple solution. The department as a whole has been working hard to look at innovative ways of managing the workload within teams as well as developing recruitment and retention strategies to address workforce pressures. Despite these significant pressures the existing staff and providers of services have continued to ensure children and adults needs are met, risks are managed, and safeguarding issues dealt with.

Social Services are working closely with Organisational Development to establish a Strategic Workforce Plan to support capacity concerns in the short, medium and longer-term as well as considering the opportunity to collaborate on a regional basis. The workforce in Social Services has been identified as a critical risk and has therefore been included on the Council's Corporate Risk Register.



### How we do what we do - Effective partnership working through Regional Partnership Boards

#### Working in Partnership

Part 9 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act places a key emphasis on partnership working including a statutory requirement for the development of Regional Partnership Boards. The Boards have been established on current local health board footprints. The Gwent Board includes ABUHB and Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen local authorities. The Cabinet Member in each local authority, with responsibility for health and social care, sits on the Regional Partnership Board. It is an advisory body which provides oversight and direction for areas of integrated working across health and social care.

Blaenau Gwent Council supports partnership and collaborative working and the Social Services Department continues to work with a wide range of partners where partnership opportunities provide better outcomes for local residents than the Council could achieve if working on its own. Social Services work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders including staff, residents and businesses. In addition, Social Services fully participates in the sharing of knowledge, good practice and information, which can result in improved services. Social Services partnership arrangements include:

- **Joint Partnership and Workforce Development Service with Caerphilly**
- **Greater Gwent Workforce Development Board**
- **Regional Adoption Service**
- **South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS)**
- **South East Wales Emergency Duty Team**
- **South East Wales Adult Placement Scheme**
- **Gwent Frailty Programme Integrated Health and Social Care Teams**
- **South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB)**
- **Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB)**
- **Regional Safeguarding Board covering all partners across Gwent**
- **Shared Lives scheme run on behalf of six Local Authorities and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**
- **Gwent Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Partnership Team**
- **South East Wales Improvement Collaboration -4C's (SEWIC)**
- **Gwent Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team**
- **Gwent Regional Collaborative (RCC) - Supporting People**
- **Gwent wide agreement with National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to provide children's advocacy services**



How we do what we do - Our Financial Resources and how we plan for the future

**Budget 2023-24- Quarter 1 & 2 (April 2023 to September 2023)**

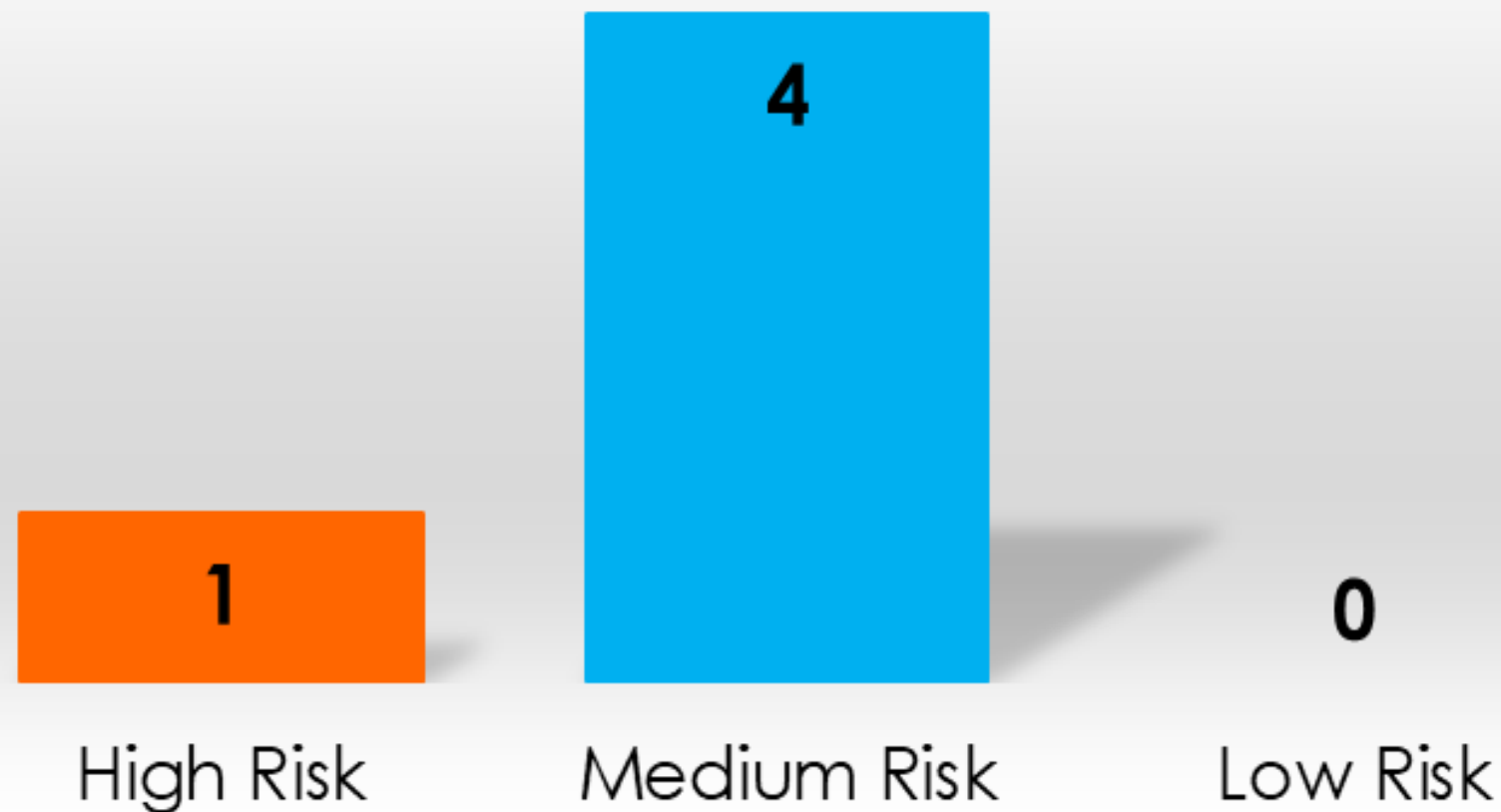
Budget Area		Budget	Forecast	Variance	
		£	£	£	%
1	Commissioning & Social Work	4,247,760	4,195,578	52,182	1.23
2	Children Looked After	7,314,350	8,790,710	(1,476,360)	(20.18)
3	Family Support Services	203,070	203,071	(1)	0
4	Youth Justice	276,080	276,023	57	0
5	Other Children's and Family Services	2,537,840	2,632,040	(94,200)	(3.71)
6	Older People Aged 65 and Over	8,034,610	7,776,765	257,845	3.21
7	Adults under 65 with Physical Disabilities	7,880	7,880	0	0
8	Adults under 65 with Learning Disabilities	4,015,310	3,840,820	174,490	4.35
9	Adults under 65 with Mental Health Needs	560,690	549,855	10,835	1.93
10	Other Adult Services	434,760	437,763	(3,003)	(0.69)
11	Community Care	20,007,270	19,651,823	355,447	1.78
12	Support Service & Management Costs	948,740	917,090	31,650	3.34
13	Corporate Recharges	5,803,660	5,803,659	1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>54,392,020</b>	<b>55,083,076</b>	<b>(691,056)</b>	

## How we do what we do - Risks

In line with the Council's Risk Management Strategy Department Leadership Team review and challenge the risks on the Directorate Risk Register on a quarterly basis. As part of this process, they will consider new risks for inclusion on to the Directorate Risk Register and consider risks for escalation to the Corporate Risk Register.

The Social Services Directorate Risk Register has 5 risks, with 1 having a high residual status and the remaining 4 being medium status. These risks are detailed below and mitigating actions are in place .....

### Social Services Directorate Risks



- There is a risk that increasingly complex needs and demand for services provided by Social Services and Education in particular for Looked After Children, will put further significant pressure on the Council's budget
- Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent.
- There is a risk that identified staffing pressures in social services will result in an inability to deliver services particularly in provider services and domiciliary care.
- Failure to improve attendance rates within Provider services will lead to an unacceptable impact on the ability to deliver services effectively.
- Instability and sustainability of the provider care home and domiciliary care market

## How we do what we do - Complaints

Number of complaints received in children's services and some examples of complaints received

**From 1st April 2023 to 30th September 2023 in children's services there were 4 stage 1 complaints and 2 stage 2 complaints (the 2 stage 2 complaints are both on-going investigations).**

### Complaints

- o Lack of communication, documents not provided in a timely manner, lack of clarity to whether photographs of injuries are required for Child Protection Enquires
- o Workers who visited family did not introduce themselves or provide identity of who they were
- o Limited communication and engagement from social services, lack of support and advice
- o Lack of professional conduct, social services not listening to the views of family members

### 2023/2024 examples of learning identified and actioned within Childrens services

- o Staff are reminded of the importance via supervision and training sessions of the importance of communication with families
- o Staff are reminded of the importance of sending out documents within the relevant timeframe
- o Recommendation to develop procedures relating to the use of photographs in Child Protection Enquires so that there is a clear practice structure which can be used as a point of reference for Local Authority staff as well as any other agency e.g. childcare/education settings
- o Recommendation that managers with case management responsibility remain vigilant to the allocation of work to practitioners where this is a planned absence from work as this will likely impact on the quality of engagement with families due to the lack of physical presence for visits/communication.
- o Staff are reminded of the importance of signposting families to access advice from other agencies e.g. citizens advice, etc. when there are new arrangements in place such as caring for a relative as part of a family arrangement

Number of complaints received in adults services and some examples of complaints received

**From 1st April 2023 to 30th September 2023 in adults services there were no complaints received.**



# Chapter 5 - Looking forward / Areas for progression

**Delivery and monitoring of the overarching departmental / corporate priorities (See page 9) continues daily in order to provide effective services to our citizens. To assist effective delivery of these overarching priorities, specific areas for progression have been highlighted throughout this report to support our continual monitoring of performance and are detailed below:-**

- Continue to deliver our workforce strategy whilst giving due consideration to necessary staffing improvements highlighted in complaint feedback ie communication /clarification and identification/clear practice structure / timeliness /continuity of staff /partnership working and engagement;
- Continue to implement the children looked after strategy and monitor numbers to ensure a downward trend;
- Deliver and monitor the Information, Advice and Assistance action plan to meet demand in the most efficient way;
- Deliver improvements detailed in staff survey action plan and repeat survey next year to measure the progress that has made;
- Continue to work on recruitment and retention strategies;
- Progress the exploration of partnership working with neighbouring authorities to include a joint mentor scheme for staff with Caerphilly CBC in order to extend our learning and development opportunities and Bettercare occupational therapy opportunities with Torfaen County Borough Council ;
- Carry out a further review of commissioned providers care fees to assess the impact in view of the current cost of living and inflationary pressures;
- Budget and Grant consideration to continue and improvement proposals to be scoped and implemented;
- Deliver recommended improvements following all Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales Inspections;
- Work towards meeting target of all children having a trauma nurture timeline prior to adoption;
- Continued delivery of Gwent Dementia Action Plan and progress development of centre of excellence for dementia care at Cwrt Mytton;
- Improve on timelines for delivering foster care reviews;
- Need to identify a life journey work champion for Blaenau Gwent;
- Analysis of increase in child protection numbers to be considered as part of Q2 Child Protection report by Safeguarding manager;
- Child protection conferences to be more strongly aligned with outcome focussed practice;
- Progress suggestion that Section 16 social enterprises self assessment tool be used on a regional basis to give us a Gwent picture and enable us to progress this area of work further; and
- Following the outcome of both the SLT and regional report, Draft a project plan to take forward the digital switchover in Blaenau Gwent.
- Further work needs to be done around the numbers in receipt of assistive technology ensuring that system is up to date.



# Chapter 6 - Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

## Useful Documents

Reports to Social Services Scrutiny Committee - <http://democracy.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=1157&Year=0&LLL=0>  
Council Corporate Plan – <https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/council/policies-plans-strategies/blaenau-gwent-corporate-plan-2022-27/>  
Blaenau Gwent Council Budget Monitoring - <http://democracy.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=1148&Year=0&LLL=0>  
Social Services Website – <http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/health-wellbeing-social-care/>  
Workforce Development - <http://socialservicesblaenau-gwent.caerphilly.gov.uk/>

Balancing Rights and Responsibilities Programme Evaluation, October 2022



Appendix B.docx

Internal Audit Corporate Safeguarding Report  
Audit Wales Safeguarding Report <https://www.audit.wales/publication/blaenau-gwent-county-borough-council-corporate-safeguarding-follow>  
Safeguarding Performance Report April 2022 – June 2022 <https://democracy.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/documents/s12813/Appendix%201.pdf?LLL=0>

## Useful Websites

Social Care Wales - <https://socialcare.wales>  
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) - <https://careinspectorate.wales/>  
Data Cymru - [www.data.cymru](http://www.data.cymru)  
Dewis Wales - <https://www.dewis.wales>  
Gwent Safeguarding - <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>  
Public Service Board - <http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/council/partnerships/partnership-working/>  
South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board - [www.sewsc.org.uk](http://www.sewsc.org.uk)

## Providing Feedback

Social Services welcomes feedback on the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services. Your views are important to us. Please contact us if you would like to give feedback on the plan or if you require this document in a different format e.g. large print, Braille, audio version, etc.

## Fersiwn Gymraeg

Yn unol â Chynllun Iaith Gymraeg y Cyngor, bydd fersiwn Gymraeg o Adroddiad Blynyddol y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol ar gael ar wefan y Cyngor.

### Write to us:

Director of Social Services  
Anvil Court  
Church Street, Abertillery, NP13 1DB

**Call us:** (01495) 355 006

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

**Visit our website:** [www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 18

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 07.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September and Education Summer Term–2023**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Haydn Trollope, Cabinet Member People & Social Services and Cllr Sue Edmunds, Cabinet Member People & Education**

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	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
12.12.23	x	07.02.24			30.01.24	21.02.24		16.1.24

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide scrutiny members with safeguarding performance information and analysis from Children's and Adult's Social Services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and Education for the Summer term 2023.

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 and adults within Blaenau Gwent.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from Social Services for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and Education information for the summer term 2023.
- 2.2 This report is written to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda. The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to a People Scrutiny Committee after each school term.
- 2.3 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 The People Scrutiny Committee considered and supported Option 1 on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### **Option 1**

Accept the approach and information detailed in the report provided.

#### **Option 2**

Consider the information provided and provide comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes.

### 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 Improvement Plan
- Single Integrated Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of CLA Strategy

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.

### ***Human Resources***

5.4 There are no human resources implications attached to this report.

## **6. Supporting Evidence**

### **6.1 Performance Information**

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

### **6.2 Children Social Services**

#### **6.2.1 Referrals to Social Services**

6.2.2 **Figure 1:1** Identifies a continued upward trend in respect of referral rates into Childrens Services with referrals received per quarter exceeding 2000 in both Q1(2,045) and Q2 (2,069). This offers a total of 4,114 for the two Q's. For comparison, the number of referrals for the same period (Q1/Q2) in year 22/23 totalled 3,388 therefore demonstrating a 21.4% increase in referrals. The volume of referrals being received via our front door Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Team is at an unprecedented high. Despite the significant increase in referrals, we continue to work tirelessly to ensure children and families are offered the right support at the right time to prevent escalation of needs and to safeguard children.

Referral rates continue to be monitored and similar increasing referral patterns are being reported within neighbouring Gwent authorities.

6.2.3 **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.

Q1 saw an average of 577 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 70 individuals who received 2 or more referrals. Q2 saw an average of 595 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 77 individuals who received 2 or more referrals.

The highest number of referrals linked to any 1 individual across Q1 and Q2 was 13 which occurred in May. This is somewhat higher than all other months during this reporting period where the average across the remaining months was 5.2.

6.2.4 **Figure 1.2:** Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, Police remain the highest referring agency (Q1 35.5% and Q2 34.5%).

Health and Education referrals are grouped closely within these quarters as being the second and third highest referring agency.

Ongoing joint working with Police through safeguarding 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 progressing, and it is hoped the draft document will be presented for approval at Gwent Safeguarding Children Board before the end of financial year. Following approval this will be disseminated to partner agencies to consider when using their professional judgement on when to submit a Duty to Report to Children's Services. Training and briefing sessions on the application of this document will be provided to partner agencies by Children's Services.

6.2.5

**Figure 1.3:** Shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. The graph identifies a marginal reduction for the receipt of additional referrals on open cases from Q1(1,796) to Q2(1,787). Figure 1.3 demonstrates minimal fluctuation in the receipt of additional referrals for open cases across the 4 Q's included in the graph.

6.2.6

### **Child Protection**

6.2.7

**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 63 children on the child protection register in Q1 which demonstrates an increase of 1 from Q4. During Q1 there were a total of 24 new registrations which is a decrease of 7 compared to Q4. There were 19 less de-registrations in Q1 compared to the previous Quarter.

During Q2 there were a total of 83 children on the child protection register which demonstrates an increase of 20 from Q1. During Q2 there were a total of 47 new registrations which is an increase of 23 compared to Q1. There were 4 more de-registrations in Q2 compared to Q1. In Q2 we have seen a sharp increase in the number of children registered on the child protection register.

When scrutinising this data there has been a double in figures for pre-birth conferences and for transfer-in conferences. One of the transfer-in conferences was for a large sibling group of 6.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) undertook a national rapid review of child protection arrangements earlier this year for which Blaenau Gwent was chosen

as one of 5 Local Authorities across Wales to have CIW undertake fieldwork activity to support their national review. We were proud of the feedback from CIW in particular their comments on how committed staff are to the children and families with whom they work which led to them receiving the right support at the right time.

The CIW rapid review full report was published in September 2023 which included several recommendations for all agencies and Regional Safeguarding Boards to consider to further strengthen child protection practices across Wales. A working group consisting of service and operational team managers within Children's Services will be seeking to review the actions as part of an action plan to consider how best these can be implemented locally in Blaenau Gwent.

6.2.8

**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 Q1 and Q2. This is typically in keeping with national statistics for child protection categorisations.

We have continued to see an increase in the number of children that have been registered under the category of Emotional/Psychological Abuse over the past 2 quarters with this category accounting for 36 (Q1) and 42 (Q2) of all registrations. The category of Neglect is the second highest category and accounts for 24 (Q1) and 35 (Q2) of all registrations.

Conference chairs seek to ensure that if the category of Emotional/Psychological Abuse is agreed within the conference, then there should be a CAMHS consultation arranged by the social worker for the child/ren to consider their emotional wellbeing needs with health colleagues to inform the child protection plan.

6.2.9

**Figure 2.4:** relates to the age and gender breakdown of children on the child protection register during Q2. In Q2 we identified males aged 10-15 being the highest (19), followed by females in the 1-4 age brackets (15).

Age group comparison with Q1 data identifies the following;

- 10–15 year-olds = 30 demonstrating an increase of 9 from Q1.
- Under 1's = 8. No change.
- 5–9 year-olds = 20 demonstrating an increase of 4 from Q1.
- 1–4 year-olds = 24 demonstrating an increase of 8 from Q1.
- There was 1 young person between the ages of 16 and 18 demonstrating a decrease of 1.

6.3

### **Adults' Social Services**

6.3.1

**Figure 3.1:** The data shows a 15.9% increase in referrals of adults at risk received in quarter 2 this year compared to last year. Although slightly lower than quarter 1 (12 less reports) there is a still a consistent increase across the year in comparison to last year. This may be reflective of there being more adults at risk due to increased poverty with regards to the cost-of-living crisis

affecting all local communities. The Safeguarding network event delivered by GWASB earlier this year focused on the impact of poverty on the most vulnerable people within our communities. The increase could also be due to awareness raising through the regular Safeguarding training that we deliver jointly with Caerphilly safeguarding team. Training has now returned to the classroom and there is a high number of attendees in every session over the last 2 quarters.

#### 6.3.2

**Figure 3.2:** The data shows we received the highest number of referrals for females over 65 who are experiencing neglect (42) followed by females over 65 who are experiencing physical abuse (29). The information suggests females tend to be more at risk than males across all types of abuse and people over 65 tend to be more at risk of physical abuse and neglect. There are more consistent figures across the ages for the other categories of abuse. This data is consistent with previous quarters.

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.

#### 6.3.4

**Figure 3.3** The figures reflecting where the alleged abuse/neglect took place shows that we had the highest number of reports from care home settings in Q2 (91) followed by own home (70). It is more likely that abuse will be witnessed and reported in this type of environment There has been a concerted attempt to work with care home managers to raise their awareness of the safeguarding procedures. We also continue to have a close working relationship with the Commissioning team within the department and with our Health colleagues in sharing information and jointly investigating any concerns. The majority of the population still reside in their own homes therefore we would expect to see a high number of reports from 'own home'. Care and support is often provided by domiciliary care companies in people's homes who again are aware of the safeguarding procedures so are more likely to report. Domestic abuse cases will also likely be included in the 'own home' category. This data is consistent with previous quarters.

#### 6.3.5

**Figure 3.4** This data shows the person allegedly responsible for the abuse is most often recorded as 'not known' (92). An example of this is where an incident such as a fall in a care home would not identify the alleged perpetrator. There can also be cases in which the report is closed because it was inappropriate, and no abuse/neglect has occurred. The alleged perpetrator may have been identified through the course of enquiries but if the safeguarding process is still ongoing when the data is taken it may not be captured in the final performance statistics. There were less reports of abuse by a professional in Q 2 (19) compared to Q1 (35) this year. This will be closely monitored and further assessed over quarters 3 and 4 to see if this trend continues and if a rationale or reason can be provided. There has been an increase in reports in which the alleged perpetrator is a son or daughter, 17 in quarter 2 compared to 11 in quarter 1.



6.3.6 **Figure 3.5:** The majority of our reports are received from provider agencies and the local health board which is to be expected due to their awareness of the safeguarding procedures. This is consistent with previous data. There has been a 50% increase in the reports received from relatives/friends. This may be due to more awareness via media or the drive to recruit more carers who will then receive the mandatory training and are more likely to report abuse in all circumstances. This is an encouraging increase from members of the public. Self-reporting continues to increase also which suggests adults at risk are becoming more aware of their rights and the importance of raising any concerns,

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.

6.3.7 **Figure 3.6:** The data suggests females continue to be more at risk of domestic abuse than males or are at least more likely to be reported. There continues to be a steady increase in females aged between 18 and 64 experiencing domestic abuse. This could be reflective of the crisis being experienced by the community as a whole such as poverty and unemployment. The reports could also be increasing due to an increased awareness of 'Ask and Act'. This figure only captures the adult at risk cases and not all people within the community experiencing domestic abuse. We have a dedicated worker within the team who has expertise in this area and responds to these reports.

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.

## 6.4 **Education**

### 6.4.1 **Overview**

Action Short of Strike (ASOS) was in place until the end of November 2023, this impacted on some of the data that would routinely be presented to Members.

Data presented within this 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.

6.4.2 **Section 05 Figure 1.2 Estyn** There was one school inspected by Estyn Summer 2023, no health and safety or safeguarding concerns were highlighted.

6.4.3 **Section 05 Figure 4.2.1/4.2.3 - Training** - The number of school staff completing the VAWDASV Group 1 online training during the summer term was 72% which is a small decrease on the Spring term when it was 73%. Whilst recorded completion of the online safeguarding module appears low, all schools are compliant with 'in-person' delivery of their whole school safeguarding training.

6.4.4 **Section 05 Fig 5.13** - There are established arrangements in place for the reporting of bullying within schools. Due to ASOS data for the summer term 2023 is not available for inclusion as not all schools have returned their data.

6.4.5 **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 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. More robust EHE guidance has been issued by WG however there is no longer going to be a national register of EHE children. All local authorities will be required to keep their own CME database but there will be requirements for other agencies to inform the local authority.

6.4.6 **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.

The 22/23 academic year has seen a decrease in children accessing the youth offending service when compared to 21/22

6.4.7 **Section 05 5.5 Anti-social Behaviour Process**  
The Council's Community Safety Team membership includes Gwent Police (CADRO), Social Services (including Families First), Youth Offending Service, Senior Education Welfare, Youth Services, Registered Social Landlords and Legal Team, where appropriate. Referrals to the group can come from the Council, Police or Registered Social Landlords.

The purpose of this Group is to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour by providing multi-agency tailored support.

There are 4 different stages of intervention:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Warning Letter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Warning Letter
- Case Review
- Punitive sanction

6.4.8 **Figure 5.5.1: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** - shows the number of children identified in the 4-Stage Anti-Social Behaviour Process, broken down by age and gender. Generally, more males have been identified in the anti-social behaviour for primary and secondary school age children. Overall, there has been a drop in the number of incidents.

6.4.9 **Figure 5.5.2 Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents-** identified from children who have received Stage 1 and Stage 2 Warning Letters. As can be seen the majority of issues are in relation to being part of a group: nuisance behaviour and setting fires.

6.4.10 **Figure 5.5.3 - Children Identified in 4-Stage ASB Process.** The majority of individuals do not progress past Stage 1. However, in the summer term there was an escalation in the number of Stage 3 cases, attributed to anti-social behaviour in one of our town centres. There were no stage 4 cases.

6.4.11 **Figure 5.8.5 Operation Encompass**

In the Summer term, children were present at 52.2% of occurrences of reported domestic violence, a significant increase from 31.6% in the Spring term. However, it is important to note that the local authority is now recording this information, as opposed to relying on police data, which may account for the increase.

6.4.12 **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.

6.4.13 **Section 05 Figure 5.11.2: Physical Interventions** - Most of the interventions reported 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.

6.4.14 **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 summer term 2023 is not available for inclusion.

## Corporate Safeguarding

6.5

**Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 DBS Compliance** evidences all those within the Council who require a DBS and those who do not. Currently over 73% of Council employees require a DBS check. It is evident that this is an area in which we are performing exceptionally well. All directorates are performing at over 98% and those where no DBS is in place, there is a clear escalation process in place to ensure that managers and leads are aware and can take necessary action to resolve. Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required.

6.5.2

**Figure 6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate Online Training** evidences that corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with 52% of staff having completed the VAWDASV online training. Welsh Government has developed an e-learning module which is available on our online learning platform – the All-Wales Academy and there is an expectation for all council staff to complete this training.

