



Blaenau Gwent Corporate Plan 2022/27



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

Version Control

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Blaenau Gwent Vision:

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

The Council's Core Values:

Respectful

Inclusive

Collaborative

Accountable

Supportive

Our Vision and Values reflect who we are as a Council, how we do things and how we are shaping the future by ensuring that these apply to everything we do.

Foreword

Blaenau Gwent is a place like no other. At the head of the Gwent Valleys – Blaenau Gwent provides a unique environment to live, work and play. Blaenau Gwent is a place of heritage and dramatic change, with a sense of its past but its eyes firmly on the future.

The Tech Valleys Vision, Valleys Regional Park and Cardiff Capital Regional Deal combined with new transport links through the soon to be completed Heads of the Valley Road and rail routes to Cardiff bring a bright future. Together with the amazing location and surrounding parkland our people and communities make Blaenau Gwent great. Our people have influence on the local, national and international stage in the arts, sport and politics for many generations – putting Blaenau Gwent on the map for all the right reasons.

The role of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and its partners is to maximise on the assets we have, doing more with less and doing it better. It is right that we recognise the challenges we face. The historical decline of heavy industry continues to impact on employment prospects and intergenerational opportunities. We face issues with health and wealth inequality, the rise of online shopping and the impact on our town centres and social issues affecting our families and young people. As a Council we face increasing demand for some of our services putting more pressure on our available budgets. But we are tackling these issues head on with our partners, businesses and the local community. We are looking at how we spend our money to achieve the best outcomes for our residents, we are supporting new and existing businesses, we are looking at our assets to achieve new income streams and we are removing barriers to enable residents to access what they need. All in all, we are looking forward to a positive future.

Across Gwent, all councils, including Blaenau Gwent, will work towards becoming a region that aims to tackle and reduce inequalities, based on the Marmot principles (further detail on page 7). We will work across all public services in our area to ensure that our policies, approaches and resources are geared towards creating a fairer, more equal society for today's residents and future generations. This will be at the centre of how we develop and deliver our services across early years, education and skills, transport, housing, places and spaces, and jobs and businesses. As an anti-poverty council, we will do everything within our power to support people trapped in poverty and those who are most vulnerable. By valuing and promoting good health, education and learning we can help people to reach their full potential. This in turn will contribute to creating better informed and connected communities throughout Blaenau Gwent that are fair, open and welcoming to all; where everyone gets to play an active part.



Blaenau Gwent Cabinet

Blaenau Gwent Council's Cabinet is made up of the Leader of the Council and four other Elected Members, called Cabinet Members. Each Cabinet Member looks after an individual area of responsibility, called a portfolio. They make decisions on how your money is spent and how services are delivered. The Cabinet is responsible for delivery of the Corporate Plan. A full list of all Elected Member, including information about how to find your local Member, is available on our website: [Councillors and Committees | Blaenau Gwent CBC \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)



Cllr Steve Thomas
Leader of the Council
Cabinet Member
Corporate Overview
and Performance



Cllr Helen Cunningham
Deputy Leader of the Council
Cabinet Member
Place and Environment



Cllr John C Morgan
Cabinet Member
Place and Regeneration



Cllr Sue Edmunds
Cabinet Member
People and Education



Cllr Hadyn Trollope
Cabinet Member
People and Social Services

Introduction

The Corporate Plan acts as the Council's business plan and sets out the vision, values and priorities for 2022/27. It outlines not only what the people of Blaenau Gwent can expect from the Council but equally, what the Council is asking from its citizens and partners.

The Plan has been developed at a time of significant financial turbulence and change within the public sector. The Council has had to take some tough decisions on where to prioritise spending, ensuring vital services are maintained for the most vulnerable in our communities.

Through focusing on delivering against the main priorities set out in the Corporate Plan we can begin to transform Blaenau Gwent into a more prosperous and welcoming area and that plays a part on a regional and national stage. It is about achieving real outcomes for the people of Blaenau Gwent and is underpinned by solid and sustainable business plans, ensuring the Council can be held to account for what it has promised to deliver.

