

# Review of People, Performance and Financial Resilience in Community Services – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

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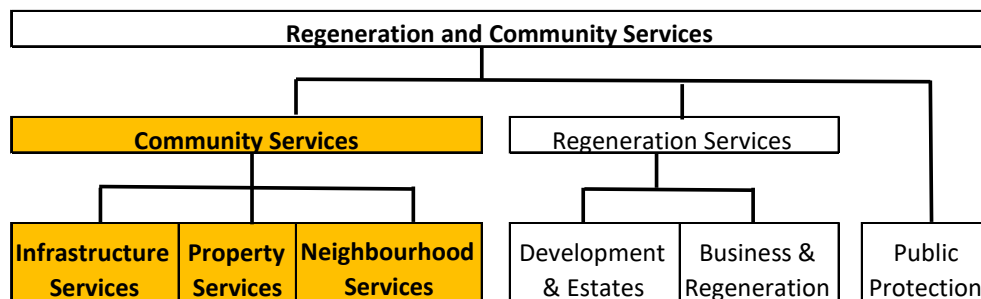
# Summary report

## What we looked at and why

- 1 We undertook this review because our work has previously identified risks in the Council's financial management culture and its impact on the Council's ongoing resilience, in areas such as financial, people and performance management.
- 2 In agreement with the Council, we selected Community Services as a tracer to explore the Council's resilience and its arrangements to support and drive sustainable improvement.
- 3 As set out in **Exhibit 1**, Community Services makes up part of the wider Regeneration and Community Services directorate. It consists of three service areas: Neighbourhood Services, Property Services and Infrastructure Services. These provide a varied portfolio of services, including waste, highways, built and natural environment, catering and cleaning services, and technical services such as architecture.

### Exhibit 1: community services structure

The following exhibit shows how Community Services sits within the Regeneration and Community Services directorate.



- 4 As the Council's waste service sits within Community Services, the review also provided us with the opportunity to follow up on our 2017 [Review of Waste Services](#). At the time, we reported that the Council was committed to improving its waste and recycling performance, but a long term well thought through business plan and engagement with users were needed to deliver the service effectively, improve performance and avoid potential financial penalties. Our current review considers the Council's progress in addressing the three proposals for improvement included in our 2017 report:
  - **P1** – Develop and agree a long-term business plan that sets out how the Council will work towards achieving the current and future statutory waste performance targets, and makes clear the arrangements to monitor the delivery of the plan.

- **P2** – Evaluate the implementation of recent changes in waste collection services. In particular:
    - its overall management of the project;
    - the quality of service plans as drivers for improvement;
    - communication/engagement of the changes to local residents.
  - **P3** – Improve the quality, frequency and timeliness of the reporting of waste and recycling performance to the executive and to overview scrutiny committee.
- 5 The review sought to answer the question: **Is the Council’s Community Services directorate sustainable and resilient?** and we undertook this review between November 2020 and April 2021.

## Proposals for improvement

### Exhibit 1: proposals for improvement

The table below sets out the proposals for improvement that we have identified following this review.

Proposals for improvement	
<b>P1</b>	To strengthen its resilience, Community Services should ensure that learning and good practice that exists within its different service areas is shared throughout the directorate. The Council should also consider whether it would benefit from sharing some examples more widely across the Council.

**Detailed report** There are opportunities for the Community Services Directorate to build resilience by sharing the learning and good practice demonstrable in specific service areas to further develop its arrangements to manage performance, and strengthen strategic financial and workforce planning

**The waste service has achieved substantial progress over the period since 2015 through sound strategic planning supported by the adoption of a learning culture to manage change effectively**

- 6 This section sets out the Council’s progress in addressing the proposals for improvement reported in our previous review of waste services.