6.5.3

**Figure 6.2.2 Corporate Online Safeguarding Training** evidence 52% of staff having completed the safeguarding training. On commencing employment with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, all practitioners are required to have basic safeguarding awareness training. A refresher training session is required every 3 years. This is the 'All Wales Group A Safeguarding' online session to be completed as part of the induction process.

The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Standards were launched in November 2023. This provides an overview of the knowledge, skills and competence expected for each group of practitioners, in relation to their safeguarding role and responsibilities. The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Framework provides guidance for the implementation of training and how this could look in practice. Work is ongoing with the Regional Safeguarding Board in order to ensure the training opportunities across the region are reflective of the practitioner needs within each practitioner grouping.

Training compliance is being monitored via the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group. There are identified challenges in respect of the data collection in respect of safeguarding training in the absence of an online learning management system. This is including the monitoring and tracking of safeguarding training consistently across all service areas. Work is ongoing to consider methods and practices which can support this function more effectively across all directorates.

6.5.4

**Figure 6.3 Risk Register** – The tables under this section evidence the progress being made against the controls outlined within the risk register and progress set against the recommendations for corporate safeguarding. As noted, the annual safeguarding self assessments for service areas across the council have been submitted and will be reviewed by the Children's

Safeguarding Team to identify themes, trends and gaps to inform a forward work plan for the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group for year 24/25.

The Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group (CSLG) will be seeking to review the effectiveness of the current corporate safeguarding model in the new financial year. This will inevitably lead to the CSLG group proposing recommendations to help strengthen and improve the current corporate safeguarding functions across the Council. This work will support the review of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

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

6.6

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.

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

6.7

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads meetings reconvened in 2021 and 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.

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.

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

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.

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

6.8

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables both Social Services and the Education Directorate to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future. This process is further supplemented by the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework within which local government education services operate.

The rigorous self-evaluation processes ensure that key areas for development are identified and then embedded within business planning arrangements.

## **Preventative focus**

6.9

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.

Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny Committee enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

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.

The recent establishment of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board continues to progress strategic issues across the Local Government Education Services.

## **Collaboration / partnership working**

6.10

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.

Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

Throughout the Q's partnership working with the police and statutory partners continued to progress. The Hub model is working well, with multi agency safeguarding meeting happening in a timely manner.

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

6.11

All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

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)

## **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

6.12 N/A

## **Integrated Impact Assessment - EqIA**

6.13 N/A

## **Monitoring Arrangements**

6.14

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.

The performance of both directorates 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.

## **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

6.15

*Appendix 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Data Template Q1&Q2 2023-24 Final*  
*Appendix 2 – BG Education Risk Register*

The following hyperlink provides further details on the governance and Structure: [www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk)

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# Safeguarding Performance Report

**Social Services**  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to  
30<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Education**  
Summer Term 2023

**Corporate Services**  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to  
30<sup>th</sup> September 2023



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

# Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

# 00 | Table of Contents

00

Foreword	4
Community Profile - Demographics	5

01

Children's Social Services

Number of referrals received by social services (on new and closed cases)	6
Number of individuals linked to referrals	6
Percentage of referrals received by source	6
	7
Additional Multi Agency Referrals (on open cases)	7

02

Child Protection

Number of children on the Child Protection Register	8
Categories of Abuse	8
Age Breakdown	8

03

Adults' Social Services

Adults suspected of being at risk	9
Categories of abuse or neglect	9
Place alleged abuse took place, alleged Person responsible	10
Source of Referral	10
Domestic abuse referrals	10

910

# 00 | Table of Contents

04

Referrals from Education

Contacts by Source (Primary)	11
Contacts by Source (Secondary)	11
Contacts by Source (Other)	11
Referrals from Youth Services	11

05

Education

Regulatory - Estyn Judgements	12
Policy – Compliance, Safeguarding	13
Systems/Quality Assurance – My Concern	14
Keeping Learners Safe audit tool	15
Independent Settings – Out of County	16
EWC Registrations	17
Safe Workforce – DBS, Training	18-19
Professional Concerns	20
Vulnerable Children – Pregnant, EHE	21-22
Children Missing in Education, Youth Offending	23-28
Anti-social behaviour	29-30
Child Employment, Child Performances	31
Operation Encompass	32
Attendance	33
Exclusions	34
RPI Incidents	35-36
Racial and Bullying incidents	37
Safer Schools	

06

Corporate

DBS Compliance	38-39
Corporate Training	40
Risk Register	41-42
Regulatory Proposals	43

## **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.

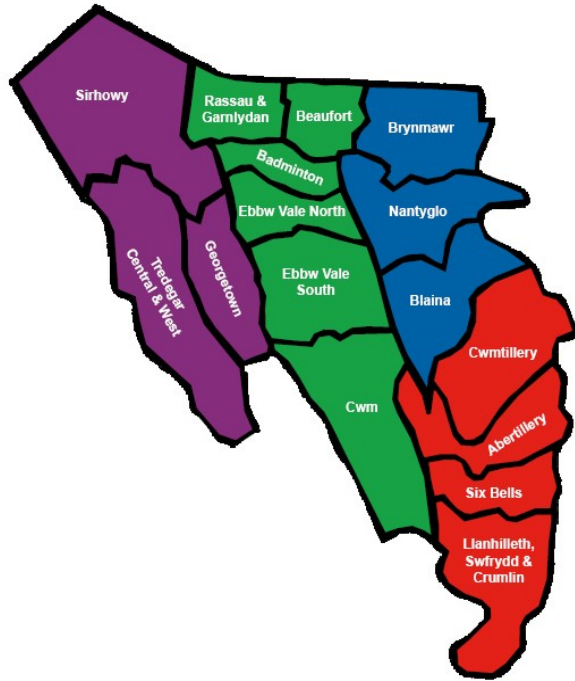
The report includes information on the following:

- 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



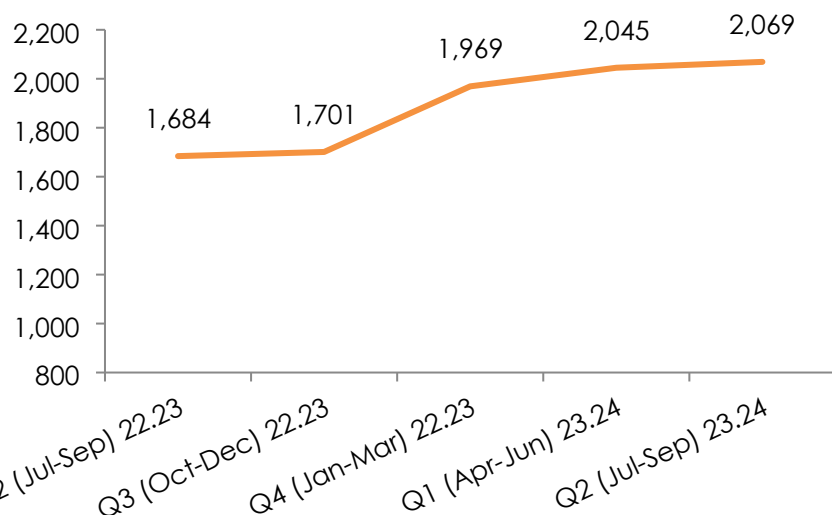
Page 1085

- 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

– key benefit claimants November 2016 – 20.3% in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of 14.4%)

- 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: **66,905** Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,153** (2021 Census)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 20: **1,108**
- Number of pupils of primary age (inc. nursery): **6,124**
- Number of pupils of secondary age: **3,250**

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services



Page 1086

Fig 1.1a Number of individuals linked to referrals

	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
<b>Referrals</b>	600	725	521	725	799	669	634	766
<b>No of Individuals</b>	526	629	451	600	681	584	535	665
<b>2+ Referrals</b>	53	84	55	68	87	77	69	75
<b>Highest No. of Referrals for an individual</b>	5	4	5	13	6	3	6	6

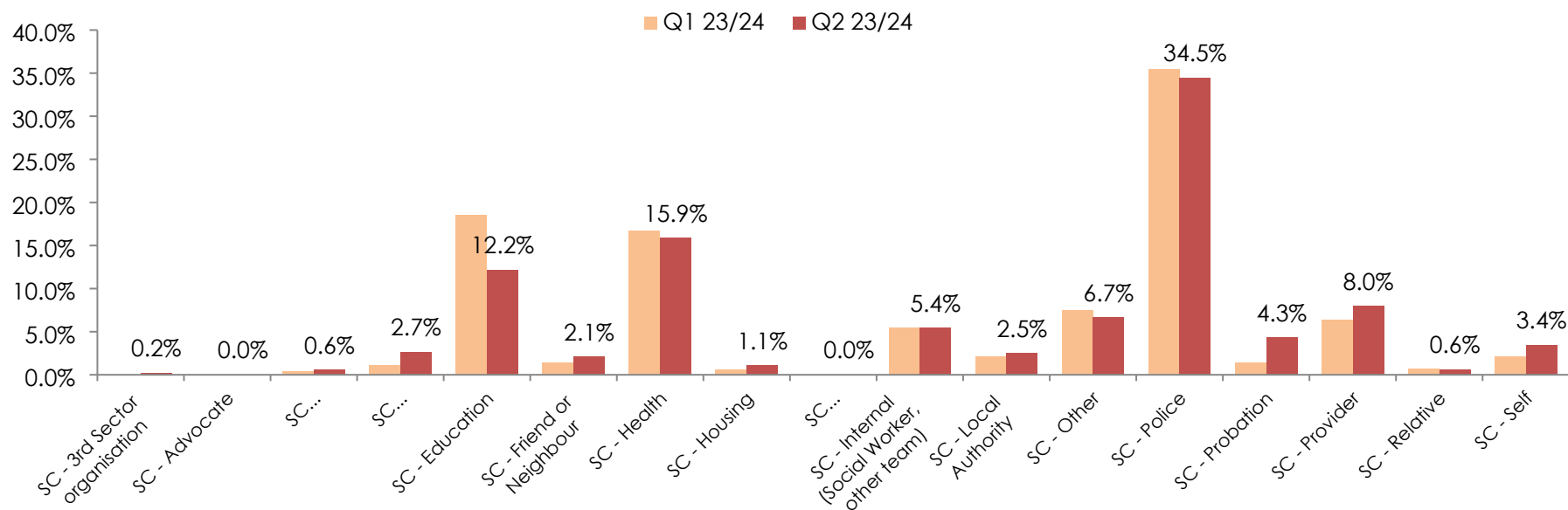
Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (Q1 &amp; Q2\*)

	Q1 23/24		Q2 23/24	
	No.	%	No.	%
SC - 3rd Sector organisation	0	-	4	0.2%
SC - Advocate	0	-	0	-
SC - Ambulance Service	7	0.3%	12	0.6%
SC - Early Intervention / Prevention Service (Step-up)	23	1.1%	55	2.7%
SC - Education	379	18.5%	252	12.2%
SC - Friend or Neighbour	28	1.4%	43	2.1%
SC - Health	342	16.7%	328	15.9%
SC - Housing	12	0.6%	22	1.1%
SC - Independent Hospital	0	-	0	-
SC - Internal (Social Worker, other team)	112	5.5%	112	5.4%
SC - Local Authority	44	2.2%	52	2.5%
SC - Other	154	7.5%	138	6.7%
SC - Police	725	35.5%	713	34.5%
SC - Probation	29	1.4%	89	4.3%
SC - Provider	131	6.4%	165	8.0%
SC - Relative	15	0.7%	13	0.6%
SC - Self	44	2.2%	71	3.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,045</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,069</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*The table is only showing 2 quarters as the reporting categories for this data item have changed.

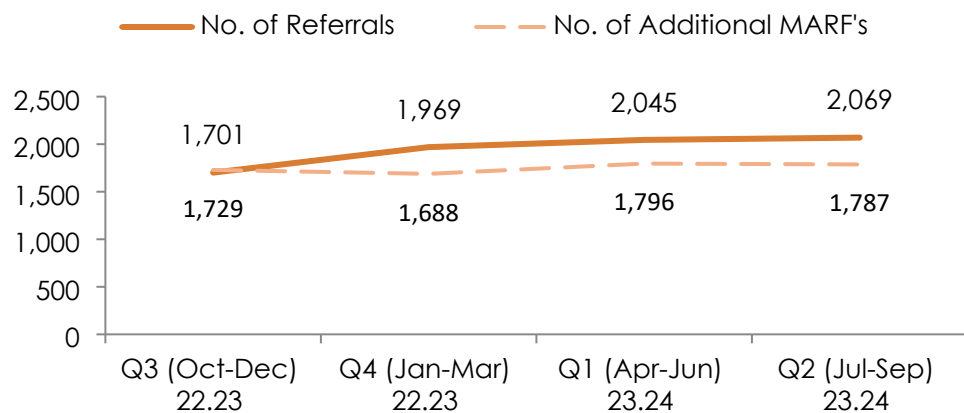
# 01 Children's Social Services

Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage

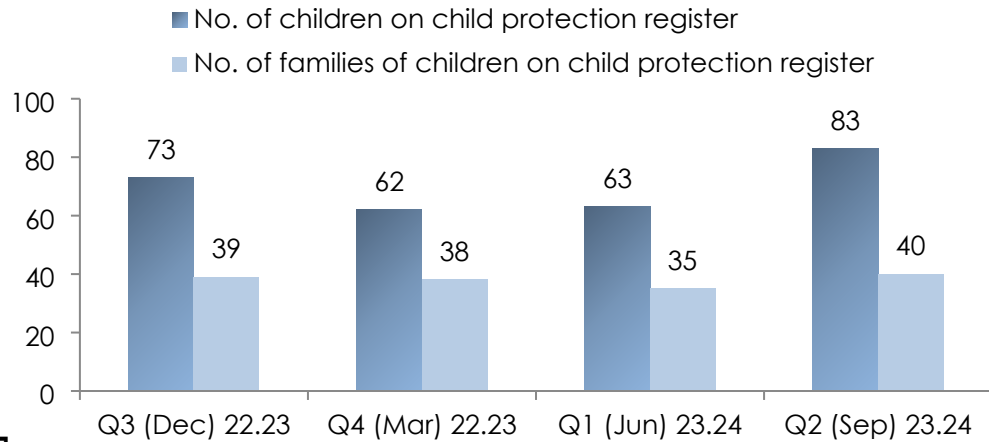


Page 1087

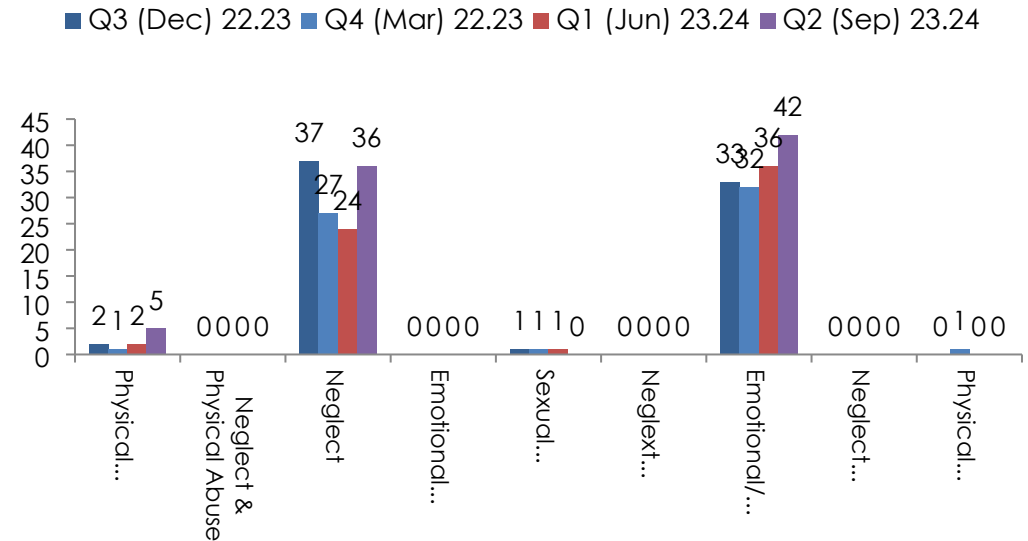
**Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open cases**



**Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register**

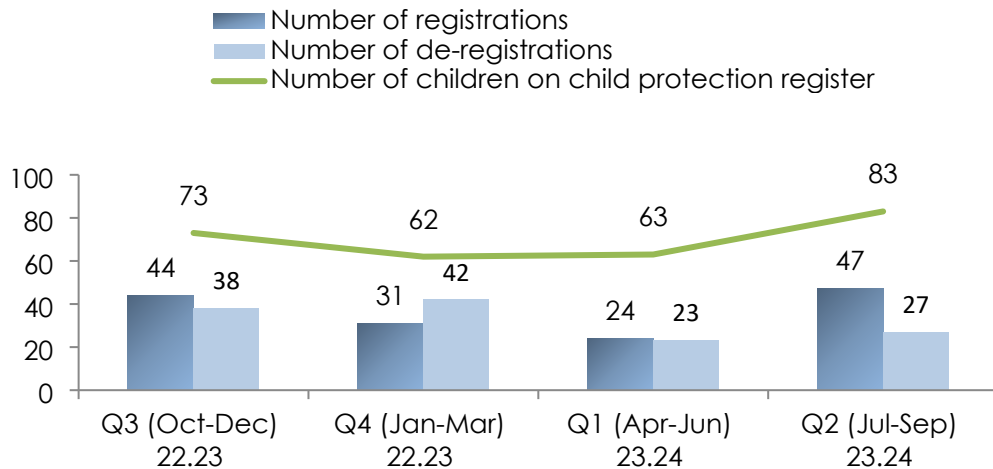


**Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse**

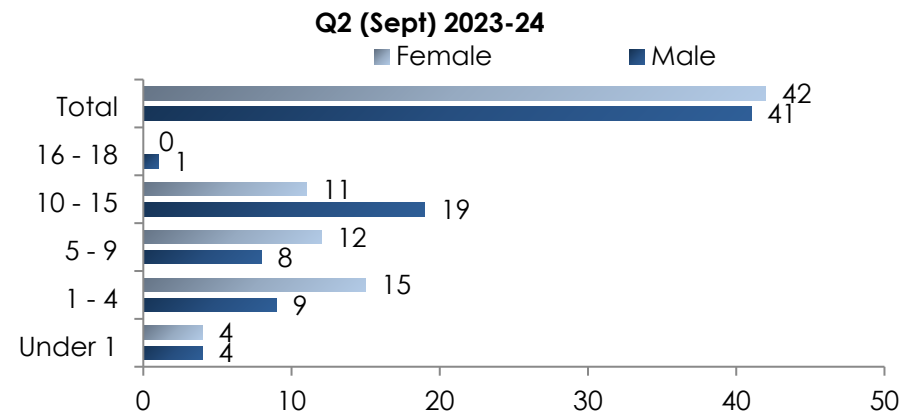


Page 1088

**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 2023/24	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	194	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	182
Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during 2022/23	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	139	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)	157

**Fig 3.2 Categories of abuse or neglect**

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
		1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Physical	Male	8	8	3	4	4	8	6	6
	Female	10	21	8	17	16	29	9	19
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	Male	3	1	0	0	2	2	0	0
	Female	5	0	2	1	2	1	2	2
	Transgender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emotional/Psychological	Male	4	2	1	3	4	6	7	7
	Female	12	7	6	4	9	6	3	7
	Transgender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial	Male	2	5	1	3	2	4	2	7
	Female	1	5	3	6	5	7	7	9
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Neglect	Male	7	28	7	15	8	19	6	16
	Female	9	54	7	48	5	42	12	30
	Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>36</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>67</b>
	<b>Transgender</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>103</b>

**Fig 3.3 Place alleged abuse/neglect took place**

Place alleged abuse or neglect occurred	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Own Home	76	48	70	65
Community	13	13	9	13
Care Home Setting	93	70	91	70
Health Setting	12	8	12	9
Other	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>157</b>

**Fig 3.5 Source of Referral**

Source of Referral	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Self-reported	7	2	8	3
Relative / friend	4	5	10	3
Local authority	10	11	15	6
Police	7	3	5	4
Local health board	37	14	27	22
Independent hospital	0	2	0	1
Ambulance service	9	3	3	3
Care regulator	6	0	3	0
Provider agency	80	57	80	66
Probation	0	0	1	0
Third sector	10	4	9	3
Advocate	0	0	0	0
Education	0	2	0	0
Housing	3	4	2	10
Internal (Social Worker, Other Team)	17	17	9	26
Other	4	15	10	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>157</b>

**Fig 3.4 Person alleged responsible**

Page 1090

Person alleged responsible	Total	Total	Total	Total
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
A spouse	10	8	13	6
A son or daughter	11	6	17	9
A family member who is not a child or spouse	7	10	7	3
A professional	35	26	19	28
A volunteer or unpaid worker	0	0	0	0
A friend	2	1	4	3
A neighbour	2	2	7	8
Another service user	19	3	16	11
Other Person	8	3	7	8
Not known	100	80	92	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>157</b>

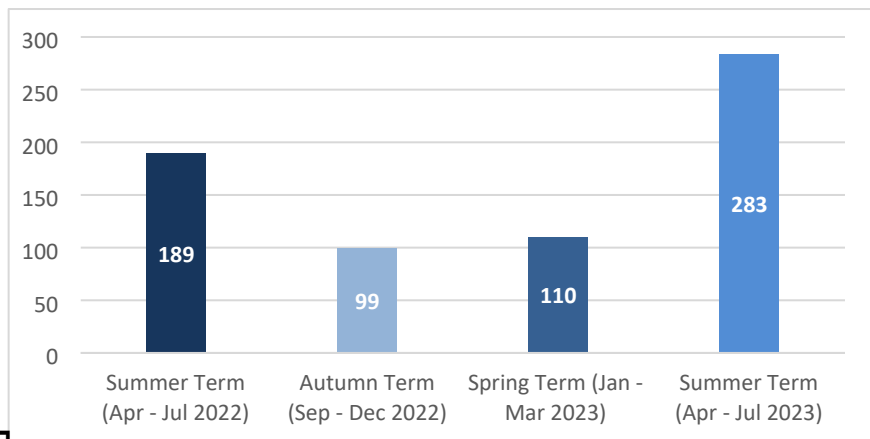
**Fig 3.6 Domestic abuse referrals**

	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
	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/23-30/6/23 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/4/22-30/6/22 (Q1)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/23-30/9/23 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)	1/7/22-30/9/22 (Q2)
Male	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1
Female	8	4	5	0	11	2	1	2

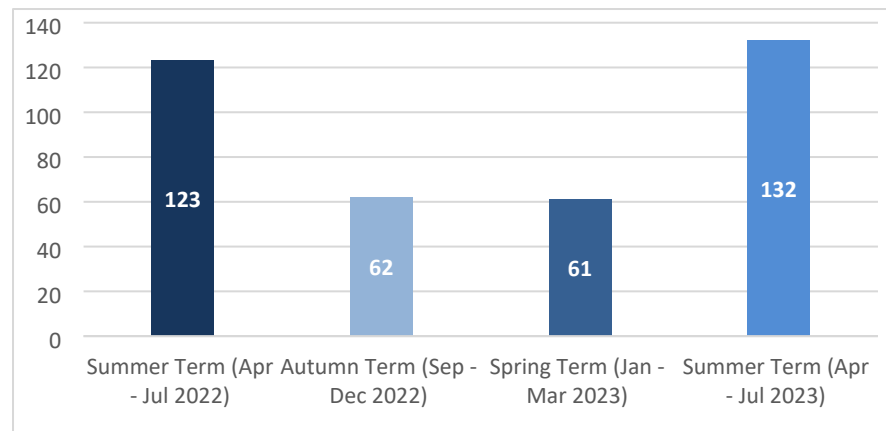
\* Please note that information recorded for Domestic abuse referrals doesn't get recorded until case closure.