The Corporate Plan is a requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The primary aim of the Act is to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act sets out seven national well-being goals that we have a duty to contribute to. The Act intends to make the Council think more about the long term, work better with people and communities, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.




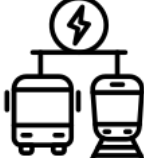




The Corporate Plan identifies four priorities, known as well-being Objectives, which set out the direction for action and agenda for change over the next five years. The ambitions set out in this Plan require for the Council, communities and partners to work in new and innovative ways to drive change and transform the area in order to have a positive impact on the lives and well-being of current and future generations.

Our Corporate Plan

Our Corporate Plan 2022/27 sets out an ambitious programme of activity for the Council over the next five years and beyond. The priorities, also referred to as Well-being Objectives, have been developed in order to support our communities to thrive. The people of Blaenau Gwent are at the heart of all that we do and the Corporate Plan is our commitment to the communities of Blaenau Gwent to provide modern and high quality services which support economic growth and well-being.

As a Council we will be an outward looking organisation who will work in partnership with businesses, the public and voluntary sectors, and communities to be a more commercially minded and business orientated organisation.

Our Corporate Plan 2022/27 Priorities are:

Priority		Outcome
	Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	An increase in the resilience of the community, providing high quality educational and skills opportunities to create a thriving economy from birth onwards, minimising dependence and maximising independence
		
	Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	Blaenau Gwent Council greatly reduces its carbon emissions, provides an environment which supports growth and well-being and connects communities
		
	An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	Blaenau Gwent Council works in partnership to provide high quality services to meet local need, and improve the quality of life and well-being within the community
		
	Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	An increase in the resilience of Communities, where everyone is welcome and safe and which minimises dependency and maximises independence
		

Through focusing on delivering the Corporate Plan we can begin to transform Blaenau Gwent into a more prosperous and welcoming area that celebrates its heritage and plays its part on the regional and national stage. It is also a key part of building a more confident and capable Council. It is about achieving real outcomes for the people of Blaenau Gwent and is underpinned

by solid and sustainable plans, ensuring the Council can be held to account for what it has promised to deliver.

The priorities have not been developed in isolation and have been identified in order to support the progression of a number of policy and partnership areas:

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act** has outlined the responsibilities on all public sector bodies to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. This is referred to as the sustainable development principle which states public bodies '**must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs**'. We have ensured that these responsibilities are a part of all that we do and our priorities and actions reflect how we will work to improve these key areas. We have also considered the contribution our priorities will have on working towards the Well-being Goals and the five ways of working.



Alignment has also been made to the **Marmot Principles** and the priorities from the **Gwent Public Service Board Plan (PSB) Well-being Plan**.

Gwent PSB have agreed to become a **Marmot Region** and to adopt the **eight Marmot principles** to reduce health inequalities across Gwent and to work in partnership with the Institute of Health Equity (IHE) to address the social determinants of health. Gwent is the first area in Wales to become a Marmot region.

Michael Marmot is Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College London and currently the Director of The UCL Institute of Health Equity. He has led research groups on health inequalities for over thirty years, working for various international and governmental bodies. Key to his approach to addressing health inequalities is to create the conditions for people to take control of their own lives which requires action across the social determinants of health and beyond the reach of the NHS. Recognising the inequality that exists in our communities, the Gwent Public Service Board has agreed to become a 'Marmot' region with the intent to implement this approach to undertake evidence-based action to reduce inequalities in Gwent. This will re-focus and accelerate progress towards reducing the root causes of health and related inequalities across Gwent. As part of this, the PSB will use the eight Marmot Principles, alongside the Objectives and Steps, as part of the Well-being Plan.









Eight Marmot Principles:

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

Alongside the Marmot Principles, The Council has aligned to the priorities outlined in the draft Well-being Plan, a Plan owned by the Gwent PSB.