## **PFI 1: Develop and agree a long-term business plan that sets out how the Council will work towards achieving the current and future statutory waste performance targets, and makes clear the arrangements to monitor the delivery of the plan**

We found that:

- 7 The Council now has a member approved waste management and recycling strategy, which was developed in collaboration with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP).
- 8 The strategy outlines the key service changes required over the coming years to direct the Council as it strives to achieve the 70% statutory recycling target in 2024.
- 9 Two action plans support the strategy: a long-term, high-level plan spanning the lifecycle of the strategy and an annual plan for 2019-20. We found that there is scope to strengthen the longer-term plan by including more detail on proposed actions, current performance if relevant, and targeted performance. This would assist officers and members in monitoring progress and gaining assurance that actions are being delivered as intended.
- 10 Officers meet with representatives from WRAP every six weeks to review progress against the waste strategy. However, the pandemic has affected the Council's original timescales for reporting progress against the strategy to members. Resources have understandably been focussed on the pandemic response and maintaining front line services and, at the time of our review, members had not yet received a waste strategy monitoring report.
- 11 Officers plan to review the strategy by early 2022 to ensure that all key actions remain relevant as well as considering any changes to the strategy. In reviewing the strategy, officers may wish to consider the benefits of estimating the costs of delivering the overall strategy. At the moment, it is unclear what the cost implications of implementing the whole strategy would be as this is done on an individual project basis as it goes through the democratic process for approval. Calculating indicative costs would also allow the Council to reflect the cost of delivering the waste strategy in its Medium Term Financial Strategy. Similarly, the Council could include an indicative assessment of the potential impact of each action on recycling rates. This would aid decision-making and provide assurance that investments to meet future recycling targets are sustainable and offer good value for money.

## **PFI 2: Evaluate the implementation of recent changes in waste collection services. In particular:**

- **its overall management of the project;**
- **the quality of service plans as drivers for improvement; and**
- **communication/engagement of the changes to local residents**

We found that:

- 12 In 2015, the Council implemented significant changes to its waste service. This involved a move from fortnightly to three-weekly residual waste collections, new receptacles for recyclate materials, changes of vehicles, change of routes, and different collection days for residents. Our previous review of the waste service

found that the consequences of making such significant changes without piloting or phasing the new arrangements were considerable. Since then, there has been a noticeable change in the culture in the waste and recycling service. Management are more reflective, more evaluative and demonstrate a willingness to learn from others as well as from past experiences. For example, a major learning point from the 2015 service change was the need to trial new systems and consider the impact on residents before introducing wider roll out. Recently, the waste service trialled the use of hessian sacks for cardboard collection at 2000 properties. The Council then sought the views of these residents before rolling out hessian sacks throughout the County Borough.

- 13 Following the changes to the waste and recycling service in 2015, the Council set up a joint working board with WRAP, with WRAP acting as a critical friend. The relationship between WRAP and the Council has evolved over time into a mutually supportive partnership. WRAP uses the Council as an example to other local authorities on how to learn from service changes and the Council is receptive to helping other councils by sharing their experiences. The Council is also working alongside WRAP to trial new initiatives, for example a plastic film recycling stream. The lessons learnt from these trials will help inform future waste service changes in Blaenau Gwent and across Wales.
- 14 We also found improved communication and exchange of information within the waste service. Supervisors work closely with the waste and recycling crews and there are regular health and safety and briefing meetings.

### **PFI 3 – Improve the quality, frequency and timeliness of the reporting of waste and recycling performance to the executive and to overview scrutiny committee**

We found that:

- 15 Community Services Scrutiny Committee and the Executive received a comprehensive annual waste and recycling performance report for 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- 16 The reports contain a wealth of data to interrogate and challenge and provide members with sufficient performance information to gain assurance over waste and recycling performance.
- 17 The 2019-20 performance report to members was delayed slightly during the Coronavirus pandemic due to the suspension of scrutiny committees from April 2020 to September 2020. Members usually receive interim waste performance data in the twice-yearly Community Services performance reports but these have been suspended during the pandemic. The Council expects to reinstate these in 2020-21.