# 04 | Referrals from Education

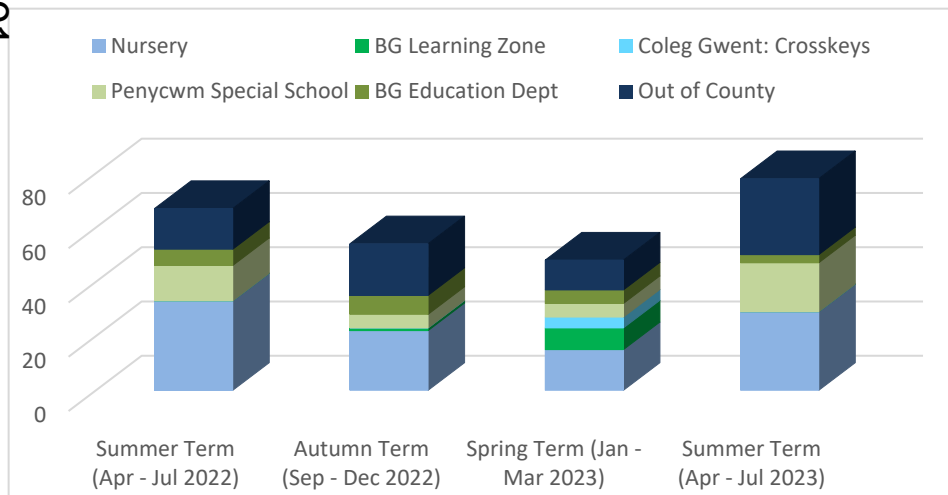
**Fig 4.1 Contacts by Source – Primary School**



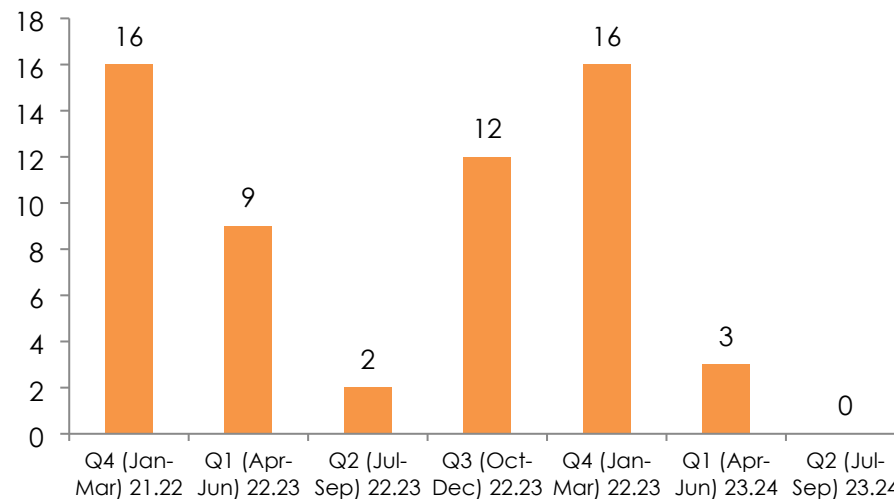
**Fig 4.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School**



**Fig 4.3 Contacts by Source - Other**



**Fig: 4.4 Referrals received from Youth Services**



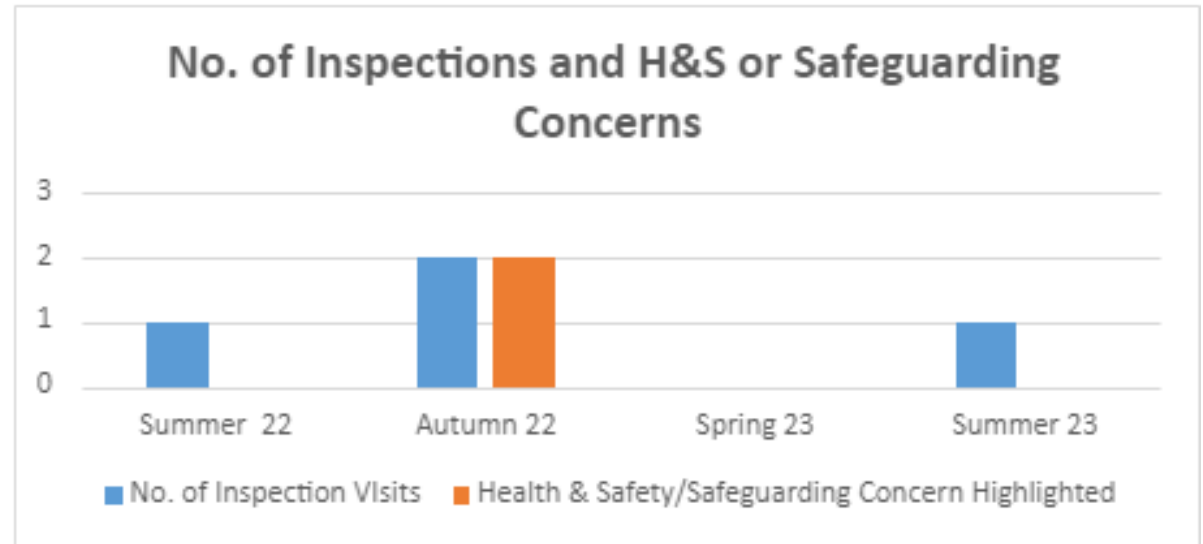
## 1. Regulatory

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
Summer 23	1	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%

### 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	23
% Compliance	100%	92%

August 2023- All schools have a Safeguarding policy. 92% are recorded as having adopted the 2022-23 version by the end of the Summer 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
<b>My Concern</b>	Autumn 22	22	81%
	Spring 23	24	96%
	Summer 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	Summer 2023
LA	15	15	9	9	11	11
Independent	18	18	10	11	16	16

#### 3.1.2 Overview of Safeguarding arrangements.

Page 1096

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.

This process is implemented for Independent Specialist Provision and there is a spreadsheet that captures all data. This is reviewed prior to the placement of any learner.

Safeguarding in Education Manager works collaboratively with counterparts in other LAs where BG are placing learners in LA schools out of area to ensure the safeguarding/quality of provision.



## 3.2 Education Workforce Council (EWC) Registrations

### 3.2.1 EWC Registrations on Appointment

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
<b>No. of Incomplete EWC Registrations</b>	5	0	0	1	2	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

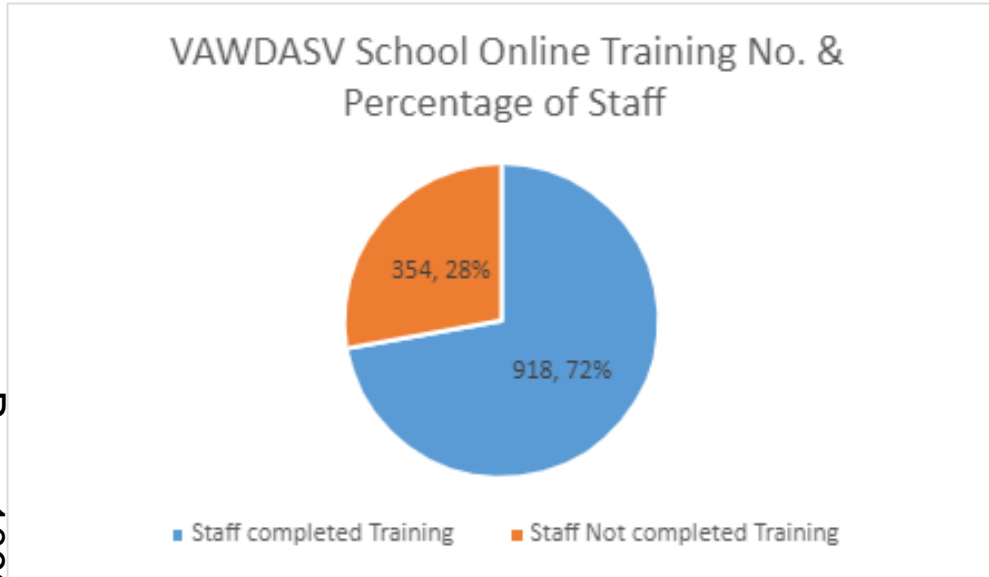
Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks		More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance	0		0	0
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance	0		1	1
<b>Totals</b>	0		1	1

Appt Comments	Awaiting Certificate		Total	Escalation	
				Chased with Employee	Escalation to Operational Team
Awaiting ID documents	0		1	0	1
	0		1	0	1

Page 1098

## 4.2 Training

### 4.2.1 Basic/Enhanced VAWDA SV



Page 1099

### 4.2.4 Online Safeguarding Training – Schools

All schools are compliant with their whole school safeguarding training (delivered in person).

Online Safeguarding Training	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24
Staff completed Training	244	256	242	244
Staff Not completed Training	1,010	998	1030	1028
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>1,272</b>	<b>1,272</b>

### 4.2.2 Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) Meetings

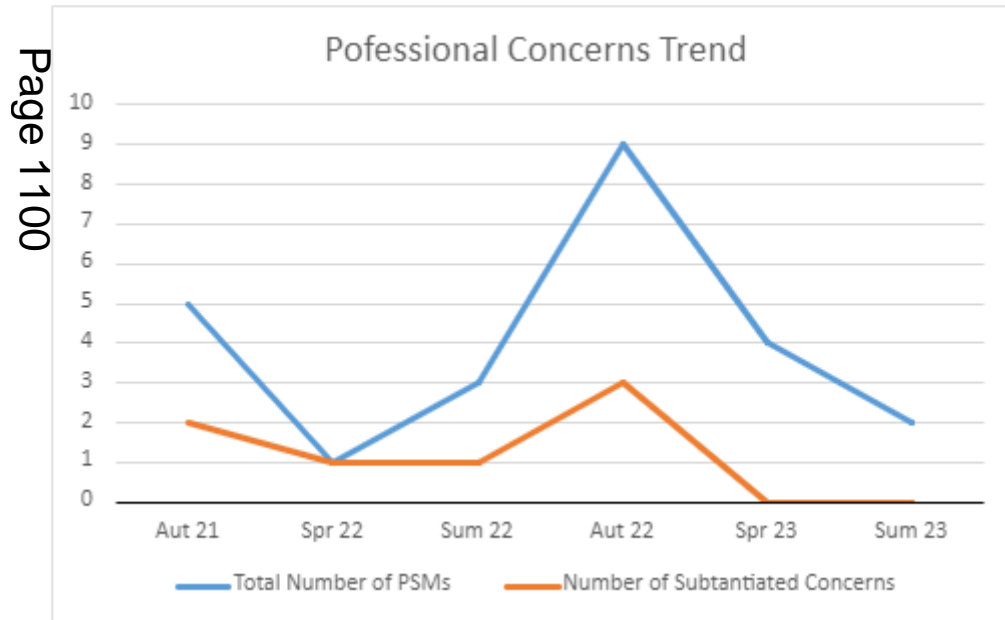
DSP Meetings	Aut 21	Spr 22	Sum 22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
No of Schools Represented	16	17	16	no mtg	16	12
% of School represented	64%	68%	64%	N/A	64%	48%

## 4.3 Professional Concerns

### 4.3.1 Professional Concerns Review

Professional Strat Meetings	Aut21	Spr 22	Sum22	Aut 22	Spr 23	Sum 23
Total Number of PSMs	5	1	3	9	4	2
Number of Substantiated Concerns	2	1	1	3	0	0 (1 concern ongoing)

### 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

	PLASC January 2023 No.	PLASC January 2022 No.	PLASC January 2021 No.	PLASC January 2020 No.
Children electively home educated in BG	214	132	89	70
Children electively home educated in Wales	242	197	180	132

Page 1101

**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
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
Apr - Jul 2023	2	0	5	0	4	0	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>

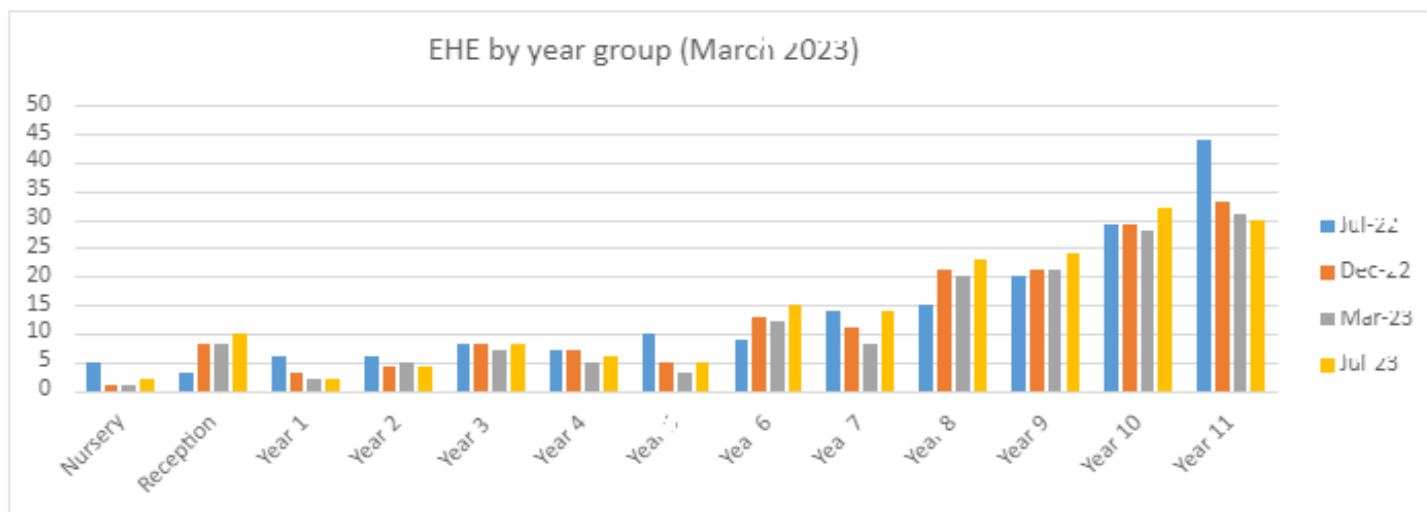
# 05 | Education

**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
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
Apr - Jul 2023	9	2	0	0	0	0	7	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

Page 1102

## 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

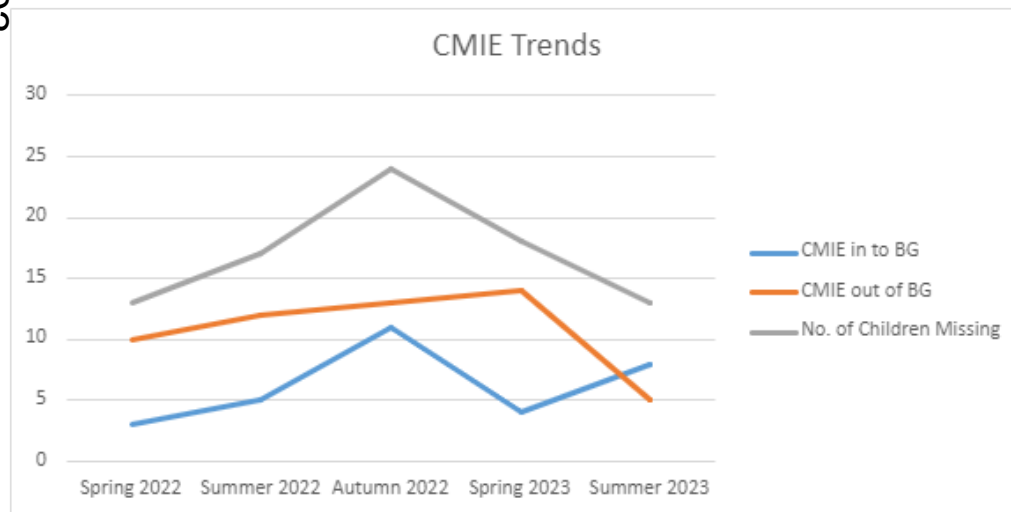
### 5.3.1 Referrals from other LAs

No. of CMIE Referrals	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
CMIE in to BG	3	3	5	11	4	8
CMIE out of BG	11	10	12	13	14	5

### 5.3.2 Number of Children Missing

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Children Missing	14	13	17	24	18	13

### 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	Summer 2023
No of Schoolchildren accessing YOS	23	34	32	18	31	30

### 5.4.2 YOS pupil Placement by Setting and Access

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
<b>Access</b>						
FT	14	34	30	6	23	24
PT	3	0	3	3	4	6
<b>Setting</b>						
EHE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Schools	5	9	5	0	4	5
Mainstream - Primary	1	4	4	0	3	2
Mainstream - Secondary	11	21	23	8	20	23
Secure Unit				1	0	0
Employed	3	0	0	1	2	0
College				3	0	0
NEET	3	0	0	4	1	0
Training Provider				1	1	0



# 05 | Education

## 5.4.4 REACH Interventions

	<b>Autumn 2021</b>	<b>Spring 2022</b>	<b>Summer 2022</b>	<b>Autumn 2022</b>	<b>Spring 2023</b>	<b>Summer 2023</b>
<b>Prevention Programme</b>	5	16	19	1	11	16
<b>Community Resolution</b>	12	13	10	10	10	3
<b>Youth Caution</b>	0	1	0	01	0	1
<b>Youth Conditional Caution</b>	1	2	1	0	0	0
<b>Referral Order</b>	2	2	2	1	0	2
<b>Youth Rehabilitation Order</b>	2	0	0	2	0	0
<b>Remanded in Custody</b>	1	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Detained</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Outcome 22</b>	0	0	0	2	10	6
<b>Turnaround</b>	0	0	0	0	0	2

## 5.5 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Data recorded in Quarters due to the team working through the summer.

	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q2
	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
<b>No. of Schoolchildren Identified and Managed through CS Team</b>	16	13	29	7	3	10	2	2	4	18	7	25	12	2	14

### 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	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q2	Q2	24
	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24	23-24
Primary Aged Pupils	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Secondary Pupils Aged 11-14 (KS3)	4	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Secondary Pupils Aged 14-16 (KS4)	9	9	18	6	2	8	1	2	3	12	5	17	5	0	5
<b>Total</b>	3	4	7	1	1	2	0	0	0	5	2	7	6	2	8

# 05 | Education

## 5.5.2 Types of ASB Incidents

Incident	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24
Nuisance behaviour – part of a group	15	28	24	4	3	1	0	0	12	5
Setting fires – part of a group	2	7	0	6	4	4	0	0	0	0
Swearing	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of alcohol	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inappropriate use of electric scooter	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trespass in a derelict building	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Verbally abusive	0	4	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
Shouting	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Criminal damage	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0
Throwing/kicking objects at property	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	9	1
No. of Individuals	20	45	24	13	7	21	8	2	21	6

## 5.5.3 Warning Letters Issued

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24
Advised by Police									5	0
Home Visit									16	4
Strike 1	19	43	24	13	6	19	6	2	0	2
Strike 2	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0
Strike 3 (multi-agency ASB Case Management Group)	4	3	2	2	7	8	1	1	4	8
Strike 4 (multi-agency ASB Case Management Group)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

# 05 | Education

## 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	Q1	Q2
	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	23-24	23-24
Youth Offending Service	1	2	1	1	4	4	1	1	2	7
Social Services	0	2	1	1	6	5	1	1	2	8
Families First	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
CAMHS	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Youth Services	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	2
Registered Social Landlord	0	3	0	2	3	4	0	0	2	5
NxtGen Project	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire Intervention Service	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Page 1108

## 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

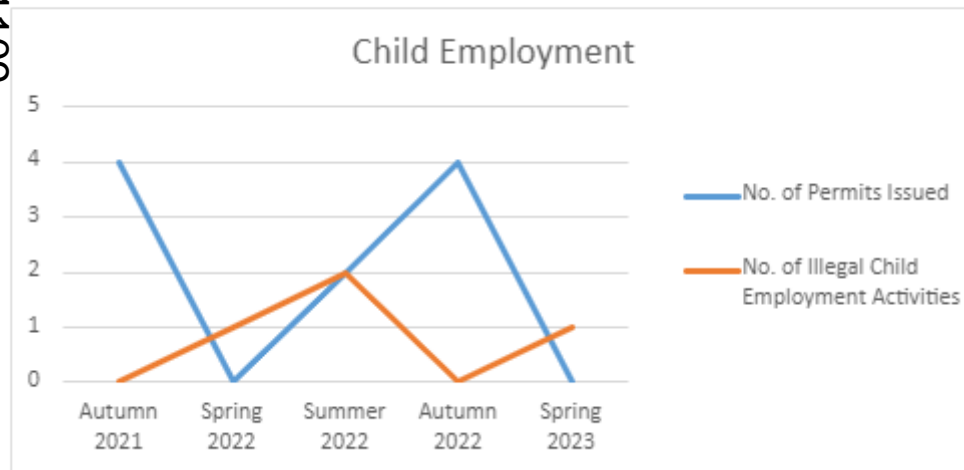
### 5.6.1 Number of Permits Issued

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 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	Summer 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

	<b>Autumn 2021</b>	<b>Spring 2022</b>	<b>Summer 2022</b>	<b>Autumn 2022</b>	<b>Spring 2023</b>	<b>Summer 2023</b>
No. of Licences Issues to Children and Chaperones	4	20	56	52	2	2
No of licences for chaperones	20	18	5	14	3	3
Body of persons approvals - group licences	10	6	7	2	6	4

### 5.7.2 Number of Chaperones attending Training

	<b>Autumn 2021</b>	<b>Spring 2022</b>	<b>Summer 2022</b>	<b>Autumn 2022</b>	<b>Spring 2023</b>	<b>Summer 2023</b>
No. of Chaperones	20	18	5	14	3	0
No of Chaperones attending Training	29	24	15	20	8	0

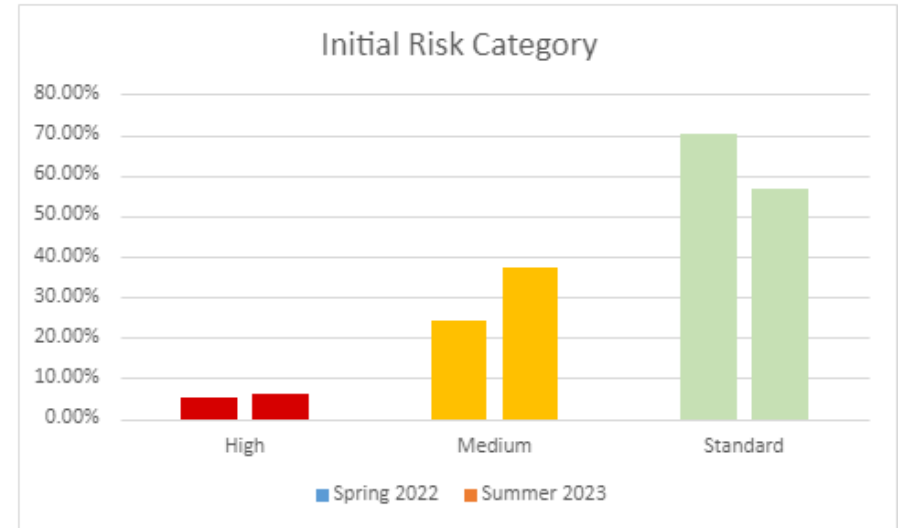
# 05 | Education

## 5.8 Operation Encompass -

### 5.8.1 Number of Incidents in Period and Repeat Incidents

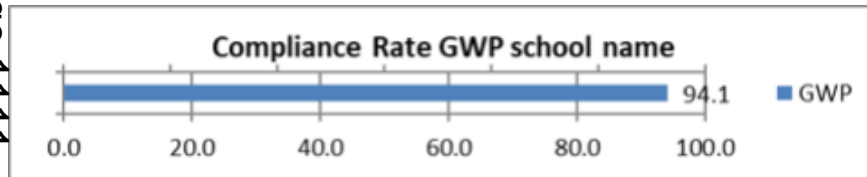
Term	Occurrences	CYP	Repeat Incidents
Autumn 2021	265	330	22.40%
Spring 2022	211	266	24.10%
Summer 2022	246	333	21%
Autumn 2022	282	299	unavailable
Spring 2023	182	218	unavailable
Summer 2023	156	333	23.1%

### 5.8.2 Risk Level



### 5.8.3 % Compliance by Police \*

Page 1111



### 5.8.4 Comparative Data

	Autumn 2021	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
No. of Occurrences	265	296	141	265	211	246	282	182	156
No. of Children and Young People Involved	330	371	185	330	266	333	299	218	333
Average No. of CYP per Occurrence		1.25	1.31	1.25	1.26	1.35	unavailable	unavailable	2.1
% children present at incident							37.50%	31.60%	52.25%

- The recording of Operation Encompass incidents is now done by the LA, which will allow for more accurate reporting. Figures used for compliance rates may be higher than expected due to them only being available from July 2023.

## 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	Summer 2023
Primary Attendance	88.4	89.6	89.9	89.3	89.3	89.0	89.5	90.4	90.0
Secondary Attendance	84.3	83.0	84.8	85.3	85.3	84.8	85.9	85.8	85.4

### 5.9.2 Low Attendance and Implementation of Neglect Policy

	Autumn 2022	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Fixed penalties	0	0	2	22	46	67
Single Justice Process	5	0	6	9	21	54
Court Notices	0	3	0	0	0	5



## 5.10 Exclusions

### 5.10.1 Exclusions by Setting and Type

	Summer 22			Autumn 22			Spring 23			Summer 23		
	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	No. Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent	Fixed	Average No. of Days	Permanent
<b>Primary</b>	25	2.4		42	2.1		39	2.1		44	2.8	
<b>Secondary</b>	193	1.4		404	1.4	2	402	1.4	1	369	1.2	1
<b>Special</b>	12	1.1		15	2.5		2	5.5		2	3	
<b>Total</b>	230	1.5		461	1.5		443	1.5		415	1.4	

### 5.10.2 Exclusions Linked to Bullying

	Spring 22		Summer 22		Autumn 22		Spring 23		Summer 23	
	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent
<b>Primary</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Secondary</b>	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

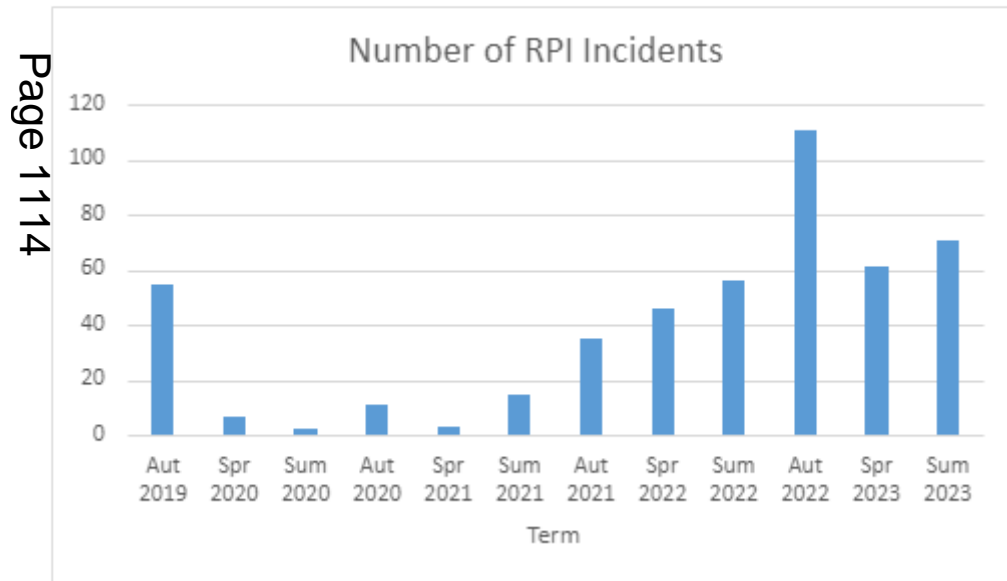
### 5.10.3 Pupils with Multiple Exclusions

No of Exclusions	Summer 22			Autumn 22			Spring 23			Summer 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
<b>1</b>	91	91	1.3	124	124	1.5	119	119	1.6	119	119	1.7
<b>2</b>	13	26	2.9	41	82	1.5	39	78	1.4	37	74	1.3
<b>3</b>	8	24	5.5	25	75	1.5	26	78	1.4	12	36	1.1
<b>4</b>	6	24	4.9	8	32	1.4	7	28	1.3	14	56	1.5
<b>5</b>	8	40	8.1	5	25	1.1	13	65	1.6	8	40	1.2
<b>6+</b>	4	25	10.4	17	123	1.5	10	74	1.7	13	90	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.4</b>