## **The Council is developing a new corporate workforce strategy and although Community Services understands its key workforce issues and is taking steps to address them, there is scope for closer collaboration with HR to improve workforce planning and resilience**

We found:

- 18 Officers understand the key workforce resilience issues within their service areas and are attempting to address these.
- 19 When we spoke to officers, workforce planning was highlighted as a key issue and all three areas of Community Services are taking steps to find solutions to their particular workforce planning challenges.
- 20 Neighbourhood Services has implemented several changes in recent years to address workforce planning and strengthen its workforce resilience. For example, Neighbourhood Services introduced an integrated workforce model a few years ago. This has created a flexible workforce where staff from across waste and recycling, highways, and green spaces are trained to work across the different departments to provide cover when needed. This flexibility to adapt to both planned and unplanned disruptions has strengthened the service's resilience. As a result, it was well placed to continue delivering services during the pandemic.
- 21 In 2020, Neighbourhood Services also implemented a new structure, creating new Assistant Team Leader roles. These roles have added resilience to the service by creating extra capacity to carry out frontline services as well as providing a direct link between frontline officers and the management team. This followed a decision by the service to bring several agency workers in-house in 2019, using the agency staff budget to cover the costs of direct employment and improve workforce resilience across front-line services. As part of the 2020 restructure, the service also considered its future workforce and is working with the Council's Aspire apprenticeship team and local colleges to fill future skills and knowledge gaps.
- 22 The steps taken by Neighbourhood Services to create a more flexible and resilient workforce may not be appropriate for all of Community Services, but the Council should ensure that positive learning is shared across Community Services, as well as more widely across the Council to other departments who might benefit from a similar approach.
- 23 Parts of Community Services have an aging workforce profile and this is a particular issue in the professional and technical job roles within Infrastructure and Property Services. In response, the services introduced apprenticeship programmes to help with succession planning and fill some of the gaps that will be created when colleagues retire. For example, to try and address ongoing difficulty in recruiting young, qualified people into technical engineering posts, the Council established technical apprenticeships. Currently, the service has two engineer apprentices. However, apprenticeships are not a short-term fix and the Council should ensure that this lead-in time is factored into its succession planning.
- 24 Although officers demonstrated good understanding of the key workforce issues affecting their areas, the Council lacks a comprehensive and up to date workforce strategy to support and guide officers. The existing Organisational Development Strategy 2015-20 is a high-level document and does not reflect recent changes



such as the impact of COVID-19 and Bridging the Gap on the way the Council operates and its subsequent workforce needs. The Council understands this and is developing a new corporate workforce strategy. At the time of our fieldwork the strategy was close to completion but not yet available for review; as such we cannot comment on its content.

- 25 A strong sense of team is a key element of a resilient workforce. Officers we spoke to in interviews and focus groups told us they feel part of a strong team. Some attributed this to recent restructures, such as in Neighbourhood Services, others to the co-location of different teams into the Civic Centre. None identified any changes or introductions that could further improve their strong sense of team.
- 26 Officers place great value in working physically alongside each other and it's therefore understandable that the feeling of being part of a strong team is wavering somewhat during the pandemic. This appears to be mainly due to the need to work from home where possible, resulting in limited social interaction, reduction in informal discussions, as well as technology not always supporting staff effectively to work remotely. Officers acknowledged that this change to working arrangements was unforeseen and not a result of a change in management style or culture. However, some expressed concern that the Council had not taken their worries about home-working seriously, shared as part of the future ways of working survey in late 2020.
- 27 Since we spoke to officers as part of this review, the Council has approved a new operating model based on agile working. In March 2021, the Council approved the decommissioning of the Civic Centre and the workforce divided into three groups: homeworkers, agile workers, and community workers. In developing the new arrangements, the Council should be mindful of the impact of the new model on the workforce's sense of team and consider how it can best manage any risks to staff well-being and resilience.
- 28 The Council expects all staff to receive an annual performance appraisal, but there was a relaxation of this expectation during the pandemic. It is managers' responsibility to update iTrent with completed appraisals, however the corporate centre was unable to provide us with any data on appraisal completion rates for current or prior years. We are therefore unable to comment on Community Services' performance in relation to annual appraisals. However, during focus groups, officers commented that they had regular opportunities to discuss their performance and personal development. The Community Services Scrutiny Committee may wish to request data on annual appraisal completion within the service to gain assurance in this area.
- 29 There was a range of views in the focus groups on the importance of staff personal development to the Council. Some officers were complimentary of the support they received from the Council to attend training and achieve qualifications. Officers shared several examples of opportunities to develop skills and consider their personal development.
- 30 The Council's sickness absence rates have increased over recent years and comparative data for 2017-18 and 2018-19 shows Blaenau Gwent had the highest rates in Wales (no comparative data was available for 2019-20). Sickness absence rates for Community Services are higher than the Council average. It is unclear if rates in these service areas are typically higher than overall council average at other local authorities as no benchmarking is done at a service level.