## 5.11.1 RPI Incidents

School	Aut 2022	Spr 2023	Sum 2023
1	14	6	7
2	96	55	62
3	1	0	0
4			2

## 5.11.2 RPI Trends



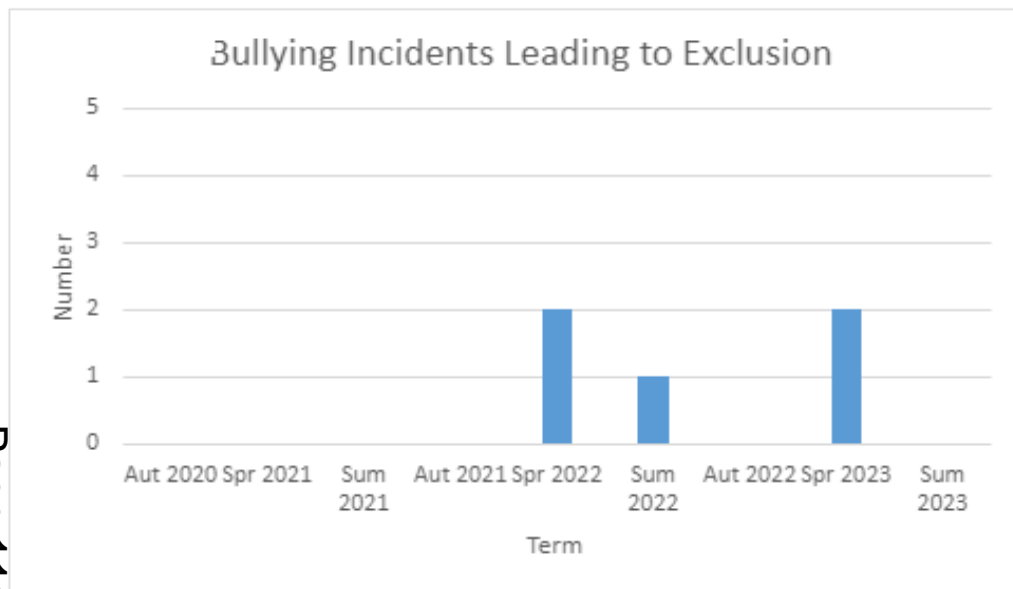
## 5.12 Racial Incidents

### 5.12.1 Racial Incidents in Period by Category and Setting

	Autum 22		Spring 23		Summer 23	
	No. Schools	No Incident.	No. Schools	No Incident.	No. Schools	No Incident.
<b>Age</b>						
<b>Learners with a disability</b>	1	1				
<b>Homophobic/ biphobic</b>	2	4				
<b>Sexist or sexual bullying</b>	1	1				
<b>Racism Anti - Gypsium</b>	0	0				
<b>Racism Anti- refugee prejudice</b>	0	0				
<b>Racism Anti- Semitism</b>	0	0				
<b>Racism - appearance</b>	7	27	2	13	5	11
<b>Total</b>	11	33	2	13	5	11

## 5.13 Bullying Incidents

### 5.13.1 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion



Page 1116

### 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	Sum 23
<b>No. of Safer Schools Strategic Partnership Board Meetings</b>	1	0	0	0
<b>No. of Safer Schools Partnership Meetings</b>	1	0	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	Sum 23
Damage	0	0	0	0
Threat to Staff	0	0	0	0
Knife Crime	0	0	0	0

### 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	Sum 23
<b>Arson</b>				
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	

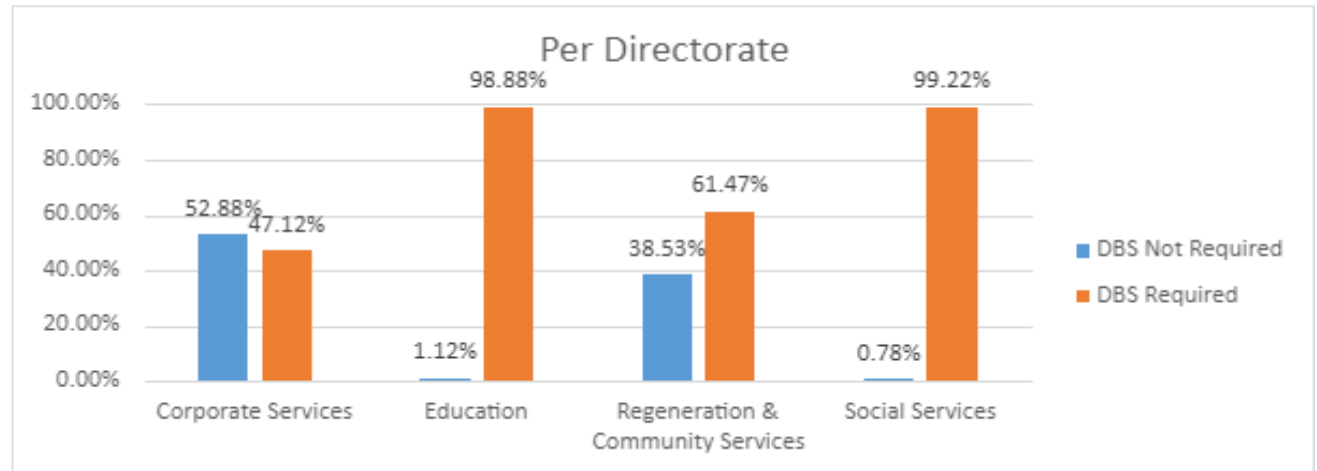
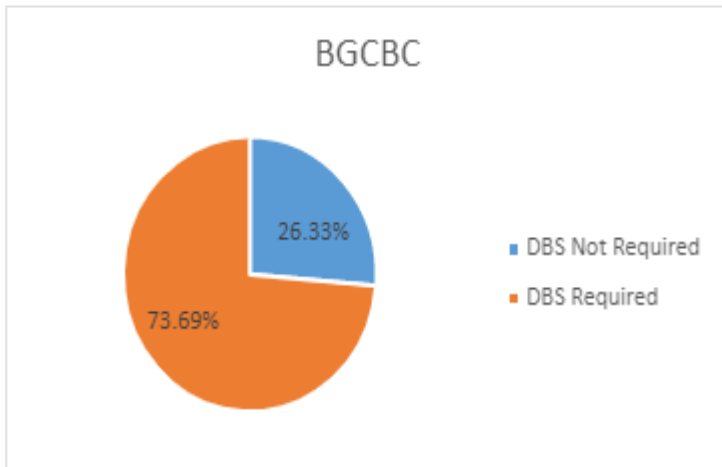
## 6.1 DBS Compliance

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.

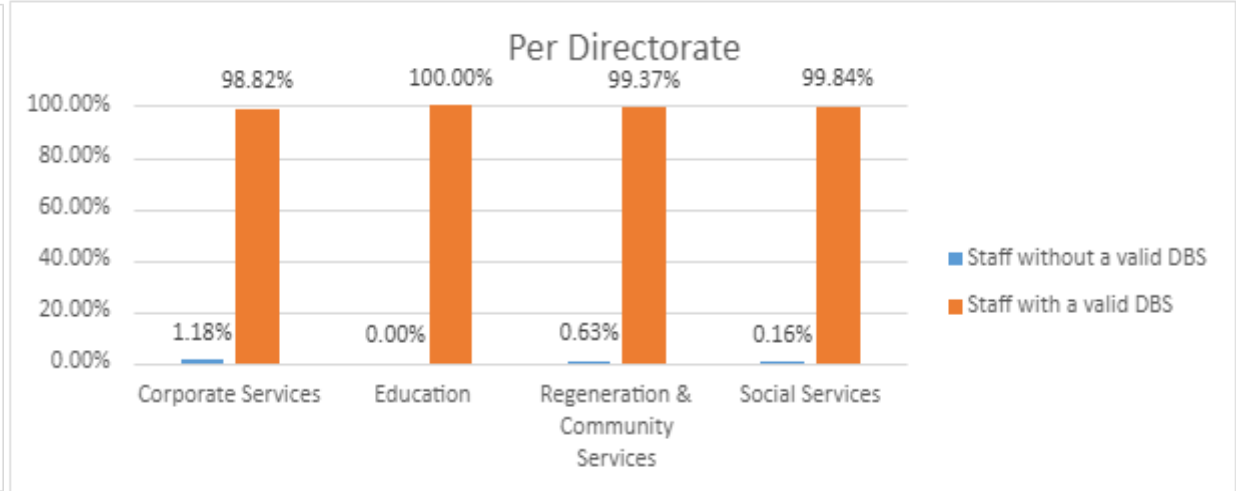
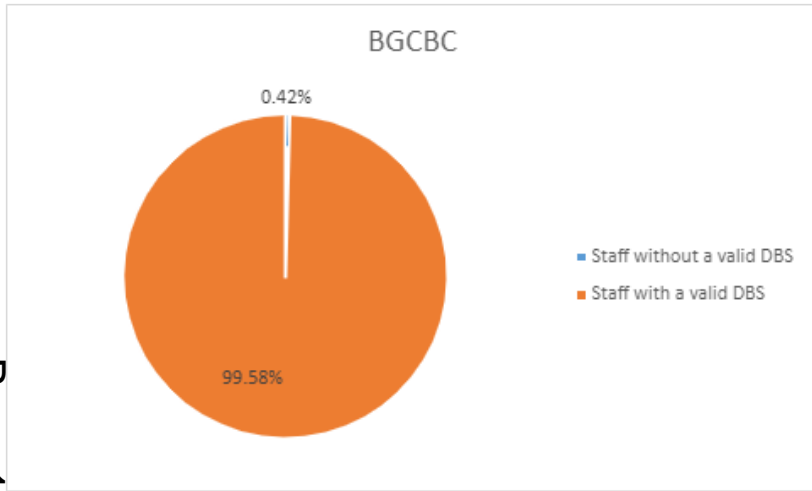
The latest submission to CLT was in May 2023 and is shown below:

### 6.1.1 Position Statement: Breakdown of Positions that require a DBS Check as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

Page 1118



## 6.1.2 Breakdown of those employees in compliance with DBS requirements as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023



Page 1119

### 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**.

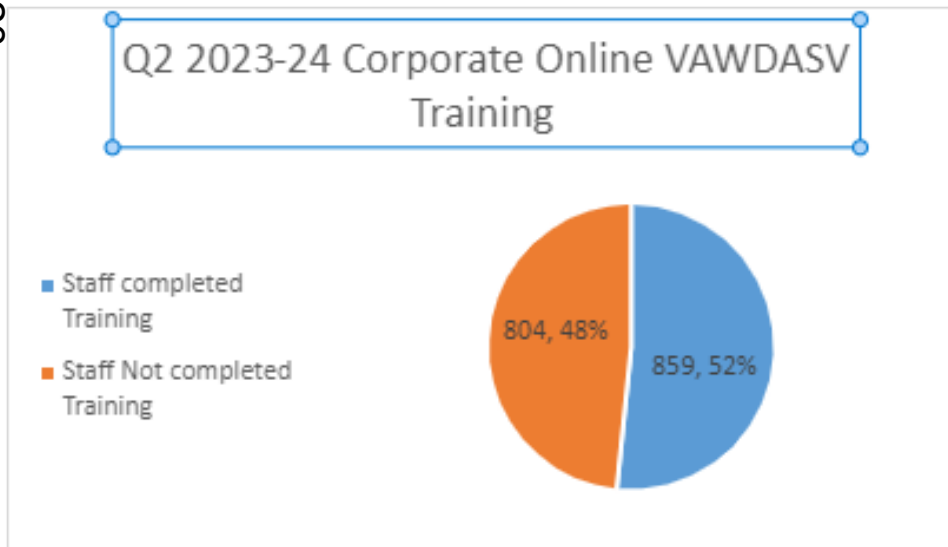
#### All Wales Safeguarding Training on line for staff

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.

Page 1120

### 6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate




### 6.2.2 Safeguarding Training





## 6.3 Risk Register



### 6.3.1 Corporate Risk Register CRR4 – Q2 Update

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							Direction of Travel No change 					
Triggers	Consequences	Inherent Risk			Current Controls	Residual Risk			Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Target Score		
		Likelihood	Impact	Status		Likelihood	Impact	Status		L x I = Score		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is inadequate assessments and monitoring</li> <li>If there is a lack of documentation</li> <li>If there are increasing referrals for services</li> <li>If there is a lack of appropriate guidance and training</li> <li>If there is poor communication between all parties (internal / external)</li> <li>If there is a high turnover of staff and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff.</li> <li>*If there are increased levels of sickness in key areas.</li> <li>Failure to recognise that all staff have a duty to report abuse, harm or neglect.</li> <li>Lack of appropriate guidance and training on safeguarding</li> <li>Failure to progress the corporate safeguarding action plan via the corporate safeguarding leads group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential significant harm / loss of life</li> <li>Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined</li> <li>Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution</li> <li>External intervention</li> <li>Increased pressure on budgets</li> <li>Low staff morale</li> </ul>	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint Social Services and Education Scrutiny established (PEOPLE scrutiny committee)</li> <li>Education Designated Lead and Deputy Officer nominated</li> <li>Education Safeguarding Officer established and in post</li> <li>Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board</li> <li>Safeguarding is a standing item on CMT agenda</li> <li>Lead Executive Member has been identified for having responsibility for safeguarding</li> <li>Senior leadership have received Level 1 safeguarding training.</li> <li>Programme of training for schools underway.</li> <li>Corporate safeguarding leads established for each directorate who have been requested to identify staff for Level 1 training (3 dates have already been set)</li> <li>Safeguarding in Education matrix regularly updated</li> <li>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.</li> <li>A corporate safeguarding leads group has been established to drive forward the safeguarding agenda and action the recommendations made by the BG Wales Audit Office report</li> </ul>	2	4	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All directorate business Plans to include safeguarding and include actions required to ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place</li> <li>Safeguarding Reports into PEOPLE Scrutiny contain corporate safeguarding information from all directorates. Plus and update from the corporate safeguarding leads group</li> <li>Safeguarding training data to be reviewed by each Directorate to ensure all staff are undertaking this</li> <li>Regularly review the councils volunteering register to ensure DBS checks are up to date</li> <li>Ensure the audit Wales BG safeguarding report recommendations continue to be reviewed and met</li> <li>Each Directorate to undertake a safeguarding self-assessment</li> </ul>	1	4	Medium

Page 121

## Quarter 2 Progress Update (July – September 2023)

Update provided in the progress against further controls. In addition, due to recommendations from Wales Audit report not fully implemented and Directorate self-assessments still outstanding the risk need to remain high.

Progress Against Further Controls	Responsible Officer	Due Date	Comments / Update on Progress	BRAG Status of further controls
All directorate risk registers to include safeguarding and include actions required to ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place.	CLT	Ongoing	Safeguarding is included in all Directorate Risk Registers.	On track
Safeguarding Reports into PEOPLE Scrutiny contain corporate safeguarding information from all directorates.	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The Corporate Safeguarding Performance Report which contains corporate safeguarding activity as well as specific information in relation to Social Services and Education was reported to People Scrutiny Committee in July. The half yearly safeguarding report is in the process of being drafted to present to scrutiny in November.	On track
Safeguarding training data to be reviewed by each Directorate to ensure all staff are undertaking this	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group are looking at the collation and accuracy of training data and reviewing the control measures to ensure its accuracy due to ongoing reporting concerns. Raising awareness for managers via DLT's to ensure staff are completing training in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework – e.g., Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. The corporate safeguarding leads group continue to take this forward to ensure accurate capture information to ensure all staff have undertaken this training	Ongoing but encountering some issues (that can be addressed)
Regularly review the councils volunteering register to ensure DBS checks are up to date	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The volunteering register has been updated across the council and all DBS checks are up to date. Periodic checks of the register will need to continue	On track
Ensure the audit Wales BG safeguarding report recommendations continue to be reviewed and met	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	The corporate safeguarding leads group continue to lead this work and reporting on progress will be contained in the next scrutiny report.	On track
Each Directorate to undertake a safeguarding self-assessment	Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group	Ongoing	This is in the process of being undertaken by each Directorate with a deadline of 30 <sup>th</sup> September being set. The safeguarding leads meeting are overseeing this and will be analysing data collection to present at the next CSGL meeting.	On track
Direction of Travel from previous quarter	Forecasted direction of travel			
		There is no change in the risk score from the last quarter. Due to recommendations from Wales Audit report not fully implemented and Directorate self-assessments still outstanding the risk need to remain High.		



Ref	Recommendation	<b>Organisational response</b> Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	<b>Completion date</b> Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	<b>Responsible officer / group</b>
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 safeguarding self-assessments for 2023 were submitted from each of the directorates at end of September 2023. The findings and analysis of the self-assessments will be reviewed by the Children’s Safeguarding Team (Team Manager, Service Manager and Safeguarding Education Manager) and will be presented in the next Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group in January 2024. This will seek to consider a comparison to the previous year’s findings. A Corporate Safeguarding action plan will be updated to reflect the themes and needs highlighted within the self-assessment returns in order to focus the work of the group over the next year. Corporate Safeguarding is reported on within the bi-annual Joint Safeguarding Report however consideration is being given to the development of a standalone corporate safeguarding report to be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee.	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. Internal Audit are completing three audits that impact on safeguarding in this financial year:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safeguarding in contracts</li> <li>2. Safeguarding with volunteers (schools)</li> <li>3. Social Services safeguarding</li> </ol> <p>The Safeguarding in Contracts audit will consider corporate procurement specifically looking at how safeguarding requirements are built in to contracts for third parties. The Safeguarding with Volunteers audit will seek to test the safeguarding arrangements implemented by schools in respect of volunteers. The parameters of Social Services Safeguarding audit will be outlined following consultation with the respective departments (adults and children’s services) in November 2023.</p> <p>The CRSA was amended to add additional safeguarding questions as per previous update. It was issued to schools in April 2023 and the draft audit report is currently being reviewed.</p> <p>The audit reports will be issued to the Strategic Safeguarding Leads group for any weaknesses identified through the audit to be rectified.</p>	Audit Quarter 2/3 2023/24	Strategic Safeguarding Leads Group

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Triggers	Consequences	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Target Score		Risk Owner	Direction of Travel from Previous Quarter		
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"> <li>Inadequate assessments and monitoring</li> <li>Lack of documentation</li> <li>Increasing demand for services</li> <li>Lack of appropriate guidance and training</li> <li>Poor communication between all parties (internal / external)</li> <li>High turnover of staff</li> <li>Varying capacity as a result of the pandemic so routine activities do not take place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential significant harm / loss of life</li> <li>Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined</li> <li>Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution</li> <li>External intervention</li> <li>Increased pressure on budgets</li> <li>Low staff morale</li> </ul>	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint Social Services and Education Scrutiny established (<b>People Scrutiny</b>)</li> <li>Education Designated Lead and Deputy Officer nominated</li> <li>Education Safeguarding Officer established and in post</li> <li>Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board</li> <li>Safeguarding is a standing item on DLT agenda</li> <li>Lead Executive Member has been identified for having responsibility for safeguarding</li> <li>Senior leadership have all received Level 1 training.</li> <li>Programme of training for schools in place.</li> <li>Corporate leads established for each directorate who have been requested to identify staff for Level 1 training</li> <li>Safeguarding in Education matrix regularly updated</li> <li>*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.</li> </ul>	1	4	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved reporting systems and databases in place</li> <li>Inclusion protocol in place</li> <li>Education Safeguarding Manager close working with School Improvement and Inclusion</li> <li>Close working relationships with Social Services Directorate</li> <li>Youth Services safeguarding arrangements are effective and monitoring is through the corporate arrangements.</li> <li>Half termly meetings to priorities to be diarised</li> <li>* DMT receive regular QA reports from Safeguarding in Education Manager</li> </ul>	1	4	Medium	Corporate Director of Education  Exec Member Sue Edmunds	No change in direction of travel	Status of Further controls  On track  Forecasted direction of travel  Work continues on target to reduce overall risk

**Quarter 1 progress update (April – June 2023)**

The Safeguarding in Education Manager continues to make good progress in implementing the various quality assurance processes for the current academic year and is now finalising the end of year position statement for education services with the Strategic Safeguarding in Education Manager through the completion of the corporate return and annual Local Government Education Services (LGES) self-evaluation process. The Education Directorate Leadership Team have received the required Fades that appropriately capture the areas for improvement and as such the improvement activities are being progressed. Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board (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 and the User Group are trialling the use of bullying and Restricted Physical Incident (RPI) returns with a view to rolling this approach to other schools during the autumn term. As part of this work a review of the Restricted Physical Intervention and Respectful Relationship policy is ongoing, one school still has not accessed My Concern training and this matter has been escalated within the Directorate

**Quarter 2 progress update (July - September 2023)**

The current safeguarding lead for the education directorate is an interim arrangement due to staff changes. All schools are now using MyConcern to record and report concerns and the MyConcern group has continued to meet despite Action Short of Strike (ASOS). Triage and filing concerns have been priority to ensure that safeguarding concerns are prioritised. Usage of the system between schools is variable and one school still needs to undertake training. ASOS has resulted in data submission being affected and this will need to be reviewed in order to ascertain the impact this has had.

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# Agenda Item 19

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.02.24

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 07.02.24

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **21<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

Report Subject: **Regeneration & Community Services 6-month progress Performance Report – April 2023 – September 2023**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr H Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Community Services and**  
**Cllr J Morgan, Cabinet Member Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Ellie Fry, Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	21.12.23	07.02.24			16.01.24	21.02.24		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Regeneration and Community Services Annual Performance Report covering the 6-month period April 23-September 23 and is attached as (*Appendix 1*).

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1. The first six months of performance for the Regeneration and Community Services Department has been summarised in the attached document and provides Members and the public an insight into the progress, achievements and issues.

- 2.2. The Blaenau Gwent Corporate Plan 22-27 outlines the four aims:
- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
  - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
  - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
  - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient

and the aims of the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), which are:

- a prosperous Wales
- a resilient Wales
- a healthier Wales

- a more equal Wales
  - a Wales of cohesive communities
  - a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
  - a globally responsible Wales
- 2.3. From the report the summary of achievements ranges from an increase in footfall throughout the towns across BG from an increased number of successful events; to an increase in our recycling rates which bring us closer to our WG targets. In Q2 we exceeded the WG target of 70% for the first time. Our successful fly tipping prosecutions have also increased.
- 2.4. The celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the NHS was particularly poignant for Blaenau Gwent, the birthplace of Aneurin Bevan. Events with the public and local pharmaceutical companies took place and memorial artwork was created.
- 2.5. Housing development continues to grow with five sites in different stages of progress giving the authority a pipeline of housing development over the next 5-10 years. The Council is working well with housing association and private partners on a range of schemes.
- 2.6. The new Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) processes have been worked through and there are now numerous projects progressing across the three areas: People and Skills; Communities and Place and Business Support. These funds replace the European funding that the Council received previously and funds support community groups, businesses, and local projects.
- 2.7. New developments including industrial and enterprise space are progressing well with completion dates later in the year; and the contract for strengthening Newtown Bridge has been completed with the bridge looking resplendent following the work. Progress against the Local Area Energy Plan has made and the start on site of the HiVE (High Value Engineering) Facility in Ebbw Vale which will be completed in late 2024.
- 2.8. A series of case studies are included to highlight some of the work that has been outlined in the performance report.
- 3. Options for Recommendation**
- 3.1. The report has been considered by Regeneration and Community Services DLT and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
- 3.2. The Place Scrutiny Committee also considered the report and supported Option 2.
- 3.3. **Option 1**  
Members are asked to consider the information detailed within the Regeneration and Community Services report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate recommendations to Cabinet.



## **Option 2**

To consider and accept the report as presented.

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

- 4.1. This proposal supports the amendments made to the Outcome Statements within the Corporate Plan 2022/27 Outcome Statements:
- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
  - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
  - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
  - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient

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

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

There are no short term budget implications associated with the report.

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

There are no risks directly associated with this report

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

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

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

There are no additional implications for human resources.

### **6. Supporting Evidence**

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

The Six Month Performance report is attached.

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

Improved economy and community benefits from the work undertaken in the last 6 months

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

The performance reporting is designed to be a method to summarise the ongoing work undertaken by the department to support and target areas of need identified through Corporate Plan and take account of changing and future needs of Blaenau Gwent.

#### **6.4. *Collaboration / partnership working***

The areas of collaboration are outlined in the performance report.

#### **6.5. *Integration (across service areas)***

Integration is outlined in the performance report

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

Monitoring will be done through the Council's Corporate Plan, Service business plan and Place Scrutiny Committee

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

*Appendix 1 –Regeneration and Community Services Q1 and Q2  
Performance Report*

# Regeneration & Community Services Performance Report

April - September 2023



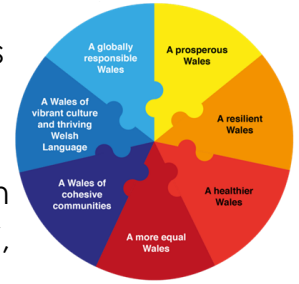
**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

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

Foreword	Page 3
Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Page 5
Town Centres	Page 7
Case Study	
Energy & Digital	Page 12
Case Study	Page 17
Destination Management & Tourism	Page 19
Case Study	
Employment and Skills	Page 21
Case Study	Page 28
Housing Development	Page 29
Case Study	Page 32
Improving the local environment	Page 33
Case Study	Page 38
Healthy and Safe Communities	Page 40
Case Study	Page 47
Managing our estate	Page 48
Improving the well being and resilience of our communities	Page 50
Case Study	Page 64
Managing our Highways Network and infrastructure	Page 65

# Foreword

The purpose of this report is to present service activity which highlights how we are contributing to the Council's overall aim of delivering all seven national well-being goals.



The following overview pages set out Regeneration & Community Services performance for the period along with some associated achievements and challenges aligned to the priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2022/27, which are to :



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



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



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



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

This report is broken down into the themes below which have been identified for the Environment Services area and support delivery of the priority areas above:

- Town Centres;
- Energy and Digital;
- Destination Management and Tourism;
- Employment and Skills;
- Housing Development;
- Improving the Local Environment;
- Healthy and Safe Communities;
- Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities;
- Managing Our Estate; and
- Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure.



Blaenau Gwent has a rich heritage and our buildings and countryside are part of Blaenau Gwent's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. Our local environment should be used to help improve the health and well-being of our families and communities and be enhanced for future generations to continue to enjoy. There is also a real desire to see the communities where people live kept clean, tidy and useable, creating areas that people can be proud of.

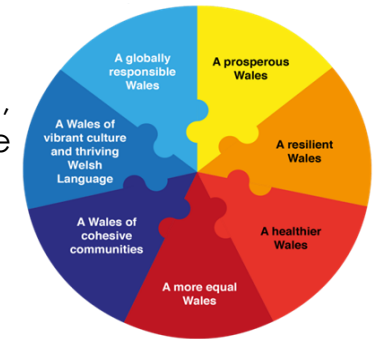
We will continue to invest in our neighbourhoods so that they are places where people are proud to live. We have prioritised economic development and regeneration in order to bring jobs, growth and opportunity to local people and businesses.

Increasing employability makes a fundamental contribution to reducing and tackling poverty and the economic status of the area. Supporting people to obtain and retain employment reduces reliance upon support services aligned to social well-being and poverty.



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

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is legislation which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The vision of this legislation is expressed in the seven National well-being goals.



The Act also puts a duty on public bodies to apply the sustainable development principle which states they 'must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The sustainable development principle is made up of the following five ways of working, pictured below:



**Collaboration**



**Integration**



**Involvement**



**Long Term**



**Prevention**

Throughout this report some areas of performance that meet these ways of working are demonstrated by the above images.



**The following pages detail some directorate service delivery & performance, during the period April 2023 to September 2023, broken down by themes as detailed on page 3.**







# Town Centres



The Welsh Government's Smart Towns Programme runs until 2025

Over the course of the 'Year of Smart Towns' the Council attended a number of workshops, developed a digital action plan and

implemented pilot projects. These have been developed into case studies that have been shared within the Smart Towns Community. The programme supports businesses, councils and communities in using digital technology and data to regenerate their high streets, in line with the Transforming Towns agenda. This means helping businesses to use data to work smarter and not harder, and to identify opportunities for growth; using data to justify and inform investment, and to measure the success of any intervention.



Development of  
Town Centre regeneration Plans  
are ongoing



**Ebbw Vale** - work continues on the delivery plan. Some work on development options for key sites has commenced. Further engagement with Design Commission for Wales to be undertaken.

**Brynmawr** - the placemaking plan has been approved by Scrutiny and Cabinet. Work is underway on the development of the delivery plan.

**Tredegar** - the placemaking plan was approved in 2022. Draft delivery plan received and currently being reviewed. The delivery plan will contain the list of projects that need to be done to achieve the overall vision for the town.

Funding application has been prepared to cover costs of developing a **Blaina Placemaking Plan**.



**Abertillery** - placemaking plan has gone through the democratic process and has highlighted the strategic vision for redevelopment of Abertillery town centre .

From the positive improvements the community have achieved in Abertillery Park, to the ongoing work to reopen Abertillery Institute, the desire for improvements in the town are evident. This plan should be viewed as a means of mobilising this latent strength.



## Town Centres

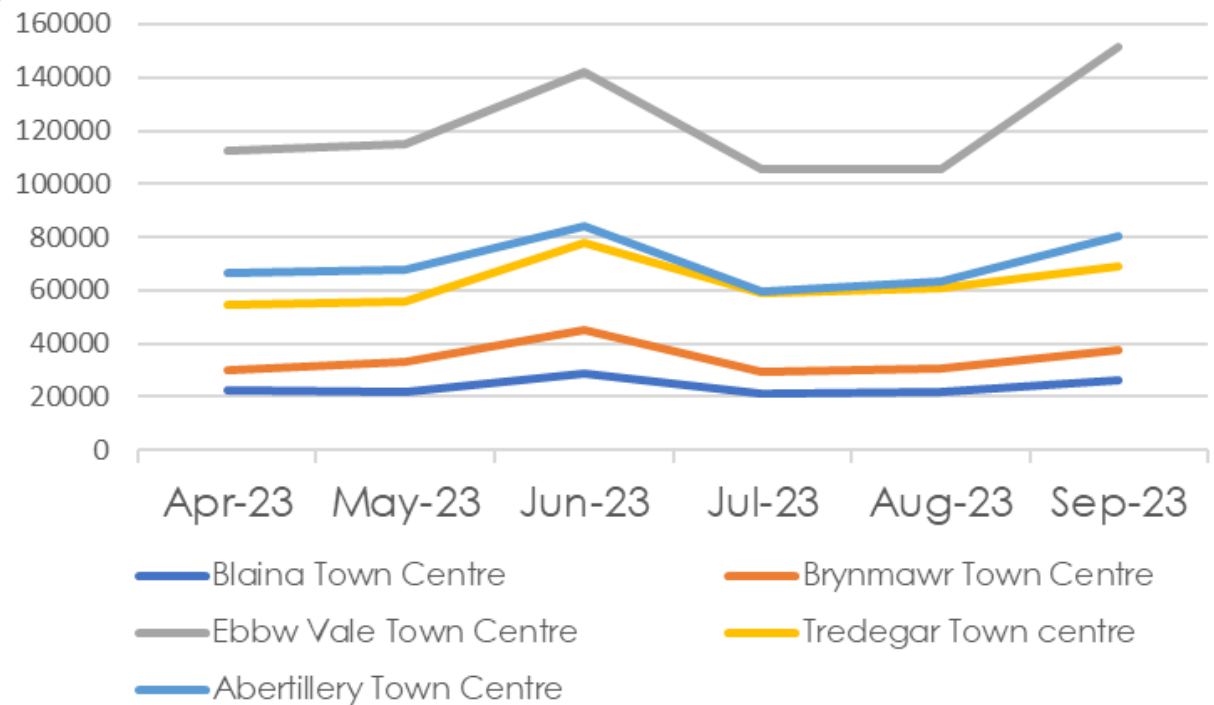


**Footfall** is an important factor influencing our town centre vitality and viability. Sensors count the number of shoppers visiting our town centres and provide analytical data on how individual town centres are performing and how shoppers are using them.

The data from footfall monitoring allows the Council to be better equipped to make evidenced based decisions on the popularity and effectiveness of current and future projects in Town Centres.

During the first six months of the year footfall has fluctuated each month with the **busiest month in nearly all towns being June**, just as it was for the same period last year.

There was a **total Blaenau Gwent town centre footfall of 1,878,996 people** over the reporting period (April 23—September 23). This was a **reduction in total footfall of 81,312 compared to the same period last year.**



Footfall counters are used across the towns within Blaenau Gwent to measure the number of people entering an area, shop or building. The technology monitors pedestrians and vehicles in any type of environment, continuously 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Visitor numbers are analysed using the very latest counting specific tracking, which is based on movement across a predefined area. At no time are images stored, with counts recorded as a value and stored as a CSV file. .

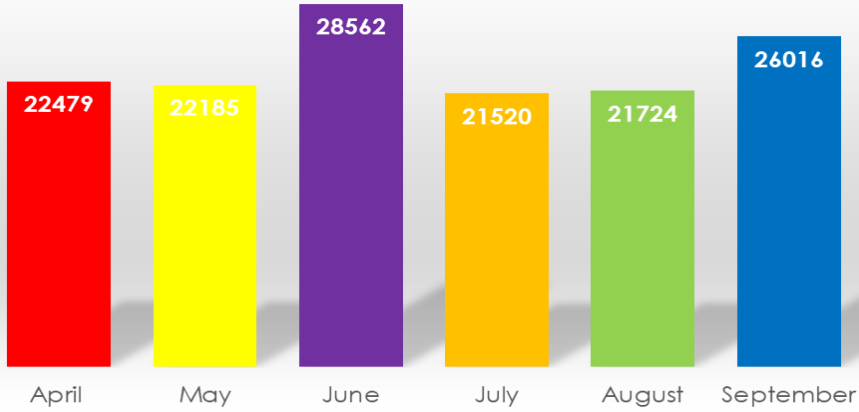


# Town Centres

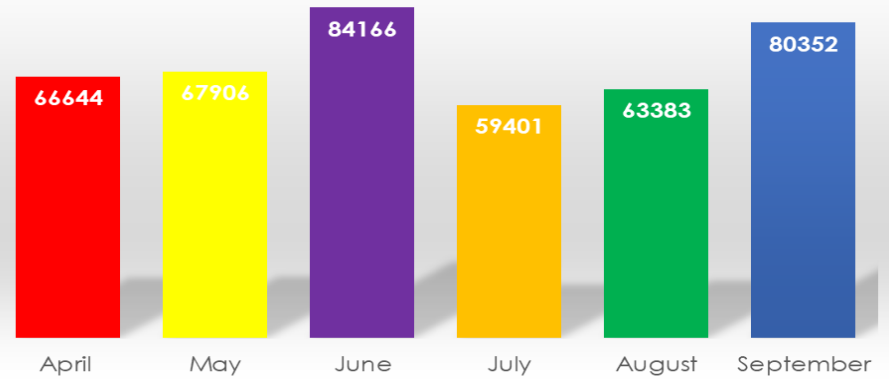


The following graphs show the amount of footfall in each of our towns each month....

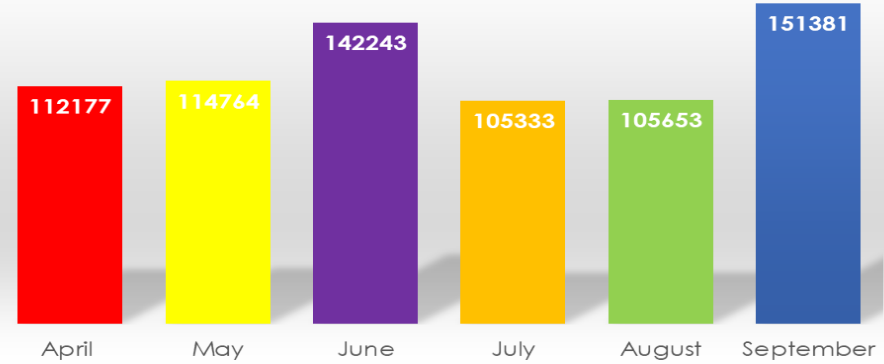
### Blaina Town Footfall Data



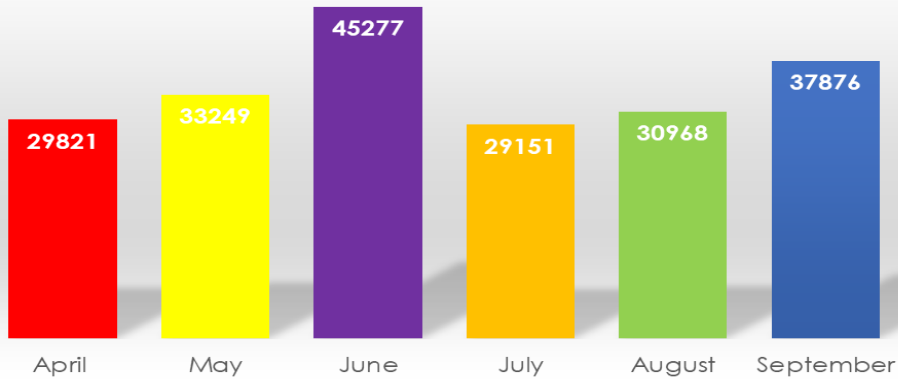
### Abertillery Town Footfall Data



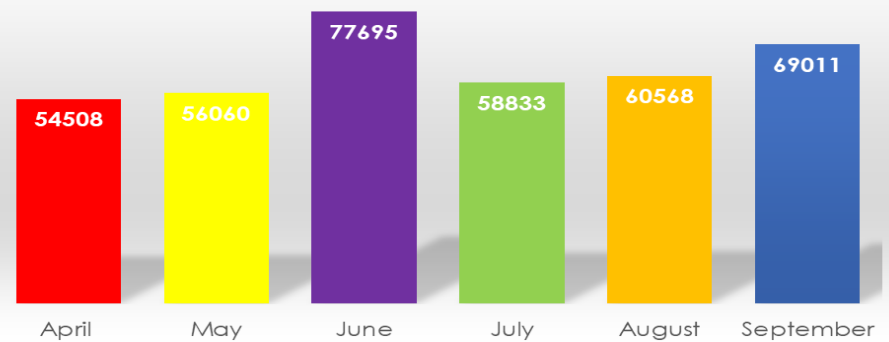
### Ebbw Vale Town Footfall Data



### Brynmawr Town Footfall Data



### Tredegar Town Footfall Data



Internet of things technology has been used to support measuring footfall in our town centres and active travel routes



# Town Centres



A range of collaborative activities and engagement have taken place during the reporting period, including the **consultation** on our **Local development plan** and **Placemaking Plans**.

The review of the existing Local Development Plan (LDP) is ongoing. Approval of a planned delivery agreement to form the updated LDP was obtained from Welsh Government along with a revised timetable for delivery due to unforeseen delays. [Open hyperlink here for further details](#)

The Local Development Plan continues to provide a long term framework for sustainable development across Blaenau Gwent, supported by key documents such as the Placemaking Plans, which when complete will support future planning decisions within the towns.



It is the intention that Placemaking Plans will all be complete or substantially complete in advance of the finalisation of the Local Development Plan.

**The Town Centre Business Development Officer has been working with businesses and other stakeholders to organise events that will help draw visitors and footfall .**



An **events programme** will be **developed** over the next few months **alongside applications for funding** such as Shared Prosperity Funding and Transforming Towns. Additional resources have also been identified to support implementation on the ground, as well as collaboration and co-delivery with a range of partners in particular within the People & Skills and Community & Place pillars.



## Case Study - 'Meanwhile Use' Scheme supporting our Town Centres



The 'Meanwhile Use' Scheme provides new businesses with financial assistance allowing them the opportunity to take on a tenancy and test trade the market without having to commit to long term or expensive rental contracts.

Meanwhile uses can assist in the regeneration of a Town, Tillery Animal Health is one of the businesses who has taken part in this scheme.

### Siobhan owner of Tillery Animal Health said:

*"As a result of being made redundant in my previous role as a Veterinary Pharmaceutical Representative, I decided to utilise my animal health advisor qualifications and open a business selling animal medicines, feeds, treats, and toys. I initially started at home and quickly progressed to a local market stall. It was at this time I spoke to the Town Centre Development Officer about my aspiration of having my own premises and she told me about the 'meanwhile' scheme, which could provide financial support allowing me the opportunity to rent a small premises within Abertillery Arcade.*

*This was the help that I needed to allow me to make the leap from trading at home into running my own shop, within a short time I outgrew the shop and have moved into larger premises. This has allowed me to extend my product range with now includes country wear, equestrian clothing and aquatics equipment. I have been overwhelmed by the support from local residents who have become valued customers .*





## Energy and Digital

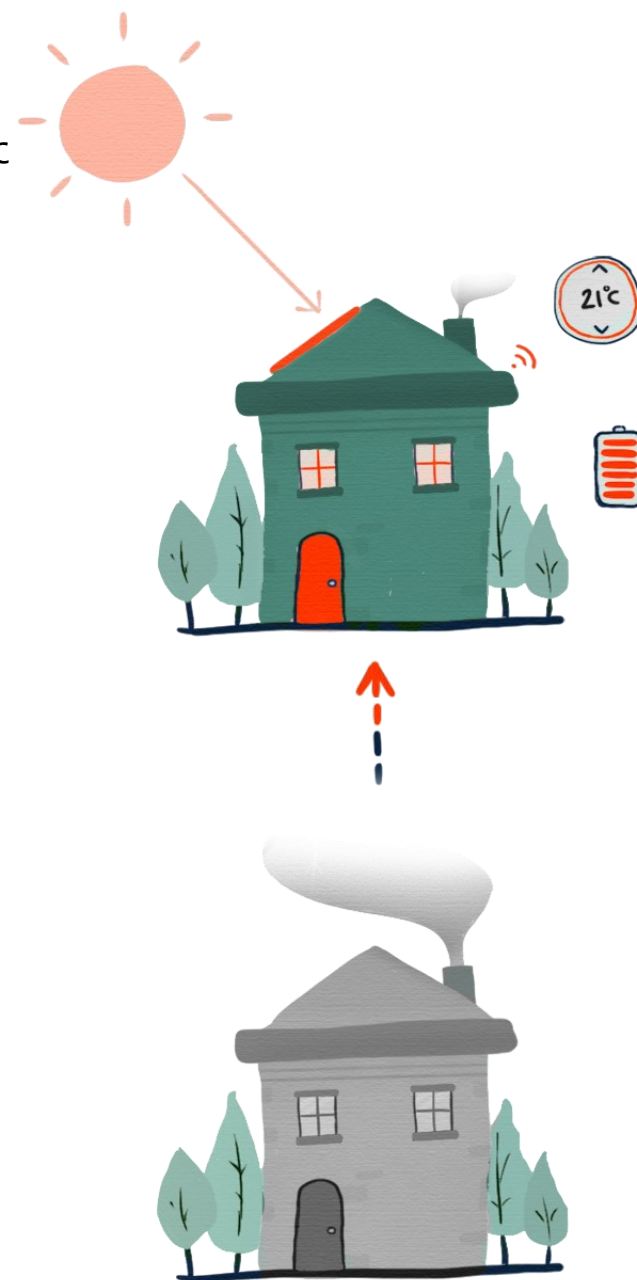


All 4 partner registered social landlords in Blaenau Gwent (Tai Calon, Linc Cymru, United Welsh and Melin) continue to deliver housing schemes supported by the funding award allocation from Welsh Government to deliver phased activity of the **Optimised Retrofit Programme**. The main theme of the programme is affordable warmth and decarbonisation achieved through the best path for each individual home.

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**90% of the current Welsh housing stock is predicted to remain in use by 2050.**

The main challenge moving forward will be retrofitting our existing housing stock, which is particularly old, one third of Welsh homes were built before 1919 while just 6% were built in the last 30 years. A whole fabric approach to retrofit is devised with the aim of ensuring that a property operates in as energy-efficient a manner as possible, with all aspects of the building complementing each other. Retrofit largely has to take place locally. This is both a significant challenge and opportunity for Blaenau Gwent. The skills and supply chain requirements of retrofit at the scale required by Net Zero 2050 are far beyond current capacities both locally and nationally. However, they also present large-scale opportunities for jobs and businesses that have to be located in Blaenau Gwent, and there is significant potential for these benefits to be retained in local businesses and communities.



<https://www.optimised-retrofit.wales/>

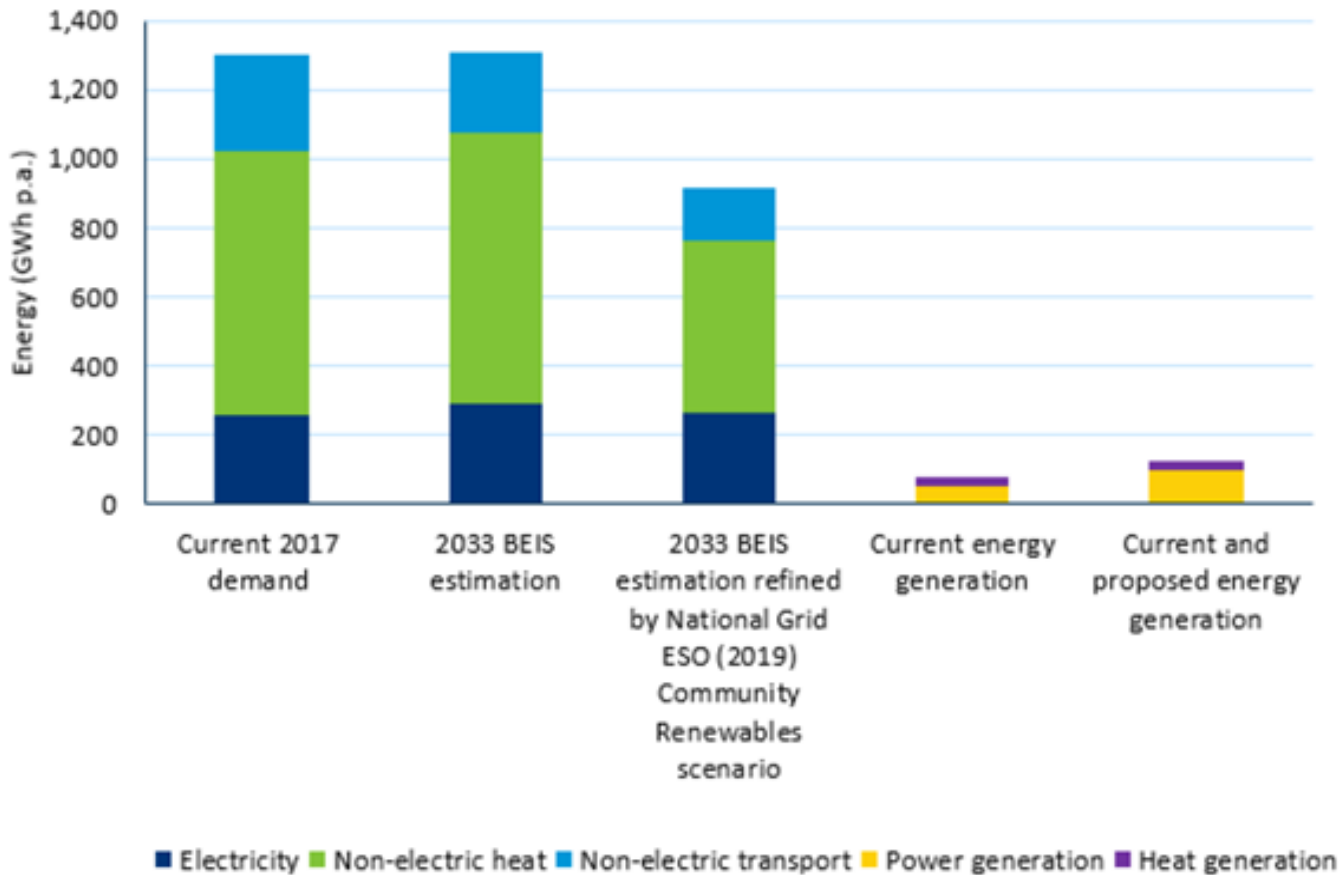


# Energy and Digital



The current level of renewables from electricity generated in Blaenau Gwent is only a small proportion of our current demand, but there is enough potential resource to cover all of this demand.

Current and estimated future energy demands and current and proposed energy generation



Decarbonisation of the electricity system has made strong progress, **emissions from electricity have fallen by 50% since 2013 and 64% since 1990**, and the UK Government has a good chance of meeting its commitment to decarbonise the electricity supply by 2035. But this was largely achieved by a small number of national organisations. Emissions reductions in other areas are going to require action by far wider range of organisations, including at the local level.





# Energy and Digital



**Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP)** is a whole energy system, looking at energy from the Domestic, Industrial, Commercial, Public, Agriculture and Transport Sector across the whole local authority area. It is data driven and focuses on local energy assets and energy demand trends across Blaenau Gwent. Scenario modelling is also undertaken, mapping out expected energy demand, up until 2050, focusing on local energy assets and energy demand trends, considering local, regional and national targets and conditions to achieve net zero. The LAEP is led by the Council but involves stakeholders and Council's across boundaries to gain buy in and commitment in order to bring success.

**By March 2024 every local authority area in Wales will have a LAEP**

Work around developing Energy Projects continue with progress being made on the Silent Valley Wind Turbine. This will be taken to a draft planning stage where the case for investment is determined.

Work is continuing on development of infrastructure for Blaenau Gwent fleet, schools and Council buildings.



**We are continuing to investigate opportunities around zero carbon within the Corporate Landlord portfolio and supporting others in development of energy schemes - wind turbine. Incorporating energy efficiency through BREAMM in new capital builds and retro fitting [LEDS ..] in Industrial & other units**

The LAEP will be funded by the Welsh Government and will contain:

**Route Map** - Will identify the most effective route for the local area to contribute to energy net zero by 2050 considering future energy demand.

**Action Plan** – describes the actions required over the next five years – to meet future energy demand by the different renewable energy sources and technologies

**Outcome:** A costed, spatial plan that identifies the change needed to the local energy system and built environment, detailing what, where, when and by whom. It provides the level of detail for an area that is equivalent to an outline design or master plan, additional detailed design work is required for identified projects to progress to implementation.





# Energy and Digital



Blaenau Gwent Council's commitment to increasing the number of Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points is throughout the borough is well underway. we are seeing a steady increase in ultra-low emission vehicles licensed across Blaenau Gwent.

Funding has been confirmed for the second phase of the delivery plan . Locations for the EV charge points will be :

- Briery Hill car park, Ebbw Vale
- Health Centre car park, Abertillery
- Lower Salisbury Street car park, Tredegar
- Somerset Street/Worcester Street car park, Brynmawr
- Arail Street car park, Six Bells
- Mitre Street car park, Abertillery
- Queen Square car park, Ebbw Vale
- Car park off Canning Street, Cwm
- Abertillery Multi Storey car park

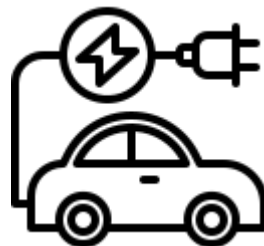


**CONNECTED KERB**  
 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGEPOINTS  
**NOW HERE**  
 On a mission to create cleaner, quieter streets

UK Government  
 Llywodraeth y DU

Prifddinas  
 Blaenau Gwent  
 Cardiff  
 Capital  
 Region

Llywodraeth Cymru  
 Welsh Government



The number of Installed chargers that are ready for public use are :

Confirmed site	Number of chargers at each site
<b>Bryn Bach Park</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>Tillery Road car park, Cwmtillery</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>Llanhilleth Railway Station Park and Ride</b>	2 x 7kW (4 bays)
<b>Cwm Terrace car park, Cwm</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>Ebbw Vale Parkway Railway Park and Ride</b>	2 x 7kW (4 bays)
<b>Gwent Shopping Centre</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>ViTTC</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>Car Park opposite the General Offices, Ebbw Vale</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>General Offices car park by Ebbw Vale Town Railway Station</b>	2 x 7kW (4 bays)
<b>Market Square car park, Brynmawr</b>	1 x 22kW (2 bays)
<b>William Street car park, Cwm</b>	1 x 7kW (2 bays)



# Energy and Digital



## Community Meals Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles

Effective integrated working has enabled the Social Services Community Meals service to become more sustainable, supporting the councils strategy to reduce carbon emissions.

The service provides a daily hot meal to over 160 vulnerable adults living in Blaenau Gwent and during the reporting period, the launch of the rebranded Community Meals Service took place. This included the unveiling of their new electric vehicles which were funded in part through Welsh Government grant funding.

The service has used the introduction of the new vehicles to develop an intergenerational cross curriculum project with year 7 and 8 learners from Abertillery Learning Community Secondary campus. The learners have worked alongside the staff in the Community Meals team to design and develop the new branding and logos for the service including designing the artwork on the new vans - ensuring that the vans are noticeable when out and about the streets of Blaenau Gwent. They also spent time with the Council's transport team learning about the benefits of the service moving to electric vehicles and impact on the environment.





## Case Study - Councillors approve scheme to improve home energy



Blaenau Gwent Council's Cabinet has endorsed its participation in a regional scheme aimed at improving energy efficiency in the homes of the most fuel poor residents in the borough.