## Exhibit 2: community services sickness absence rates

The following exhibit shows the number of days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee between 2015-16 and 2019-20 for the Council as a whole and for Community Services<sup>1</sup>

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Council	11.39	12.49	11.23	12.66	13.91
Environment / Regeneration and Community Services	10.35	18.67	19.19	11.21	16.15
Community Services					19.35

Exhibit source: Sickness Absence Performance reported to Corporate Overview Scrutiny in December 2020 / Community Services 2019-20 figure from internal Council document

- 31 The latest report on sickness absence to Community Services Scrutiny Committee notes that there is evidence of managerial action in managing sickness. Figures for quarters 1 to 3 of 2020-21 show sickness absence rates in Community Services fell by 40% from the previous year: 8.2 days lost per full time equivalent compared to 13.6 days at the same point in 2019-20. It is unclear to what extent this is due to management of sickness or other factors, such as the pandemic. The Community Services Scrutiny Committee should ensure there is ongoing challenge of sickness absence rates and efforts to identify and address the key issues underlying performance.
- 32 There is a significant issue with the low percentage of Community Services sickness absence return to work interviews completed on iTrent. The completion rate only increased from 16.5% in 2019-20 to 17.2% by the end of December 2020. Some officers we spoke to were unaware of the requirement to record sickness absence return to work interviews on iTrent. The low completion rate may also be attributed to the fact that responsible officers have had no training on how to use iTrent.
- 33 There are opportunities for Community Services and HR to communicate and work together more effectively. Together they can pool their respective expertise to prioritise and resolve the issues highlighted above and build on the actions already underway to strengthen workforce resilience and ensure Community Services' workforce is fit for the future.

<sup>1</sup> Sickness absence is reported at directorate level, i.e. Regeneration and Community Services. Where the breakdown for Community Services alone is available, we have included this.

## **Waste and recycling performance has improved significantly but the use of performance data is inconsistent across Community Services and some performance reports lack sufficient detail**

- 34 Community Services' performance measures are set out in its business plans. The overarching Community Services business plan is supported by separate business plans for Neighbourhood, Infrastructure and Property services. All cover the period 2018-22 and are written with support from the corporate business team.
- 35 Business plans demonstrate clear links to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and include actions against each of the service priorities and specific key performance indicators (KPIs). However, members do not receive these plans so do not have the opportunity to understand, challenge and consider planned service actions and targets and how those support the corporate priorities. These arrangements are not unique to Community Services and are consistent with practice across the Council.
- 36 Operationally, the Head of Service uses the business plans to monitor progress. However, although the business plan actions are BRAG rated to show progress status, they lack targets and timescales for completion, making it difficult to see how progress is assessed.
- 37 KPIs in the business plans are a combination of national Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) and local measures. We saw little evidence that Community Services regularly reviews its locally set measures to ensure they remain appropriate and that targets continue to be achievable and sustainable over the longer-term.
- 38 Performance information in Community Services appears to be predominantly used for historic performance reporting but there are some examples of using it to plan service delivery. For example, Neighbourhood Services is using current data effectively in planning its recycling service to improve performance. Officers use data available from the different waste and recycling collection rounds to determine levels of participation in recycling. This data is then used to target specific areas of the Borough through the Council's 'Keeping up with the Joneses' campaign.
- 39 The waste service acknowledges that it doesn't have the capacity to undertake all necessary performance modelling, for example on potential future service delivery models for waste. In these circumstances, the service will work with WRAP on performance modelling information and cost benefit analysis of the options.
- 40 Neighbourhood Services is more efficient than other services within Community Services in gathering and using performance information, due to waste being a highly regulated service. Other services are not regulated to the same degree so are less advanced in gathering data and using it to improve planning and service delivery. Neighbourhood Services also benefits from the support of a Performance Data Officer who assists with analysing and reporting waste performance data. Other parts of Community Services may also benefit from support to explore opportunities to use performance data more effectively.

- 41 There is currently limited evidence of Community Services routinely linking its performance and financial data to demonstrate value for money. Such an approach would support informed decision-making, enable resources to be better targeted and provide assurance over sustainability. This could be considered further as part of the Council's wider work on developing its use of data.
- 42 Performance reporting to members paused during the pandemic as committee meetings were suspended and relevant officers redeployed to support the council's pandemic response planning. This meant that at a time when services were being adapted to respond to necessary service changes, members were not formally made aware of the impact of these changes on service performance. This information could be helpful in supporting members to make future decisions on any permanent changes to future service delivery.
- 43 Prior to the pandemic, the Community Services Scrutiny Committee received twice yearly performance reports which summarised activity and performance relating to the Council's corporate priority for Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities. The most recent report covers the first two quarters of 2019-20 and was received by Committee in December 2019. Although the format is engaging, with a range of qualitative and quantitative data, it lacks comparative data to enable members to challenge performance against targets, prior years and other authorities.
- 44 The Council's annual assessment of performance and quarterly joint finance and performance reports<sup>1</sup> to Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee and the Executive also contain aspects of Community Services performance. However, performance data is presented by quarter, making it difficult to compare annual performance against prior years and a lack of targets makes it difficult to determine if performance is as expected.
- 45 A review of the above performance reports and service business plans found that Neighbourhood Services' performance against its performance indicators is improving. Between 2017-18 and 2019-20:
- the amount of waste reused, recycled or composted increased by 17%, improving the Council's ranking from 22nd to 11th in Wales;
  - the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill fell by 92% and the average kilogram of residual waste generated per person in the county fell by 65%;
  - the percentage of streets classified as clean increased by 7%; and
- 
- the average number of working days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents decreased by 35%<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The quarterly joint finance and performance reports have been suspended since the outbreak of COVID-19.

<sup>2</sup> This measure was introduced in 2018 and so relates to performance improvement between 2018-19 and 2019-20, rather than between 2017-18 and 2019-20.

- 46 The waste service remains on track to meet the 64% statutory recycling target for 2020-21, having continued to deliver all waste and recycling services during the pandemic.
- 47 Infrastructure Services' performance shows several improving areas. Between 2017-18 and 2019-20, the Council reduced the number of roads in poor condition with only B roads being below the Wales average:
- 23% reduction in number of A roads in poor condition
  - 11% reduction in number of B roads in poor condition
  - 11% reduction in number of C roads in poor condition
- Performance against local measures relating to trees and to Natural Resource Management activities in schools also improved but the Infrastructure Services business plan lacked data for some indicators.
- 48 Property Services' performance remains steady, achieving most of its quarterly performance targets, but the business plan we received lacked performance data beyond quarter 3 of 2019-20. Most of Property Services' indicators are local and are not reported to members.

### **Robust corporate budget monitoring arrangements have helped manage Community Services' overspends, but the scope and focus of financial planning is overly short-term**

- 49 Our recent Financial Sustainability review found that although the Council's overall performance against budget is improving, some service areas continue to overspend. The Environment portfolio, which includes Community Services, is one area of the Council that has not been able to completely offset overspends within the portfolio. These overspends then impact on the Council's overall budget position.
- 50 A review of budget outturn reports shows that Community Services has a history of overspending against budget. But overspends are falling and in 2019-20 Community Services reported a total budget overspend of 1% against a budget of £12 million, as set out in **Exhibit 3** below.

#### **Exhibit 3: community services performance against budget**

The following exhibit shows how Community Services has performed against budget between 2017-18 and 2019-20 as well as forecast performance for 2020-21.