The Council will work in partnership with the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) and energy supplier EDF, as part of the Energy Company Obligation Scheme (ECO4 Flex), to identify domestic properties in need of energy improvement measures. Qualifying homes of property owners and privately renting tenants will be retrofitted with a range of insulation and energy improving measures as part of a 'whole house' approach.

A previous scheme saw 134 households in Blaenau Gwent benefit from measures including replacement of boilers, cavity wall, internal wall and loft insulation, first time central heating, upgrading electrical heaters and solar panel installation. A flexible element of the new scheme enables councils to tailor energy efficiency schemes to their area. Under ECO4 Flex, councils can refer private tenure households that it considers to be living in fuel poverty or on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

### **The Council's Cabinet Member for Place & Environment, Cllr Helen Cunningham says:**

*"As energy prices have rocketed and more families have been plunged into fuel poverty, this scheme is very welcome. It will target people living in properties with the lowest energy performance ratings and those not on the gas grid. We hope it will help reduce inequalities in living standards and in so doing deliver health, and wellbeing for people benefiting from the scheme.*

*It also supports the Council's aim to play our part in responding to the worldwide nature and climate crisis. We need to greatly reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of homes as part of that."*





# Destination Management & Tourism



## WELLBEING WORKHUB

In April remote working well being hubs were opened in Parc Bryn Bach helping to encourage people to work remotely whilst enjoying the nature reserve.

The opportunity to work remotely at the hub will help to benefit local community, businesses, individual's and the environment



We aim to bring community and business tourism to Blaenau Gwent - meetings, incentives, conferences and events. Improvements to the transport network give the ideal platform to fully embrace the opportunities that exist.



The Council continue to work with Transport for Wales on the **Abertillery rail extension** (Phase 2). This design and feasibility work is ongoing and the Council, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales are waiting to hear from the Department for Transport at UK Government for an update on funding to support the delivery of the project.



The EVR Frequency Enhancement (Phase 1) project is nearing completion with the provision of a **new rail station extension at Llanhilleth** and a new hourly service to Newport and Cardiff from Ebbw Vale starting in January 2024.





# Destination Management & Tourism



Politicians came together to celebrate Wales Tourism Week and hear first-hand from businesses in a small Welsh town where the NHS was dreamed up 75 years ago. Nick Smith MP, Alun Davies MS and Cllr John Morgan, Cabinet member for Place and Regeneration met with managers of Bedwellty House and Park, The Tredegar Workmen’s Medical Aid Society Heritage Centre and the Tredegar Arms to explore what is available to visitors unearthing NHS history.



Bevan was a miner enjoying the comfort of what the local medical aid society offered its members. The society had Walter Conway as its secretary who in turn was a mentor for Bevan and was a fellow member of the local ‘Query Club’, a radical debating society in the town. This is where Aneurin Bevan sharpened his debating skills growing his intellect and shaping his principles that led to the formation of a health service, free at the point of need for everyone in the UK.

Page 1149



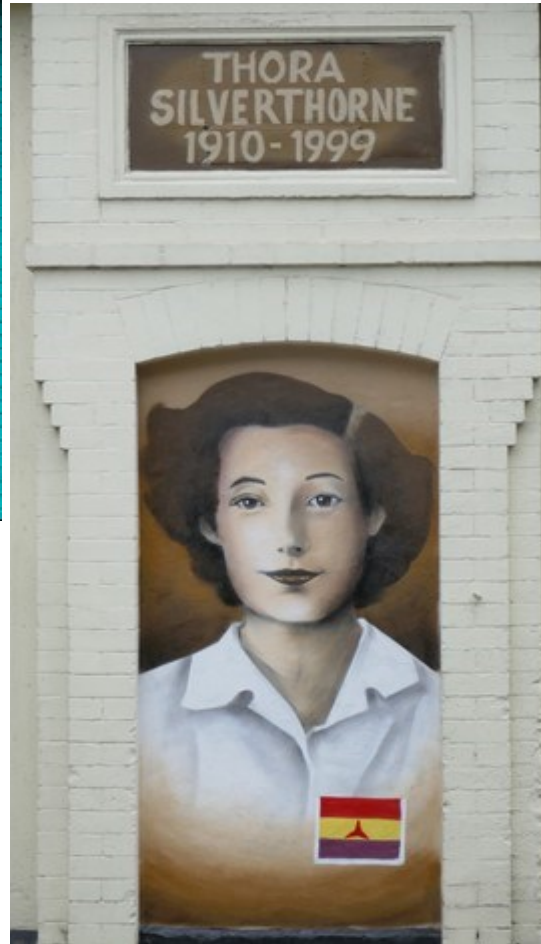
Kevin Phillips, TWASHC\*, Nick Smith, MP and Jay Sweeny, TWASHC\* – at the \*Tredegar Workmen’s Medical Aid Society Heritage Centre, The Circle, Tredegar.

*We have a proud heritage here in our communities and a history of standing up for those in need. The NHS is carved on our hearts and we want to use this its 75th anniversary to invite visitors to come and see where it all started. There is so much to see and do whether it is visiting heritage centres and museums, walking trails, listening to films, reading and learning about its roots. You can stay in friendly hotels with comfy beds, enjoy tasty food in our cosy restaurants or toast the NHS in our welcoming bars. You really should make 2023 the year to visit Blaenau Gwent*

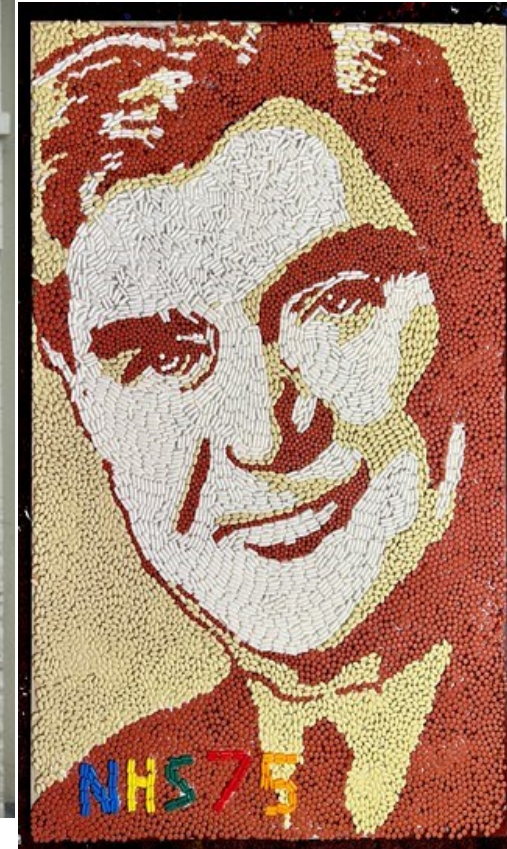
**Councillor John Morgan, Cabinet Member for Place and Regeneration**



# Case Study - Destination Management & Tourism



Portrait of Aneurin Bevan made of out of placebo pills provided by PCI Pharma Services .



The mural is in Alma Street, Abertillery near the terraced house where Thora lived in at the start of the twentieth century

Famous artist Nathan Wyburn has created a large portrait in stones of Aneurin Bevan on a hillside above Trefil, Tredegar.

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the NHS a series of artworks were commissioned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. This included artwork from the famous artist Nathan Wyburn of a large mural of Aneurin Bevan and artwork of Thora Silverthorne one of the first to sign up for the Spanish Medical Aid Committee at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

# Employment and Skills



## Business / Support to Business

The Enterprise Facilitation project was relaunched in June 2023.

Enterprise Facilitation is a free, informal, and confidential service for aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners within Blaenau Gwent. The Enterprise Facilitation® model places no time constraint on an Enterprise Facilitator's time or length of support available, which means clients will always have access to the form of support needed, as and when issues arise.



Since June 2023 the Enterprise Facilitators have been meeting with internal and external stakeholders to promote the service and working with a wide range of clients.

This includes:

- External Meetings/Intros 30
- Internal Meetings/Intros 25
- No of clients 62
- No contacts identified for VRP (skills gap audit) 28
- No of Drop-in Sessions / Business Clinics 1

2 new Enterprise Facilitators have been recruited to deliver the Enterprise Facilitation model as well as lead on the day-to-day marketing and communications for the Business & Innovation team, including implementing new digital ways of working to improve customer experience and promote local business support initiatives and ensure local business development opportunities are maximised.

The Enterprise Facilitators will also support the development of an effective business networking forum for start-up, new and small businesses in Blaenau Gwent.



**Blaenau Gwent Business Hub**

A marketing and social media plan is currently being developed and the re-design of the Blaenau Gwent Business Hub is underway.



Kick Start Plus is **a joint initiative funded by UK Steel Enterprise and administered by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**. The scheme has been developed to complement the existing business start up grant initiative. The grant is aimed at supporting new businesses from 6 months up to 3 years old, to help them develop and expand.

## Kick Start Plus

**£10K funding secured from UKSE to continue with delivery of the Kick Start Plus** programme, which is aimed at supporting new businesses from 6 months up to 3 years old, to help them develop and expand. UKSE also agreed to **increase level of maximum grant to £2,500.**



Page 1152



- **9 Expression of Interests received resulting in 6 applications issued.**
- **2 full applications received and 7 ongoing.**
- **2 grants approved, totalling £2,267.50.**
- **1 FTE job to be created and 2 FTE jobs to be safeguarded.**







## Employment and Skills



Contractors, ISG have started work on the site of the former Monwel Hankinson factory, Ebbw Vale, to create a new multi-million hi-tech post 16 education facility.

The new **21,808 sq ft High Value Engineering (HiVE) facility** will provide state-of-the-art training and education for young people and businesses in the fields of robotics, advanced materials and manufacturing, and digital and enabling technologies.

In partnership with Coleg Gwent, and industry partners, the Council secured over **£12 million** from the Welsh Government's Tech Valleys programme and the UK Government to bring the redundant factory building back in to use and create HiVE facility.

There will be a high-quality teaching space with the capacity for **up to 600 students**, complete with classrooms, study areas and a range of workshop spaces. students, including those enrolled onto engineering courses at Coleg Gwent from Autumn 2024.

**Construction starts on multi-million hi-tech post 16 education facility in Ebbw Vale**



UK Government contributed over **£9 million** from its Levelling Up fund

# Employment and Skills



## HiVE aims to:

- Provide relevant, up-to-date qualifications for the next industrial revolution.
- Raise awareness in schools, pupils, and the wider community.
- Raise aspiration and inspire future generations.
- Improve accessibility.
- Raise attainment levels in STEM.
- Align with partners/ stakeholders to develop a skills package/offer; and
- Address the gender imbalance in Engineering.

The Centre will offer employment and skills opportunities with training, specifically allowing students to experience the world of work and equipping them with a qualification such as BTEC, HNC or HND.

It will be a Centre of academic excellence for relevant engineering qualifications up to level 6 and therefore responding to industry and their needs.



The Welsh Government has committed **£3.97** million to this proposal comprising:

- **£20,327** contribution to evaluation of need study commissioned by BGCBC from the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC).
- **£200,000** seed funding for detailed design development (specifically, activities and reports to bring architectural drawings and ecological and other surveys required to enable the planning application to be submitted this sum has been paid in full).
- **£160,000** was awarded in January 2022 to assist in de-risking detailed design work and moving from RIBA 3 to 4 in the development of tender documents.
- **£600,000** for the purchase of autonomous robotics equipment and creation of feeder / taster learning hubs in Tredegar Comprehensive School and Coleg Gwent Learning Campus.
- **£2.99 million** in March 2022 for the delivery of HiVE going forward.



The **Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme** within Blaenau Gwent is a strategic project with a number of partners; Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone, Education, Industry and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. The programme is set to enhance skills development within the manufacturing and engineering companies to develop business growth; whilst tackling unemployment and providing aspirational opportunities for young people across the local authority.

## External Aspire Apprentices

- Total Apprentices external 102 (16-24 year olds)
- Currently 20 Apprentices on programme Utilised Over 22 host companies within Blaenau Gwent
- Apprentices that are live in BG at 44 %
- Percentage of 90% male 10% female
- Varying Apprenticeship Pathways - within an Advanced manufacturing setting

## Internal Apprentices -

- Facilitated 29 Internal apprentices - Age profile 17-42 because we could do any age apprenticeships.
- 18 Apprentices currently on programme.
- 60% Male 40% Female
- 63% live in Blaenau Gwent
- over 10 different departments including Business support, transport, social services, education etc.
- 8 apprentices have moved into employment

## Aspire Children Looked - Aspire Support

- 43 referrals from 14+
- Met 31- supported with:
  - ◇ Career options
  - ◇ CV workshops
  - ◇ Job applications/ DBS
- 18 work placements/ traineeships facilitated. 7 of these now in employment

# Employment and Skills

**The STEM Facilitation Project** is funded by Welsh Government as part of Tech Valleys initiative to establish a coordinated programme of STEM support to schools, centred on industry.

The following link contains all our latest up to date information. <https://padlet.com/BGSTEMPROJECT/stem-facilitation-project-jjw368i31d79ypnh>

## Key Targets achieved between April – September:

- New Businesses engaged = 17
- Business committed to working with schools = 12
- No of Activities delivered or supported by business = 8
- No of activities delivered from other providers = 57
- No. schools engaged = 27
- STEM audits undertaken with schools = 11
- STEM sessions delivered at Secondary Schools = 4
- STEM sessions delivered at Primary Schools = 71
- STEM Events delivered = 2



## Key activities between April to September are:

- STEM Facilitation Grant (Tech Valleys Initiative) – over £57k in total, awarded across all 4 secondary schools to purchase capital equipment that will enhance the STEM learning of pupils, by bringing real world, authentic work experiences into the classroom, in partnership with industry.
- Padlet launched April 2023 – updated monthly, circulated to schools, internal staff and Councillors.
- Blaenau Gwent STEM League launched May 2023 – school of the month, termly hero, school of the year. 21 schools signed up to League / 27 out of 29 schools currently engaging with us \*(all schools now engaged with us)
- Launched BG STEM Business Recognition Scheme in August – businesses working with us will get points for each school intervention. If businesses do a minimum of 3 interventions per academic year, they will be referred to Careers Wales to become a School Valued Partner and enter their Annual Awards.
- Shortlisted as finalists for the Wales STEM Awards 2023 in the STEM Educational Programme of the Year (Public Sector).
- Strong relationship with Careers Wales – monthly F2F meetings held with them. Collaborative project to launch with them early 2024 – Tasty Careers.
- Creating Coding Communities – scoped out during the summer and launched October 2023. The purpose of this project is to provide an extra curricular, community based, STEM intervention that addresses educational inequality and disparity of opportunity, for children in Blaenau Gwent - **Creating Coding Communities** is currently being delivered across all 6 libraries. In September, all Blaenau Gwent Library Services staff were trained to deliver child-led coding sessions to all Yr 5/6 primary school children and is being supported by the provision of 10 Chromebooks and 20 complete micro:bit starter robotics kits for each of the 6 libraries which is included in the programme. These items will be permanently donated to each library as a project legacy gift and will help facilitate an understanding of Coding and Robotics to hitherto unachievable levels. The idea is to bring learning into the communities where children can take family members / carers to participate in coding sessions too.

Page 1156



# Blaenau Gwent QuickStart Work Placements

## Supported Work Placements

The Quickstart Blaenau Gwent Programme offers 6 month supported paid work placements within Blaenau Gwent to anyone aged 16 + who are unemployed or economically inactive, to gain valuable experience and enhance employability skills to increase their chances of finding full time work once the placement has ended.

A host of employers in Blaenau Gwent are offering meaningful Quickstart Blaenau Gwent placements in a variety of sectors to suit individual interests. Participants will be supported throughout their placement to develop transferrable skills, undertake relevant training and increase confidence to secure future long term employment.



The **Quickstart** Programme commenced in April 2023



**Quickstart** was based on the principles of Kickstart –

The aim is to support 100 unemployed people over the 2 years. Already we have

**facilitated 60 placements in 39 companies.**



**APPRENTICESHIP  
IN ACTION**

**Aspire Blaenau Gwent  
Apprenticeships**

*Case Study*

**Katie Hall**  
Care Assistant Apprentice  
**Employer**  
Blaenau Gwent County  
Borough Council



**BACKGROUND**

**What did you do before the apprenticeship?**

I'm a mum of 2. Before I had my eldest I was at college. I fell pregnant halfway through my sports level 3 course but managed to complete it. I worked in retail for a short while and did some shifts with an agency in domiciliary care.

**Why did choose to do an apprenticeship?**

My experience with the agency wasn't good but I knew I wanted to work in care. The council has a good reputation so I knew it would be a good chance to work with a good employer and get my qualifications. My partner started as an apprentice and is now fully qualified- that's what I want.

**Why you chose this area of work?**

I love making people smile! I love helping people who can't do everything for themselves- it makes their day better. Providing person centred care and helping individuals access their rights and community, giving them choice makes me very happy. I love going to work every day.



**WHAT YOUR ROLE ENTAILS**

**What have you learnt in your role?**

I've learned how to interact and communicate with people with special needs, especially those who are non-verbal. I can read their expressions and body language to understand what they want or need. I have also had med training and manual handling training.

**WHAT PARTS OF THE JOB YOU ENJOY?**

**What support/help you get?**

My team are brilliant, they answer all my questions and help me understand anything I'm not sure about. I have regular supervision with my manager who is brilliant. I also have a PA and Aspire Mentor who can help me with anything I need and my tutor for coursework.

**What challenges have you faced?**

The meds training. It's a big responsibility to give meds and I really had to concentrate to make sure I understood everything but I passed and feel much more confident after it.

**What would you say to a friend who was interested in an apprenticeship?**

Go for it- it will change your life! I've had loads of support along the way.

**Plans for the future- what do you hope to do at the end of the apprenticeship?**

I want to qualify as a level 5 manager! Ideally I'd like to do the level 3 in childcare next year as we will be having children in Augusta soon. I really hope I can stay in this placement and complete my qualifications as I love it.

*Apprenticeships - working for you...*



**For further information telephone: 01495 355508 or Email: [sap@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:sap@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)**



# Housing Development



We are committed to the regeneration and economic future of Blaenau Gwent and to working with partners to bring disused sites in the county borough back into use.

## The Social Housing

### Grant Programme

supports delivery of affordable housing provision. In 2022/23 an increased Social Housing Grant award of **£7.1m** was allocated to Blaenau Gwent to support delivery of social housing. This will be maintained at this rate until 2025/26.

**Six Bells Colliery** - A partner Registered Social Landlord (RSL) has expressed an interest in developing a mixed tenure residential scheme on the site. **Discussions are at initial stages.**



**Ashvale** - Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Housing Viability Gap Fund has been secured, in order to bring the site forward for residential development. This will bring forward 54 open market and 6 affordable homes to the area. Commencement on site is due January 2024

**Former Civic Centre Site** - A high level development brief has been shared with RSL Partners in order to evoke discussions to bring forward a mixed tenure residential scheme to the site.



**Abertillery Leisure Centre** - Social Housing Grant has been allocated to the 22 unit scheme for 2024/25, working in partnership with Melin Homes. The scheme is due to be considered by Planning Committee early 2024.



**Former Nantyglo School** - Options to ensure that the former Nantyglo School is brought forward for residential development are currently being formulated.





# Housing Development



The Council works to improve homes across Blaenau Gwent with the aim of increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty.

Total of **40** adaptations completed at a cost of

**£248, 237.45**

**4** x Home Improvement Loans applications received and going through legal process

**6** x Houses to Homes Loan awaiting approval

**13** Empty Property Grant Surveys carried out

We aim to deliver **Disabled Facilities Grants in private homes to support independent living** within a target of 300 days and this was achieved during the first half of the reporting period. However, due to the continued increase in applications and availability of surveyors and contractors to carry out assessments and on site works, by the end of quarter 2 we were over target, **delivering within an average of 328 days.**

This still remains an improvement on the same period last year which then stood at an average of 396 days.

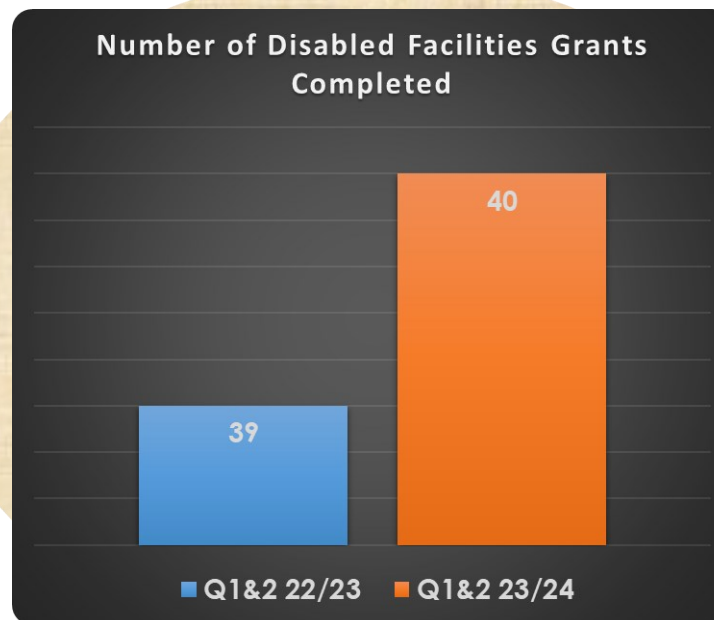
Page 1160

During the period, **2** units were delivered via the Social Housing Grant and occupied by customers.

This was on the Carn y Cefn Site.



Number of Disabled Facilities Grants Completed



Work has continued delivering **40 Disabled Facilities Grants**

(DFGs) so far this year.

This work provides major home adaptations for disabled people for the purpose of providing access into and around their homes.







# Housing Development



Every 5 years, each Local Authority in Wales is to undertake a **Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA)**. The Blaenau Gwent Plan is **in the process of being completed** and is expected March 2024. The assessment will include key socio-economic demographics, including population projections, wage and rent levels, homelessness trends, care accommodation demands, the strengths and weaknesses of the housing market.

We are currently Investigating the presence of approximately 800 privately owned empty properties within the Borough. This will lead to a review of the empty property strategy.

In 2022/23, 33 empty properties (46 units) were brought back into use via direct action.

The LHMA is then used to inform the housing strategy, Social Housing Grant prospectus, market engagement, regeneration and social care plans.

There are a number of grants available from Welsh Government to help deliver new social and affordable homes, including:

- Social Housing Grant
- Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme
- Housing Care Fund
- Affordable Housing Grant
- Recycled capital grant
- Empty Homes grant
- Town centre regeneration/stalled sites fund/ land for housing scheme (loan)





## Case Study - Affordable Housing



### Blaenau Gwent-based Housing Association Secures £105 Million Long-Term Debt Refinancing with NatWest Group

In a groundbreaking move that promises to transform the landscape of affordable housing in Blaenau Gwent, Tai Calon Community Housing, the largest provider of homes in the region, has achieved an extraordinary milestone. The organisation recently finalised a £105 million long-term debt refinancing partnership with NatWest Group. This landmark agreement, concluded on Friday, 28th July 2023, ushers in a new era of growth and progress for Tai Calon and the communities it serves.

This refinancing deal allows Tai Calon to access a level of funding flexibility typically associated with developing housing associations. Until now, the organisation had only ventured into one small Housing First scheme and is developing a modest housing project in Ebbw Vale. With the support of NatWest Group, Tai Calon can now embark on a full-scale development program to construct new affordable homes for those in need across the county of Blaenau Gwent.

Tai Calon's journey towards securing this significant refinancing milestone was made possible by the valuable expertise and guidance of their funding advisors, 2Tix Ltd, and the dedicated legal counsel provided by Clarke Wilmott.

The successful £105 million long-term debt refinancing partnership with NatWest Group marks a significant turning point for Tai Calon. Empowered with greater funding flexibility, Tai Calon is now set to forge a brighter future for affordable housing in Blaenau Gwent.



*"With the support of the NatWest Group, we can now start a development program of new affordable homes for those in need within the county of Blaenau Gwent. This is an exciting opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our communities and address the pressing demand for quality and affordable housing."*

**Howard Toplis, Chief Executive at Tai Calon**





## Improving the Local Environment



The **People and skills investment priority** of the Shared prosperity funding was based on a 3 year allocation of **£8,599,836** – Year 3 funding has been allocated and programmes were profiled over the 2-3 years within education and Regeneration. Grant funded projects were conditionally offered funding for year 3 as well. In terms of the multiply underspend we have been working with in internal departments reviewing opportunities to link – high carbon and green energy agendas to facilitate upskilling and training opportunities for internal and external teams.



The **Communities and Place investment priority** of the Shared Prosperity Fund will enable places to invest to restore their community spaces and relationships and create the foundations for economic development at the neighbourhood-level. The intention of this is to strengthen the social fabric of communities, supporting in building pride in place. Blaenau Gwent's SPF funding allocation over the 3 year delivery programme against this investment priority is **£7,837,618**. In the summer we opened up applications for funding to support projects that fit under the Community and Place pillar. This process is now concluding, and applicants are being informed of the status of their application. The community and place funding has also been used to deliver the town centre events programme.



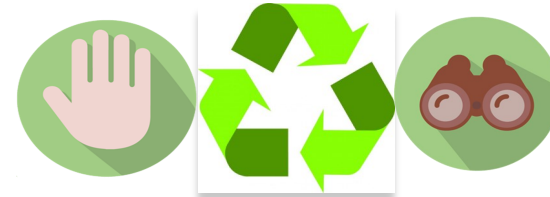
### **LONG TERM - Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

The decarbonisation agenda is considered when putting individual projects together. Some of the interventions in the Community and Place investment priority of the SPF Fund support work within the community around decarbonisation and could support locally owned renewable energy projects to come forward. Likewise, the support for local business will look to help them in decarbonising their activities.