	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	£10.28	£10.91	£0.63	6%

2018-19	£11.52	£12.00	£0.48	4%
2019-20	£12.05	£12.20	£0.15	1%
2020-21 (forecast)	£11.99	£12.28	£0.29	2%

Exhibit source: 2017-18 - 2019-20: Budget Outturn Reports; 2020-21: M9 budget monitoring report.

- 51 Because some of the budgets that sit within Community Services are split between more than one service area, we have not been able to produce a similar table showing performance against budget for the Neighbourhood, Property and infrastructure services. However, a breakdown by budget area is included in **Appendix 1**. These show that all budget areas that sit under Community Services have a trend of reducing overspends.
- 52 The Council has strengthened its arrangements to monitor and manage cost pressures and overspends. For example, it now has a Cost Pressure Subgroup, which meets quarterly to challenge and assess progress against overspending portfolios' action plans. The arrangements are robust and have contributed to reducing overspends across the Council, including Community Services.
- 53 There is some variability in the quality of quarterly updates to the action plans. For example, not all plans clearly demonstrate progress, with some cost pressures and actions remaining unchanged between quarters. The Subgroup could maximise the existing arrangements by ensuring it robustly challenges the quality of action plans. Plans also lack timescales, which makes it difficult to assess whether actions are on track. The Council should consider revising the action plan template, so officers have to include measurable targets and demonstrate progress between quarters more clearly.
- 54 Finance business partners effectively support officers within Community Services. They meet regularly with budget holders and managers and produce a range of financial data to support both budget monitoring and challenge.
- 55 Most officers we spoke to during focus groups received regular financial information. Neighbourhood Services officers referred to a change in culture since the service restructure, with greater staff accountability for monitoring finances and a standing agenda item on budgets for team leaders.
- 56 Community Services reviews its budgets annually with base budgets adjusted for inflation, agreed cost pressures, and planned savings. Business plans cover the period 2018-22 but do not contain financial data so we saw no evidence of longerterm financial planning within Community Services.
- 57 Our analysis identified that most overspends are non-recurring, suggesting that actions to tackle overspends and / or the incorporation of ongoing cost pressures into base budgets is effective. However, newly emerging cost pressures continue to cause problems in year.
- 58 Some officers we spoke to felt they had limited influence over the budget planning and income generation setting processes. Some areas, particularly within Infrastructure Services, are predominantly grant-funded and have very small core budgets. This presents particular challenges to robust financial planning. A further challenge to financial planning within Community Services is the difficulty of accurately anticipating the cost of responding to unpredictable events, for example, severe weather or fly tipping.

- 59 Community Services could strengthen its financial sustainability by taking a more strategic, medium-term approach to financial planning. By forecasting, where possible, future demand for, and cost of, services (including anticipated cost pressures and investment needs, eg to meet future performance targets), the Service can plan ahead to ensure it has sufficient resources to deliver future services and actions to mitigate against forecast cost pressures.
- 60 We compared the Council's spend on waste and highways (the two largest areas of spend within Community Services) to that of other local authorities. We found that the Council's waste service was the 5th most expensive in Wales in 2016-17, costing £93.52 per head of population. By 2019-20, the cost had increased by 6% to £99.47 per head, the 6th most expensive in Wales. To put this increase in context, the average increase in waste service costs in Wales over the period was 6% and 8% in valleys local authorities. It should also be noted that the Council's recycling performance improved during this time from 22nd in Wales to 11th. Four of the seven valleys local authorities saw their performance ranking fall over this period.

#### Exhibit 4: waste service net spend per head of population

The following exhibit sets how much money the Council spent per head of population on waste between 2016-17 and 2019-20. It also shows the average spends across Wales and valleys local authorities.

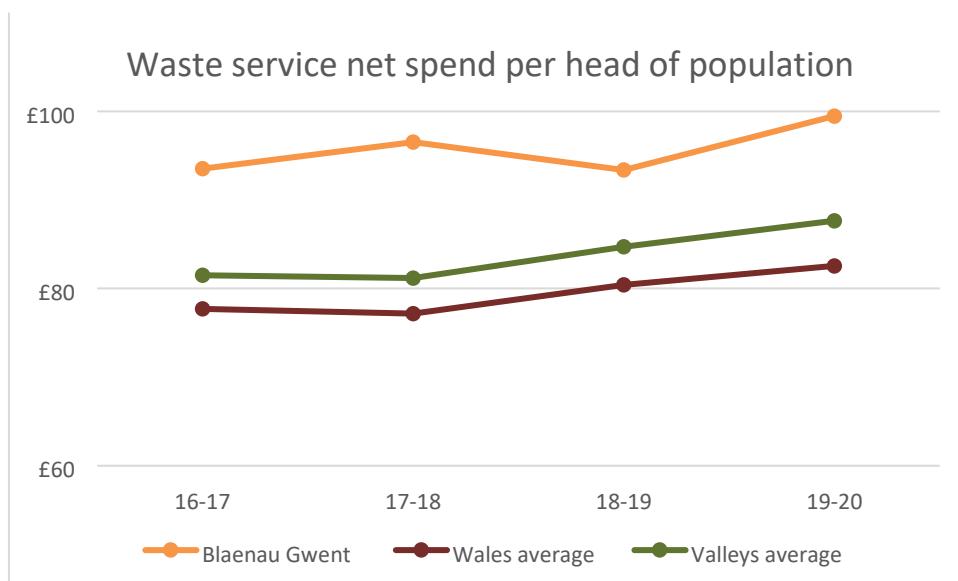


Exhibit source: Stats Wales Revenue Outturn and population data

- 61 We found that the Council's highways service was the 7th most expensive in Wales in 2016-17, costing £71.62 per head of population. By 19-20, the cost had fallen 26% to £52.77 per head, the 10th most expensive in Wales. Over the same period, the average cost per head in Wales fell by 3%, whereas in valleys councils the average cost increased by 8%.



## Exhibit 5: highways service net spend per head of population

The following exhibit sets how much money the Council spent per head of population on highways between 2016-17 and 2019-20. It also shows the average spends across Wales and valleys local authorities.

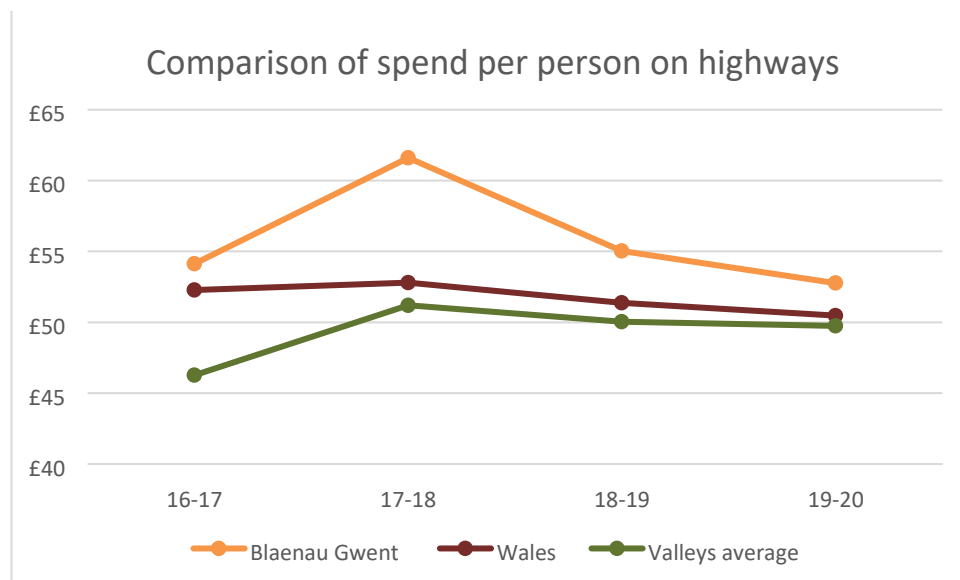


Exhibit source: Stats Wales Revenue Outturn and population data

- 62 Community Services has a good track record of achieving its planned savings, as set out in **Exhibit 6** below.