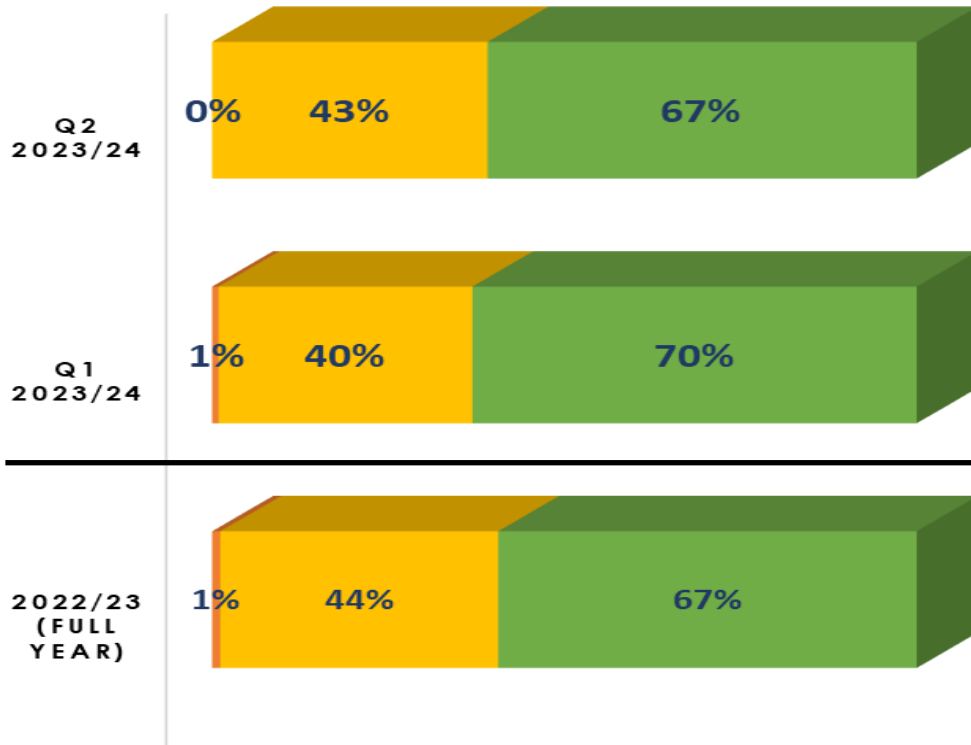


# Improving the Local Environment

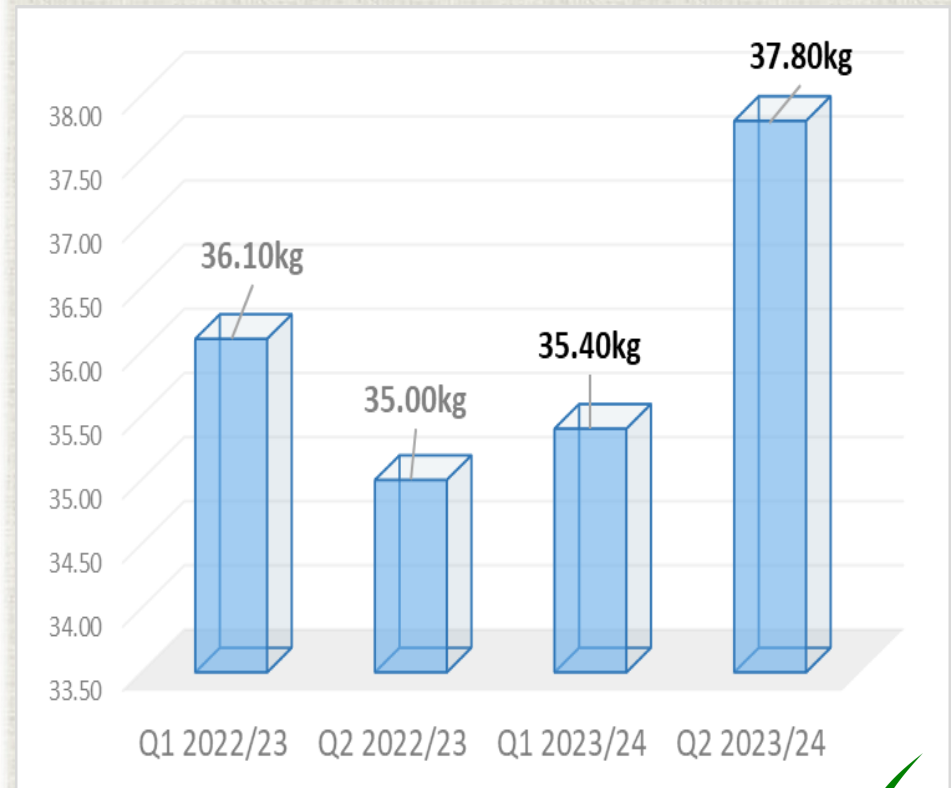


## WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR WASTE?

- Municipal waste sent to landfill
- Municipal waste sent to Energy from Waste
- Waste reused, recycled or composted



Average amount of waste produced per resident during April—September (kg) - Comparison showing the period this year and last year



- 2023/24 Data unverified by Natural Resources Wales
- The Energy from Waste indicator is based on collected waste and we claim a % back from the Incinerator Bottom Ash which also contributes to our recycling rate.



## Improving the Local Environment



Our recycling performance continues to support the Council's Corporate Plan in the priority of 'Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities', which is to increase the rate of recycling and achieve national targets. Welsh Government has set a national recycling rate of 70% by 2024/ 2025.



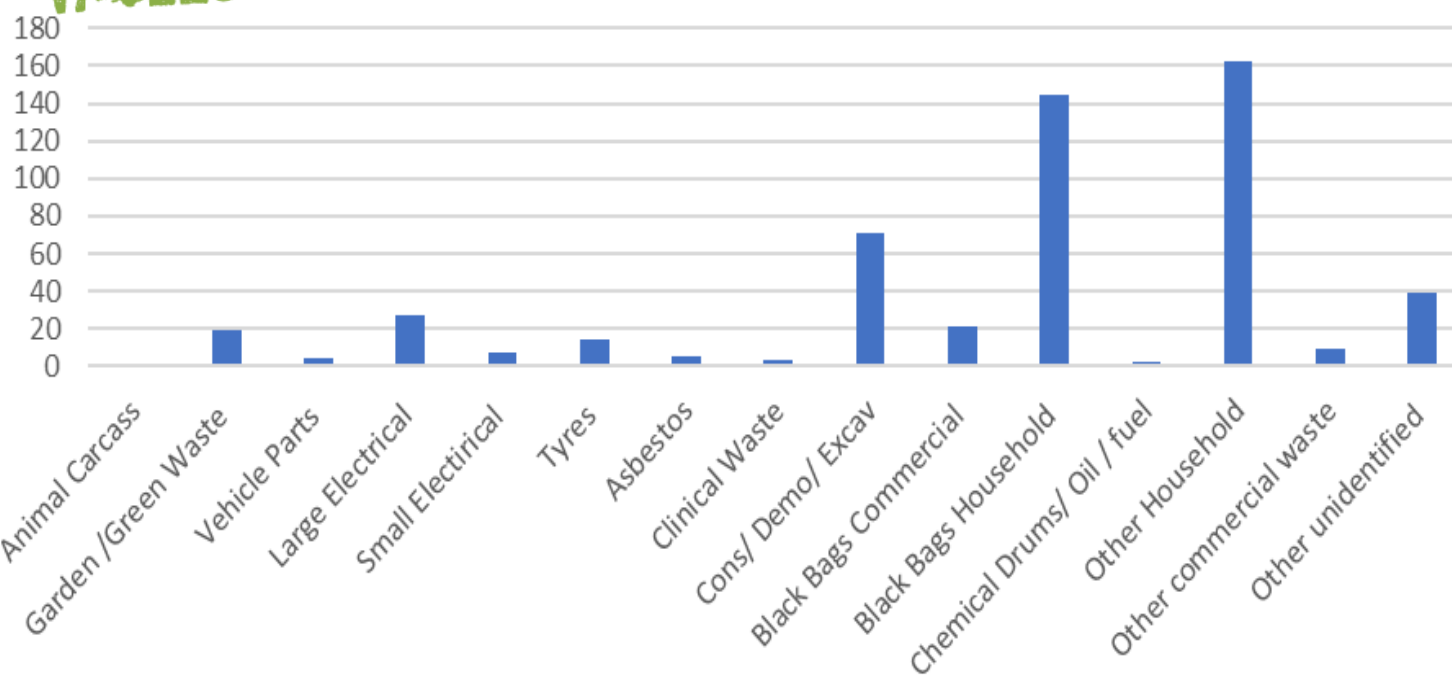
In quarter 1 our recycling rate was **70.11%** exceeding **Welsh Government target** for the first time



**Prevention - CCTV units have been deployed across the County Borough to target highway lay-bys and rural locations subject to prolific fly tipping. There have been 58 incidents captured on CCTV during the April - September period.**



Incidents by Primary Waste Type



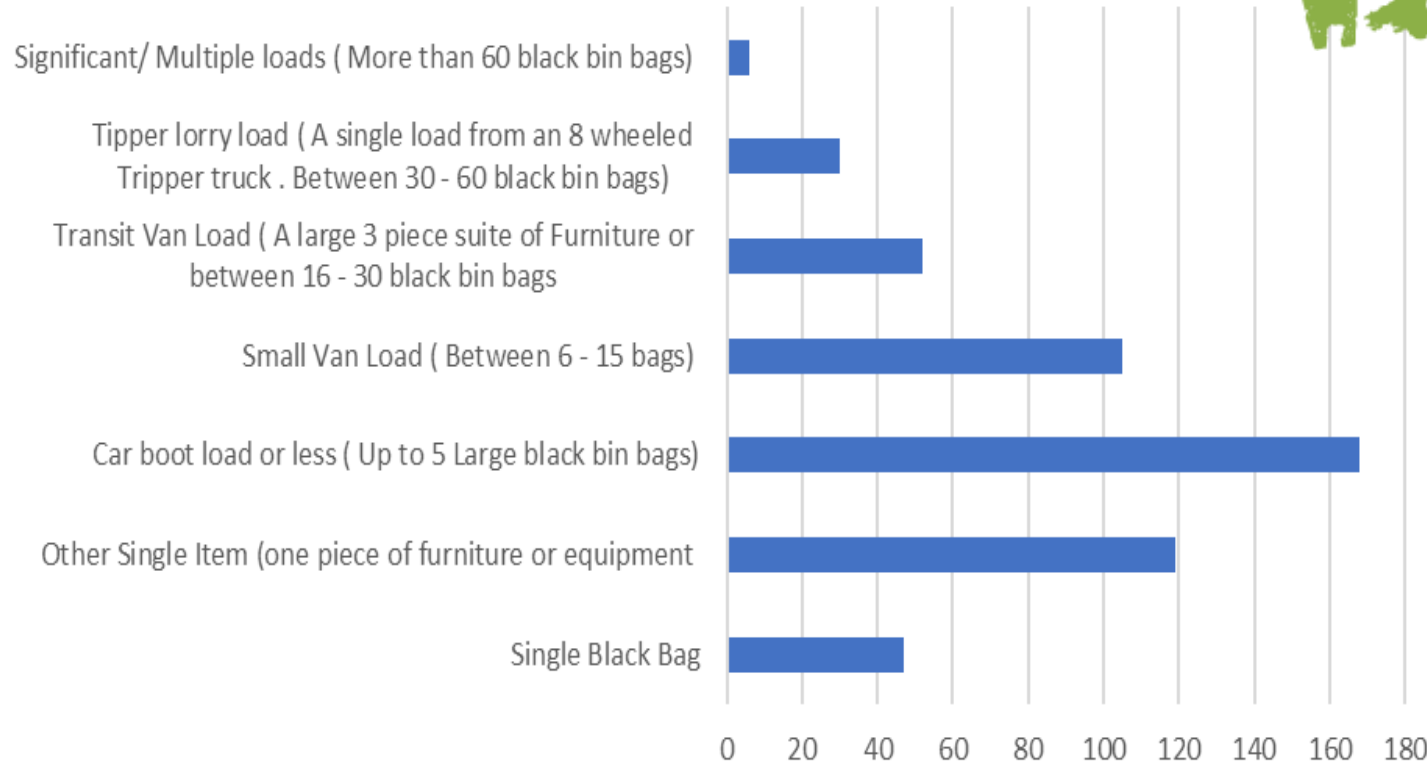


# Improving the Local Environment



## FLY-TIPPING ACTION WALES

### Fly Tipping Incident breakdown by size



During the reporting period (April 23 to Sept 23) there were **73 £400 fixed penalty notices issued for Fly Tipping**

Provisional figures indicate a there was a **28% reduction in fly tipping from 2020/21 to 2022/23** and in the first 2 quarters of 2023/24 there was a **21% reduction in the number of incidents compared to the first 2 quarters of 2022/23**

### Data unverified by Natural Resources Wales

**527** Fly-tipping incidents were reported during the reporting period, the average number of days taken to clear was **5 days**

Successful prosecutions were secured against 2 individuals in September 2023 for a total of **35 separate waste offences** with a total of **£13,253 in fines** and costs issued by the Courts.





# Improving the Local Environment



In June 2023 a **Food waste campaign** was launched to engage with residents of Blaenau Gwent following an analysis that **23% of residual waste was identified as food.**

Excess / Bulky cardboard is now collected when presented in dedicated “cardboard sack” following the re opening of the Authority's Household Waste Recycling Centre's in Roseheyworth and New Vale.

Our Wardens have been carrying our door to door activity with residents who are not recycling food to inform them of the benefits of food recycling and to ensure that they have the appropriate receptacles.

Monitoring is taking place to identify any increases in recycling rates.

Following the Enforcement Wardens engagement with residents on recycling Rounds 1 to 4 conducted during Q1 and Q2, there has been a 16% increase in food recycling participation.



**43** warning letters have been issued from **April – September** with **4** section **46** notices served.





# Case Study - Clean local environment



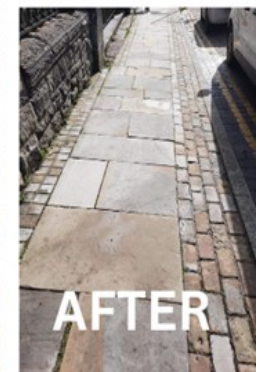
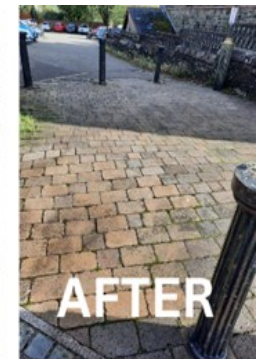
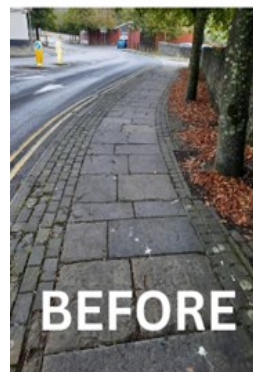
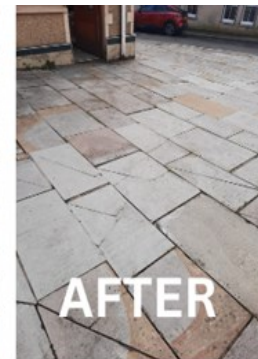
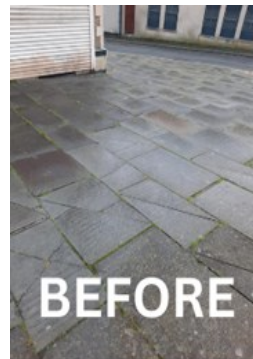
## Gum Blitzer Monthly Cleaning Report August-September 2023

During the reporting period, the rotary cleaning team covered a total area of **1,650 square** meters in Tredegar.

- The team worked for **33** days during this period and covered an average of **50** square meters per day.
- The rotary cleaning team focused on high-traffic areas such as bus stops, pedestrian crossings, and shopping areas as detailed on the site plan.

The rotary cleaning team needed to use a total of 20,000 litres of water during the reporting period. The team used high-pressure water jets to remove dirt, debris and other contaminants from the pavement surfaces.

*26 days of Chewing gum removal was carried out during this period in Tredegar as requested using our ecofriendly steam cleaning system.*







# Case Study - Educational Suite



The new Educational Suite at Roseheyworth Household Recycling Centre has been completed. The charred wood effect on the building has been achieved by reclaiming wood from the recycling site. All the doors, furniture, TV, chairs, tables, and lockers were reclaimed from the Civic Centre before it was demolished which is not only a good way of reusing items but has helped to reduce the costs.

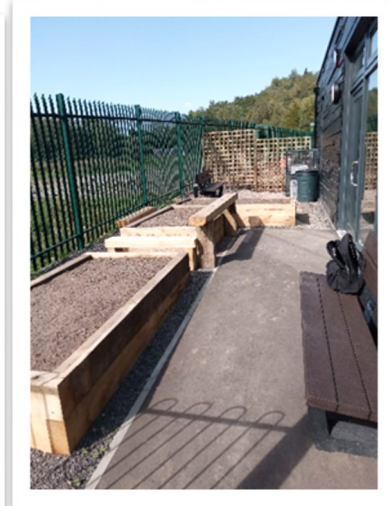


The Educational Suite will allow school children and community groups to learn about recycling and what happens to materials. We have already been approached by several partners with an interest in utilising the building for a range of activities including a Nappy Library, Repair cafes and community meetings. The Educational Suite was built with Welsh Government Circular Economy Funding.



Page 1169

A bid to Keep Wales Tidy for a wildlife pack was successful and has been utilised, with support from the Ecology Team, to develop the grounds for the benefit of local wildlife. An open day is planned for early November with interested parties with a view to taking bookings in the New Year.





# Healthy and Safe Communities



Our Transitional Capital Funding Programme involves working with Registered Social Landlords to identify properties for homelessness/ resettlement schemes. During the year 8 additional properties have been included and a further 3 properties have been identified in partnership with Tai Calon for inclusion in the scheme for which a bid was submitted to Welsh Government for funding.

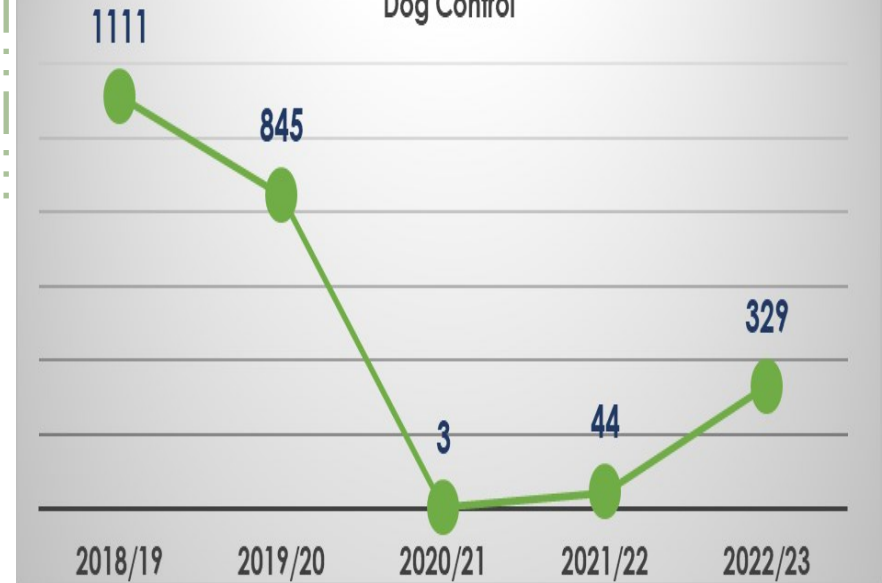


**HOMELESSNESS** - During the reporting period, 76 households met the threshold for being threatened with homelessness. Of these, 41 were successfully prevented from losing their accommodation - 54%. Due to the continued lack of move on accommodation in the private and social housing sectors, combined with clients approaching the Council at crisis point, it continues to be difficult for the team to prevent homelessness and meet the target set.



**LONG TERM** - It is a priority for us to raise the profile of Play by improving the quality and equity of play provision throughout the Borough for all our children and young people. To achieve this we are looking to refurbish and maintain existing play provision to acceptable levels and develop new initiatives based on identified need within the Borough.

Number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) Issues for Litter and Dog Control



During the first six months of the year there were

**14** fixed penalty notices issued for litter and **5** for dog control.



New **fixed penalty notice contractor**, District Enforcement Ltd have been **appointed** and to begin enforcement in the County Borough in Q3 **enforcing litter, dog control, commercial duty of care, smoking, urinating and spitting in public offences.**



# Healthy and Safe Communities



In May 2023 Audit Wales published a report following a review of our Planning department which took place in February 2023. The review sought to:

“ provide assurance and insight as to whether the Council’s planning service is effectively and sustainably meeting its objectives and contributing towards the achievement of the Council’s corporate priorities”



The overall findings of the report found the planning services plays a key role in enabling delivery of the councils corporate objectives and that the planning committee performance is improving

However “ ***the service’s business planning and performance reporting do not demonstrate this important contribution***”

**4 recommendations were identified** following the audit :

- Include performance measures in the Development and Estates business plan to demonstrate the service’s performance ambitions and to enable effective monitoring of the service
- Include in the Development and Estates business plan the service’s contribution towards delivering the Council’s corporate objectives to demonstrate its important enabling role
- The Council needs to assure itself that the planning service has robust data quality arrangements to ensure that it reports accurate performance data so that staff, members, Welsh Government and the public can place reliance on its integrity to make accurate and informed decisions
- Full Council to consider the outcome of the scheme of delegation and planning protocol review by September 2023 and decide on future planning governance

**Idox is a software that supports the management of planning and building control . Work on Idox system continues and data migration is being explored. Work on updating the Scheme of Delegation has been completed and has been presented to the Planning Committee and Senior Management.**



The full report can be found here : [democracy.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=1251&Mid=2616&Ver=4&LLL=0](https://democracy.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=1251&Mid=2616&Ver=4&LLL=0)



# Healthy and Safe Communities



Environmental Health responded to **179 Housing Safety/Standards service requests** relating to sub-standard Privately Rented Sector accommodation, damp nuisance, Warm Home Nest Inspections, including the **approval of a New Landlord loan. (35k).**

**Pest Control is delivered in partnership with Rentokil. 1,139 free rat treatments Were completed along with 105 treatments for other pests**

Environmental Health responded to:

**184** service requests related to **accumulations of waste in gardens – mostly household waste;**

**51** related to **smoke from domestic fires/bonfires;**

**10** service requests relating to **alleged filthy and verminous premises;**

**287 Noise** Nuisance Complaints;

**23 Other Nuisance** Complaints;

**132 Planning** Consultations; and

**32 Licensing/Temporary Event Notice** Consultations.



Support has been provided for the local response relating to the resettlement scheme for Ukrainian people by **inspecting 2 properties** to ensure they are **safe and suitable.**





# Healthy and Safe Communities



A range of Commercial Health & Safety interventions continue to be Delivered as outlined in the Health & Safety Service Delivery Plan 2023/24

127

inspections have taken place at food businesses across the Borough during the reporting period



During the reporting period—**51** new food businesses have been identified :

- **55** revisits have been undertaken to check that matters of non-compliance at food businesses have been remedied
- **144 written** warnings have been served to food businesses and served **9** Hygiene Improvement Notices
- **63** food samples have been taken from food businesses and 2 products have been identified which were microbiologically unsatisfactory. Action has been taken in both instances to alert the producer / supplier as they were out of county
- **6** complaints have been investigated about foodstuffs and **32** complaints about the hygiene of food premises
- **3** Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for failure to correctly display a valid food hygiene rating
- We have responded to **119 requests** for service (these include a mixture of advice requests, registration, event notifications, etc)

Page 1173

The Food Standards Agency is a non-ministerial government department with the main objective to protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food.

An Audit was completed by the Food Standards Agency at the end of September against Services planning for recovery work of Food Law Service and to revisit any outstanding actions from previous Audits.

The results of this Audit along with next steps will be reported in the next Performance report.

SGŌR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING <b>0</b> 1 2 3 4 5 ANGEN GWELLA AR FRYYS URGENT IMPROVEMENT NECESSARY	SGŌR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING 0 <b>1</b> 2 3 4 5 ANGEN GWELLA YN SYLWEDDOL MAJOR IMPROVEMENT NECESSARY	SGŌR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING 0 1 <b>2</b> 3 4 5 ANGEN GWELLA IMPROVEMENT NECESSARY
SGŌR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING 0 1 2 <b>3</b> 4 5 BODDHAOL AR Y CYFAN GENERALLY SATISFACTORY	SGŌR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING 0 1 2 3 <b>4</b> 5 DA GOOD	SGŌR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING 0 1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> DA IAWN VERY GOOD



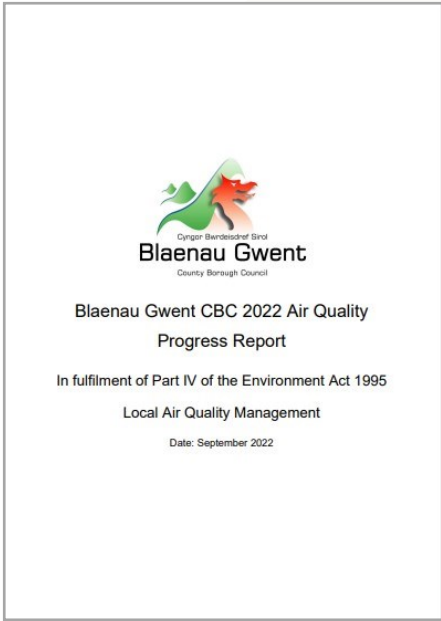
# Healthy and Safe Communities



The Environmental Health Section is responsible for monitoring **air quality within Blaenau Gwent**. Air Quality is the term used to describe and classify the concentration of certain pollutants in the air. These pollutants have the potential to adversely affect human health at elevated concentrations.

An air quality management is declared when there is an exceedance of air quality standards and the local authority must take legal steps to improve the situation.

**In Blaenau Gwent we have good levels of air quality so we have not declared any air quality management areas.**



**The completion of the 2022 Air Quality Assessment has been completed and submitted to Welsh Government**

We currently carry out **air quality monitoring at 28 locations** within the borough at residential properties and schools.

These locations are selected by officers due to them being in close proximity to busy roads, industrial estates and specifically at schools due to the school run effect.



In the reporting period, one premises closed, One permit was surrendered (no longer necessary) and a new permit was awarded to a wood manufacturing company.

Environmental Health **successfully regulated 22 industrial processes to minimise pollution** without the need for any formal enforcement action.

<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/environmental-health/pollution/air-quality/>

Page 1174



## Healthy and Safe Communities



We have responded to a total of **77** individual cases of infectious disease

We have responded to **8** incidents of infectious disease at care and education settings (Incident = 2 or more cases)

### Infectious Disease:

We continue to support the response to clusters of COVID-19 in some of our most vulnerable settings.

We have attended meetings and provided detailed feedback to Public Health Wales and Welsh Government to assist in the review of the procedure for dealing with incidents of COVID-19 at care settings

### Health and Safety:

We continue to prepare for the introduction of the Special Procedures Licensing Regime. The current proposed commencement date is June 2024. We have arranged for a members briefing by Welsh Government with a focus on the impact on Licensing Committee and this is scheduled for December 2023. We continue to participate in a small working group led by Welsh Government So far in 2023/24 (all since June) we have the following:

- **4** new premises registered, **2** in process and **1** expected (currently pending planning) – **7 total**
- 6 new practitioner registered, 3 in process- **9 total**
- Compared to the figures for 2022/23 we have already had double the number of new premises apply to register compared to that for the entirety of 22/23
- We have responded to 15 notifications to the Authority as a Health and Safety regulator under RIDDOR
- We have received and responded to 65 requests to the Health and Safety service (these are a mixture of advice requests, events and complaints)
- We continue to implement the priority actions identified in the Health and Safety Workplan 2023/24





# Healthy and Safe Communities



## Trading Standards

Trading Standards aims to ensure a fair, safe and equitable environment for all who purchase and sell goods and services in Blaenau Gwent. This is undertaken through a range of intervention, advice and enforcement activities with businesses and consumers. We work closely with partner agencies in order to gather intelligence and enforce the legislation covering areas such as:

- Weights and Measures
- Food Labelling and composition
- Counterfeit Goods
- Product Safety
- Pricing
- Rogue Trading and Doorstep Crime
- Consumer Credit
- Misdescribed Goods
- Scams
- Age Restricted Sales

More information on the work of Trading Standards can be obtained at: <https://tradingstandards.gov.wales/> <http://www.tradingstandards.uk/>



**41 victims of scams were identified as potentially vulnerable** and requiring a support visit. 100% of these were visited in accordance with targets agreed with the National Scams Hub.

**32 Alternative Enforcement Strategies** were undertaken with food businesses involving information gathering questionnaires and visits.

**18 service requests** during the first 6 months and all were responded to within our target time of 5 days.

As part of **Scams Awareness Week 3-9th July 2023**, Trading Standards Officers undertook a scam prevention presentation for vulnerable adults and disseminated social media messaging to help raise awareness of bogus sellers

**347 consumer complaints** received ( of which 313 were received via the Citizens Advice Consumer Service)







## Case Study - Trading Standards



### Trading Standards Prosecution

*A Blaenau Gwent resident was sentenced at Cwmbran Magistrates Court on 31/08/23 after pleading guilty to 4 offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994 relating to the sale and advertising of counterfeit clothing and trainers.*

*The individual had been investigated by Blaenau Gwent Trading Standards Officers after a complaint was received in March 2022. Trading standards investigations showed that she was advertising and selling a wide variety of counterfeit goods through the private Facebook group that she had set up and which had over 1500 members. The evidence showed*



*that the individual was responsible for purchasing the fake items from UK and foreign suppliers as well as taking orders from customers and arranging for delivery suggesting a higher category of culpability and harm.*

*The counterfeit goods being sold included clothing, trainers, bags, aftershaves, perfumes, jewellery and other accessories bearing fake branding such as Nike, Adidas, North Face, Stone Island, Hugo Boss, Rolex and Ugg.*

*A warrant was executed on 13/07/22 at the person's home address where counterfeit goods were found ready to be sent to customers. Further forensic examinations of mobile phone following the warrant showed that the business was organised and extensive with large volumes of customers all over the UK.*

*Magistrates sentenced the individual to 240 hours of unpaid work which was reduced to 160 hours the person's early guilty plea, a victim surcharge of £114 and costs of £1200.00.*



# Managing Our Estate



Work is to be undertaken on the General Offices. Architecture Services have been tasked with considering proposals to improve the area, as an environmental space, subject to approval, this would be supported by grant funding. A Specialist Surveyor has been engaged to undertake a Condition Survey of the GO to undertake an appreciation of schedule of costs for the medium and long term



**PREVENTION** - Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 requires surface water drainage for new developments to comply with mandatory National Standards for sustainable drainage (SuDS). It also requires surface water drainage systems to be approved by a SuDS Approving Body (SAB), before construction work with drainage implications may begin.

Page 1178  
As we have moved to a more agile model, we have had less staff using our offices on a daily basis and will need to look at how we meet the future needs of our staff. A review of accommodation, with the potential view to reduce it further, is currently being considered in order to protect jobs and cut costs.

A corporate property management group has been established to look at the medium to long term position of council buildings.



From April – September over 14 SABS inspections took place by the team

Land Drainage Maintenance & Improvement continued including :Kingstreet & Ladies Row (cleansing); Valley View Road (repair); Old Blaina Road (hatch repairs) Yard Row (Repair drainage pipe), Gelli Road (New Culvert), Marine St Cwm (jettted culverts), clearance work undertaken at various locations.

Notice has been served at George Street in Brynmawr to undertake works, there has been a failing to comply with the notice so further remedy is currently being sought



## Managing Our Estate



Good progress has been made during the reporting period on all fronts in managing our estate with key participation in developing the New Operating Model & the review of Blaenau Gwent Property needs moving forward.

- ✓ We continue to lead on Income Generation projects supporting neighbouring Authorities in key Educational and other capital schemes.
- ✓ We continue to support on Community Asset Transfers with regular engagement and meetings in place.
- ✓ 21st Century Band B Projects - Glyncoed progressing well with final contractual arrangements being finalised for Welsh Medium Primary school in Tredegar / HIVE commenced in September / Continue to support Schools in Road Safety Education, Waste & Biodiversity initiatives.



Work is ongoing to investigate opportunities around zero carbon within the Corporate Landlord portfolio and supporting others in development of energy schemes - wind turbine .... Incorporating energy efficiency through BREAMM in new capital builds and retro fitting [LEDS ..] in Industrial & other units





# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



- The Shared Prosperity Fund is the UK Government replacement for European funding (European Structural Investment Fund ESIF) following the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union in 2020.
- The primary aim of the fund is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. Underpinning this aim are three investment priorities: **communities and place; supporting local business and people and skills**. There is a dedicated and ring-fenced element of the UKSPF called Multiply which seeks to improve adult numeracy skills as part of the People and Skills priority
- As part of the Multiply programme Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council invited organisations to bid in a competitive process to deliver the bespoke numeracy activities to Blaenau Gwent residents, aged 19+ and who do not currently have a level 2 qualification in numeracy, GCSE Maths grade 4/C or higher.



BGCBC's SPF allocation over the 3-year programme against each priority is as follows:

- **Community and Place - £7,837,618**
- **Supporting Local Businesses - £6,682,246**
- **People and Skills - £8,599,836**
  - **Multiply - £3,874,171**
- Total - £26,993,871**



Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council are the Lead Local Authority regarding the administration and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)





# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



The Regeneration Team continues to receive a number of property enquiries ranging from new business start-ups, expansions, and relocations into Blaenau Gwent.

During the reporting period 62 property enquiries were received with property searches for Council and private sector units all completed.

The Team **received and dealt with 392 business enquiries** relating to financial support, start-up or property over the past 6 months

As at the end of September 23:-

**89% of the business units** on the Council's portfolio were **occupied** (92% of floor space occupied).



The Council's business units remain in demand – stock remains an issue, with demand for units of **300 – 3000 sq. ft. high**

There have been

**162**

**new companies registered** from April—September 23 in Blaenau Gwent.

A welcome pack has been sent to all newly registered businesses.

## Constrained Business Units Security

Installation of security gates have proved to be extremely successful on some of our business units, with no antisocial behaviour or fly tipping, being reported. The remaining sites without security are now being considered as a whole project. Tech Services have been unable to obtain quotes due to conflicting priorities, however, it is anticipated that they will be rolled out across other estates by end of the financial year.

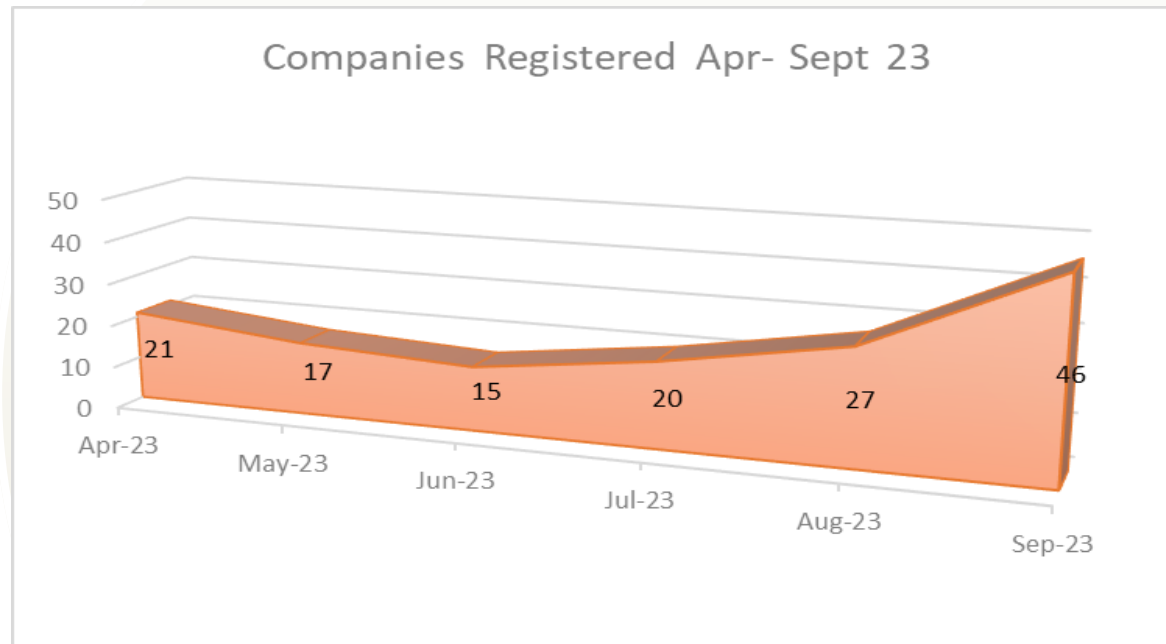




# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



There has been **29.9%** more businesses start-ups in Blaenau Gwent during the first eight months of this year compared with the corresponding period of last year, according to latest data from BankSearch. This growth rate ranks Blaenau Gwent at 2 out of the 22 Welsh districts



**Business Start up grant:** 27 start up support enquiries received.

- 13 Expression of Interests received, resulting in 11 applications issued.
- 7 BG Effect applications approved, totalling **£5,874.40**.
- **10.5 FTE** jobs to be created.



## Business Development Grant:

- 53 Expressions of Interest received resulting in 46 applications issued.
- 23 Full applications received – 8 withdrawn or ineligible.
- 14 Grants approved, totalling **£257,831.55**.
  - o £310,839.05 of private sector investment
- **21 FTE jobs to be created and 60.5 FTE jobs to be safeguarded.**



The B&I team's company tracking database, Beauhurst, highlights approximately **1,784** ctive companies operating within the area.

## Social Enterprise Grant

- 15 Expressions of Interest received resulting in application issued.
- 14 Full applications received – 8 withdrawn or ineligible.
- 1 Grant approved, totalling £4049.50.
- 1.5 FTE jobs to be created.
- £4049.50 of private sector investment (50%).



# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



There are currently a number of **building Contracts, over £500k, that are ongoing.** These projects support the development and/or re development of buildings and infrastructure across the authority, thus providing better facilities and highways for use by the community and members of the public.

## New Glyncoed Primary School and Childcare Facility -

Works are progressing well on the new build to provide a 360 place primary school and separate childcare facility in Ebbw Vale, despite a contract delay of 10 weeks.

The work programme was affected due to approvals for the Welsh Water main sewer diversion works and an Extension Of Time has been agreed with an anticipated **completion date of April 2024.** This with other off-site issues and utility diversions have also increased the anticipated **final cost to £13,700,000.00, an overspend of approx. £650k.**



**This is being managed by the project delivery team within the funding envelope as part of Band B.**

Page 1183



# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



**New Enterprise Hub and managed Workspace, 'Regain 2', Mill Lane, The Works, Ebbw Vale** - The team are working with Tech Valleys to develop an Enterprise Hub for Blaenau Gwent. The facility will support individuals and new businesses by creating a managed workspace with hot and warm desk spaces and will also include separate offices for hire.

**Works are progressing well**, with completion likely in late Autumn.



## Remedial works at Newtown Bridge Ebbw Vale

Newtown Bridge is Grade II listing. A contract was undertaken for strengthening work to the arch in the form of steel reinforcement and also the installation of interstitial grouting to the arch ring to provide a water-controlled barrier. Newtown Bridge project has **now been completed on site and is now in Defects Period**. Delays of 9 weeks and additional costs were incurred on the project due to meeting the Cadw specification requirements for a Grade 2 listed structure.

**Final Cost -  
£1,202,825.55**







# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



Work to **build a 52,582 sq. ft. manufacturing unit at the Rhyd y Blew industrial site at Ebbw Vale** is underway and is **on target for completion Autumn 2023.**

The **£8.5m** Welsh Government **Investment** forms the first phase of a wider site masterplan, and helps satisfy huge demand for such industrial space in the South East Wales area.

Companies in the automotive and food sector have already expressed an interest in the development, which also sits within the Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone.





## HIVE - as referred to on page 22 .....



HIVE Project - Several on site issues relating to existing floor slab, drainage & steelwork are being addressed but have resulted in delays to the program.





# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



New 210 place **Welsh Medium Primary School, inclusive of a Welsh-medium childcare provision, at Chartist Way, Sirhowy Tredegar.** The Council has secured £13.4million of capital funding via the Welsh Government Welsh Medium Capital Grant and Childcare Capital Grant schemes to progress with the school build and will also incorporate a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), a forest play area, a growing orchard and wild-flower meadows. The school will also be climate conscious with solar panels and electric vehicle charging points. A play area on the site will also be relocated as part of the project on the same site and be furnished with new play equipment.

The project has progressed to appointment of contractor, ISG, in July 2023 and the works on site commenced September 2023 to investigate the adits and commence Drilling and Grouting. Anticipated ground work commencement will be early 2024 with completion being expected early 2025.





# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



Schools' biodiversity events continue to be delivered across Blaenau Gwent Schools to **1,412 pupils** between April – Sept 2023



Page 1188

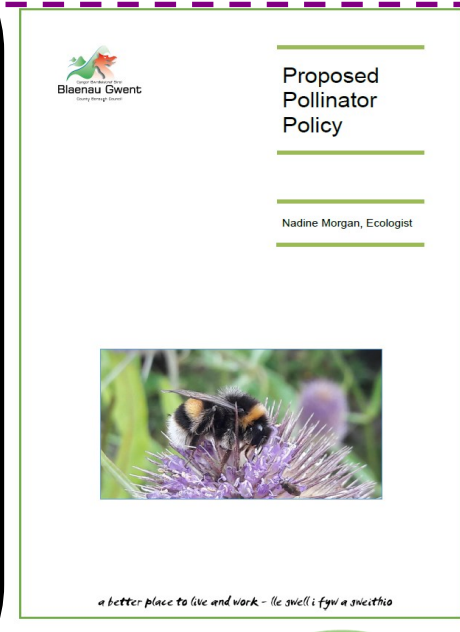


Name of school	Activity	Number of pupils engaged per activity	Total no. of pupils engaged with per school
St Joseph's Primary	Multiple inc signs of Spring	73	73
Bryn Bach Primary	Birds, Bugs	75, 73	148
Pen Y Cwm	Nature walk focus, birds/ bugs	8, 7, 8, 16	39
Beaufort Hill	Orchard maintenance	4, 23, 4, 24	55
Georgetown	The Lost Words, Pond Dip	54, 56	110
Blaen Y Cwm	Pollinators	67	67
ALC – Six Bells	Pollinators and Bugs	109, 151	260
Rhos Y Fedwen	Gardening, bugs, ponds	8, 8, 22	38
ALC – Tillery St	Pollinators and Bugs	148, 136, 118	402
ALC - Roseheyworth	Pollinators and Bugs	143	143
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	Pond Dipping	57	57
St. Illtyd's	Trees	20	20
<b>Overall Totals</b>		<b>No. of workshops 25</b>	<b>No of pupils 1,412</b>



## The Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6, The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

A draft Pollinator Policy has been developed which promotes the creation of pollinator friendly habitats on land owned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. The policy will go through the democratic process and be reported within the next reporting period.



## Biodiversity Projects

We are supporting partners of Pentref Tyleri, supporting the group in delivering a Wetland Creation Project. The group were successful in securing approx. £52,000 from NRW's Resilient Communities Fund. The project is promoting awareness of enhancing resilient ecological networks; demonstrating a continued sustainability of natural resources and principles for the local community, and will also contribute to the evidence base for future conservation action as part of the Local Nature Recovery Plan in Blaenau Gwent

Page 1189



Fit  
count  
survey  
4<sup>th</sup>  
April



Pentref  
Tyleri  
Wetland  
creation  
project





# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



*Grassland management  
at entrance to Beaufort  
Woodlands LNR*



*Grassland  
management  
at Ebbw Vale  
Cemetery*



*Love your  
burial  
ground  
Bioblitz*

Volunteer days	Number of Volunteers
Pond Spawn survey was carried out at Parc Bryn Bach	9
Flower and Insect Timed (FIT) surveys at Parc Bryn Bach	5
Flower and Insect Timed (FIT) surveys at Beaufort Woodlands	4
Flower and Insect Timed (FIT) surveys at Beaufort Woodlands	4
Flower and Insect Timed (FIT) surveys at Trevor Rowson	10
Scrub clearance to restore area of heath at Beaufort Woodlands	13
Trevor Rowson	13
Love your Burial Ground Event- Biodiversity survey at Ebbw Vale Cemetery	3
Bioblitz at Tredegar Sports Centre.	1
Bioblitz at Six Bells	2
Bioblitz at Roseheyworth	0



**2 year funding has been secured from the local and nature fund from Welsh Government :**

- **23/24: Capital £353,900**
- **24/25: Capital £389,500**



# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



The following events took place over the reporting period :

- 20<sup>th</sup> May Greater Gwent Goes Wild at Bailey Park-Abergavenny event was as part of the Gwent Green Grid Partnership;
- Go Wild 29<sup>th</sup> July at Bryn Bach Park- held during Wales Nature Week. 1700 visitors;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> August Wildlife Wednesday at Bryn Bach Park. Pond dipping;
- 16<sup>th</sup> August Wildlife Wednesday at Bryn Bach Park. Bug Hunt;
- 17<sup>th</sup> August Nature Session at Cefyn Golau Together; and
- SHEP school summer events.



The Ecology and Biodiversity team delivered a children's activity and **engaged with over 70 families at Greater Gwent goes wild**





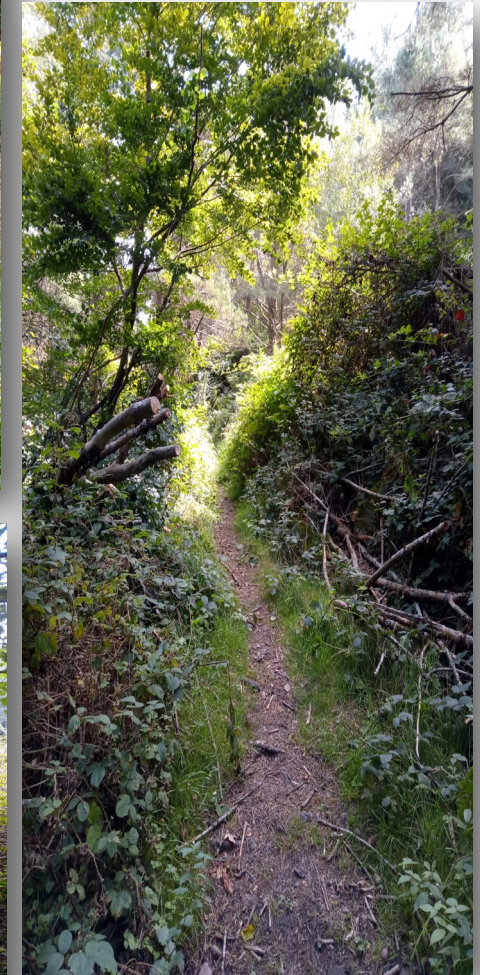
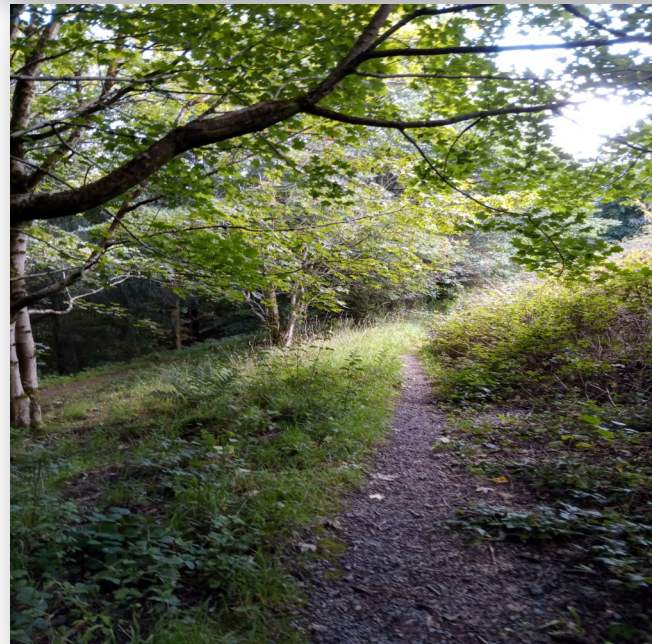
# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



Access routes and entrances to the site at Garden City have been enhanced and improved, opening up the reserve to local people and groups. This work has included clearing paths of bramble and vegetation, allowing easy access to the orchard. Damaged infrastructure was repaired or replaced where needed, and in other areas removed. A replacement footbridge and new steps allow access to a pond which can now be managed for biodiversity.

These works were delivered by Tillery Action For You, a social enterprise based in Ebbw Vale. The group works with participants and volunteers from Blaenau Gwent providing volunteering and training opportunities for disadvantaged participants to develop new skills while undertaking activities. The project will be maintained by a new ranger team and funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund. The community will also be encouraged to be involved in management activities.

Opening up access to this site has enabled local residents to exercise on their doorstep, reducing the need to travel to improve their health and well-being. This reduced need to travel also reduces carbon emission from exhaust fumes, helping to improve air quality. The improved access allows easier biodiversity and ecological management of the area.



Garden City





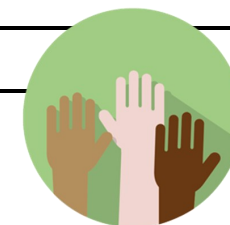
# Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



To celebrate 75 years of the NHS a range of activities and events took place across Blaenau Gwent. Events were organised in collaboration with a wide range of community groups, schools and trade unions.



Date	Activity
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Tredegarise portrait at Gwent Shopping Centre
28 <sup>th</sup> June	Gwent Archive Lectures
29 <sup>th</sup> June	The records of Pen-y-Fal Hospital. This talk provided a brief overview of the history of Pen-y-Fal Hospital, Abergavenny and an introduction of the records held at Gwent Archives.
1 <sup>st</sup> July	Classic Car Show, Tredegar
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Bevan Day at Bedwellty Park
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Meducators Healthcare Workshop at Abertillery Learning Community. Unveiling of Placebo Portrait by Nathan Wyburn Pharma and NHS supply chain Recognition Awards with Minister Economy
4 <sup>th</sup> July	Tredegar Comp piloted a day in the home of the NHS School visits - Carousel of activities linked to Home of the NHS including Memorial Stones, Bedwellty House, Bevan Trail, Tredegar Museum, Tredegar Medical Aid Society Heritage Centre etc. (130 pupils)
5 <sup>th</sup> July	PCI Open Day 10-12.30 Photo Collage By Nathan Wyburn appears at locations across EV. Clap for the NHS – At council buildings across BG Design a Teams Background comp for schools. Artwork created at 10 the Circle by STEWY.
6 <sup>th</sup> July	School debate Bedwellty House School debate – event for secondary schools to promote debating.
7 <sup>th</sup> July	Social Media Takeover Day – Poetry competition
8 <sup>th</sup> July	Parkrun – C25K graduation, guest runners with music from Ebbw Valley Brass Film Premier of 14 films made by students of Blaenau Gwent Film Academy. The story of the Tredegar Task Force.
9 <sup>th</sup> July	Singing Festival, Bedwellty Park, Tredegar, Tredegar Town Council
13 <sup>th</sup> July	Dr. Henry Naunton Davies -Rhondda Colliery Doctor Speaker: Ceri Thompson" by BG Heritage Forum





## Case Study- Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



The old steps leading to Rhiw Wen car park at Glyncoed have been refurbished by a local contractor: the old, worn timber risers have been replaced with new concrete risers. The old fencing has been replaced and a new handrail has been installed along the northern side of the steps to assist users. A new cycle wheeling channel and signage has been installed to assist cyclists to transport their bikes up and down the steps. We have received positive feedback from members of the public and are currently developing designs to extend the existing Active Travel route south.



At Blaina, we have designed a scheme to **improve the Active Travel Links** of the area east of Ystruth Primary School. The existing footpaths will be widened and street lighting will be installed to improve the walking and cycling connections in the area. Construction is programmed to commence early 2024 subject to Planning and SAB approval.



# Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure



Appendix 1



**Blaenau Gwent**  
County Borough Council  
**Highway Asset Management Plan**  
2023 – 2028  
01 June 2023



**Significant progress has been made over the past 10 years on improving the Highway network, however the absence of Welsh Government funding for 2023/24 & the end of the Prudential Borrowing Programme has curtailed Capital investments in the highway network. The completion and formal adoption of the HAMP 2023 - 2028 will support and drive the Authority's approach to maintenance over the next 5 years**

The Senedd passed the legislation (The Restricted Roads (20 mph Speed Limit) (Wales) Order 2022) to bring in the new default speed limit across Wales by an almost two-thirds majority. From September 2023 approximately 35% of the roads in Wales (by length) have become 20mph. This is arguably the biggest change to Welsh roads since the wearing of seatbelts was made compulsory in 1983.

The Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) was approved by Council in September. The HAMP describes how the Council will maintain the road network under its control. It details the procedures used to plan and execute all works and functions associated with the management, operation and maintenance of the highway asset including how the activities are monitored to ensure compliance with council policies.



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