## Exhibit 6: community services savings delivered as a percentage of planned savings

The following exhibit sets how much money Community Services intended to save from its savings plans during 2018-19 and 2019-20 and how much of this it actually saved as well as estimated figures for 2020-21.

	Total planned savings (£'000)	Planned savings achieved (£'000)	Planned savings unachieved (£'000)	Percentage of savings achieved
2018-19	718	718	0	100%
2019-20	732	727	5	99%
2020-21 estimate	553	439	37	79% <sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> At the time of our fieldwork, the Council anticipated it would achieve a minimum of £439,000 (79%) of its planned savings for 2020-21, with £36.5,000 (7%) unachievable in year. A further £77,000 (14%) of planned savings relate to stretched income targets and increases to fees and charges, but we were unable to calculate what proportion of these savings will be achieved as no breakdown by service area was available.



Exhibit source: We calculated the value of planned and achieved savings relating to Community Services from Council documents, Budget Outturn Reports and M9 budget monitoring report.

- 63 In line with the rest of the Council, Community Services has moved away from an annual approach to identifying savings, which was unsustainable over the longer term. Savings for 2020-21 were identified through the Council's Bridging the Gap strategic business reviews, which aim to identify long-term savings opportunities, potential cost avoidance and new revenue streams. This approach will help strengthen the Council's financial sustainability by reducing its reliance on short term savings. In 2020-21, the Council planned to save £1.47 million through Bridging the Gap, of which £0.55 million (38%) related to Community Services.
- 64 However, the pandemic has impacted on Community Services' ability to achieve all its planned savings in 2020-21. For example, a new Commercial Waste Service with forecast income of £23,000 a year was due to be rolled out in April 2020. But the Council suspended the roll out because of the pandemic and, given the ongoing impact of COVID-19, has prudently revised future income expectations for the new service.

## Appendix 1

### Community services performance against budget

#### Exhibit 7: community Services performance against budget – breakdown by budget area

The following exhibit shows how each of the budget areas within Community Services has performed against budget between 2017-18 and 2019-20 as well as forecast performance for 2020-21.

Waste <sup>4</sup>	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	3.67	3.67	0	0%
2018-19	4.70	4.84	0.14	3%
2019-20	5.17	5.25	0.07	1%

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<sup>4</sup> This is the combined budget for waste collection, waste transfer and waste disposal.

2020-21 (forecast)	4.69	5.00	0.31	7%
Highways & Roads	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	3.26	3.58	0.32	10%
2018-19	2.60	2.75	0.15	6%
2019-20	2.55	2.58	0.03	1%
2020-21 (forecast)	3.01	3.02	0.01	0.5%
Public Services	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	1.77	1.83	0.06	3%
2018-19	2.09	2.25	0.15	7%
2019-20	1.86	1.90	0.04	2%
2020-21 (forecast)	1.79	1.71	-0.08	-5%
Transport Services	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18				
2018-19	0.41	0.35	-0.06	-15%
2019-20	0.27	0.27	-0.005	-2%
2020-21 (forecast)	0.51	0.51	-0.002	-0.4%
Facilities Management	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	1.61	1.89	0.28	17%
2018-19	1.89	1.93	0.04	2%
2019-20	2.20	2.21	0.01	0.1%
2020-21 (forecast)	1.88	1.93	0.05	3%
Cultural & Environmental Services	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	-0.03	-0.04	-0.01	-54%
2018-19	0.02	0.08	0.06	425%

2019-20	0.11	0.11	0.006	6%
2020-21 (forecast)	0.13	0.13	0	0%

Departmental Services	Budget (£m)	Outturn (£m)	Overspend (£m)	Overspend (%)
2017-18	-0.004	-0.009	-0.005	-118%
2018-19	-0.199	-0.207	-0.008	-5%
2019-20	-0.110	-0.112	-0.002	-2%
2020-21 (forecast)	-0.006	-0.012	-0.006	-93%

Exhibit source: 17-18 - 19-20: Budget Outturn Reports; 20-21: M9 budget monitoring report.



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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.  
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.