How the Council's Priorities Align

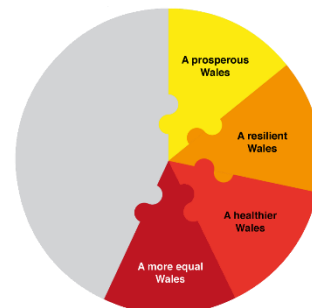
The table below highlights the links between the Corporate Plan 2022/27, the Marmot Principles and the Gwent PSB's Well-being Plan.

Corporate Plan 2022/27		Marmot Principle	Gwent Well-being Plan
Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give every child the best start in life • Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives • Create fair employment and good work for all • Ensure a healthy standard of living for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create an equal Gwent for all
			
Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention • 'Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create a Gwent where the natural environment is protected and enhanced to maximise the well-being benefits that nature provides to current and future generations
			
An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create fair employment and good work for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create an equal Gwent for all
			
Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create a Gwent that has friendly, safe and confident communities
			

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



What We Aim to Achieve – An increase in the resilience of the community, providing high quality educational and skills opportunities to create a thriving economy from birth onwards, minimising dependence and maximising independence.



Why This is Important - Identified Need

- Tackling the cost of living and supporting residents and families
- Examining the potential for further economic improvement and growth for Blaenau Gwent:
 - Maximisation of opportunities and income levels
 - Children, young people and adults with the right qualifications and skills for life
 - Skills / employment
 - Job prospects
 - Growth
- Community –
 - Independent living
 - Thriving and Resilient
 - Aging population
- Access to services

How We Will Know How Well We Are Doing

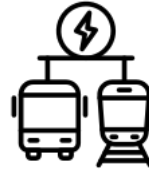
- Percentage of working age people who are employed
- Full / part time workers weekly earnings
- Percentage of adults 16-64 with no qualifications
- Percentage of people living in households in material deprivation
- % that travel outside of the borough for employment
- Percentage of children living in workless households
- Rate of households for whom homelessness was successfully prevented for at least 6 months per 10,000 households
- Percentage of low birth rate live single births
- Educational outcomes and attainment
- NEETs Levels
- School Attendance
- Percentage of school pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals
- Social Services Performance Framework
- Economic Activity Rates
- Business Start-up Rates per 1,000 Inhabitants
- Number of Business per 1,000 inhabitants
- Proportion of Working Age Population with NVQ Level 4 or
- Proportion of Knowledge-Based Business
- Data Unit Self Assessment Indicators
- WIMD

<https://www.data.cymru/dashboards/viewofpoverty>

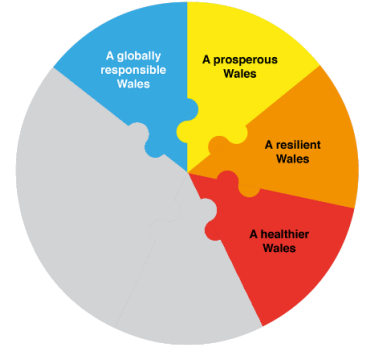
**Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Sustainable Development and the Five Ways of Working**

<p>We will work in Partnership / Collaboration With...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent Public Service Board • Aneurin Bevan University Health Board • Education Achievement Service • Regional Partnership Board • Cardiff Capital Region City Deal • Local Nature Partnership Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen • Tech Valleys • Valley Task Force • Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) • Town Centre Forums • Business Hub • Enterprise Board • Greater Gwent Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnership • Gwent Frailty • WAST • Cost of Living Sub Group
<p>We will work with a focus on Long term planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a key area for Blaenau Gwent and it is recognised that evidence to show improvement will take time but it is vital that work is undertaken now to support communities now and in the future. 	
<p>We will work with a focus on Integration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This priority is cross cutting in nature and will include a number of Council Services including Regeneration, Social Services and Education. 	
<p>We will work with a focus on Prevention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the impacts of poverty and material deprivation from getting worse by providing good quality local employment opportunities and supporting a thriving and resilient Blaenau Gwent 	
<p>We will work with a focus on Involving the public and partners in all that we do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with businesses and partners will be key to support economic growth and job creation / opportunities. • The Education Directorate is committed to providing high quality services to its citizens and uses various engagement methodologies in order to understand if the service is making the intended outcomes or if amendments to service delivery need to be considered • An important aspect of providing Social Services to service users is that their voice is heard and they are able to shape the services they receive. Consultation with children and families occurs on a case by case basis and is captured in the care planning documents of each child. 	

Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities



What We Aim to Achieve - Blaenau Gwent Council greatly reduces its carbon emissions, provides an environment which supports growth and well-being and connects communities



Why This is Important - Identified Need

- Connectivity -
 - Digital Infrastructure
 - Digital Skills
 - Transport
 - Prioritising active and safe transport
- Community –
 - Natural and built environment
 - Attractive area to live
 - Minimising air pollution
 - Building energy efficient homes
- Decarbonisation –
 - Net zero by 2030
 - Building Adaptions (including schools)
 - Tackling climate change
 - Energy provision

How We Will Know How Well We Are Doing

- Jobs in the area - % that leave the area to work elsewhere - % change over time
- Decarbonisation Measures
- Housing
- Highways
- Assets
- Fly tipping
- Street cleansing
- Waste and recycling
- Environment and biodiversity
- Transport planning
- Data Unit Self Assessment Indicators

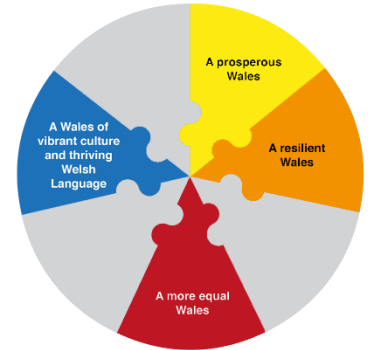
**Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Sustainable Development and the Five Ways of Working**

<p>We will work in Partnership / Collaboration With...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent PSB • Local Authorities in Wales • CCRC • Transport for Wales • Climate Ready Gwent • Local Nature Partnership Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen • Dwr Cymru Welsh Water • Natural Resources Wales
<p>We will work with a focus on Long term planning</p>	<p>Protecting the environment and working towards new zero carbon is an immediate aim with actions being put in place now to support in the long term.</p>
<p>We will work with a focus on Integration</p>	<p>The Council has developed a Decarbonisation Strategy and an Environment and Biodiversity Strategy both of which outline responsibilities to support these agendas across all Councils services. Through a joined up approach to service delivery the Council will be able to achieve more and use less resources.</p>
<p>We will work with a focus on Prevention</p>	<p>Contributing to the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience will help to mitigate and adapt to climate change and provide positive opportunities to maintain and build mental and physical health and well-being.</p>
<p>We will work with a focus on Involving the public and partners in all that we do</p>	<p>Support to local community groups is continuing with local litter champions being provided with materials, equipment, staff support and the collection of waste following clean up and clearance.</p>

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



What We Aim to Achieve – Blaenau Gwent Council works in partnership to provide high quality services to meet local need, and improve the quality of life and well-being within the community



Why This is Important - Identified Need

- Digital infrastructure
- Commercially minded Council
- Strong Resilient Council
- Financially Resilient
- Recruitment and retention
- Adapting (Exit from the EU and post COVID)
- Partnership Working / Regionalisation
- Celebrate success
- Focus on the future
- Building Blaenau Gwent's reputation
- Data and intelligence

How We Will Know How Well We Are Doing

- Council attendance and sickness
- Council recruitment and retention
- Complaints and Compliments
- Financial health indicators
- Community Hub data
- Digital data
- Customer data
- Communications activity
- Data Unit Self Assessment Indicators

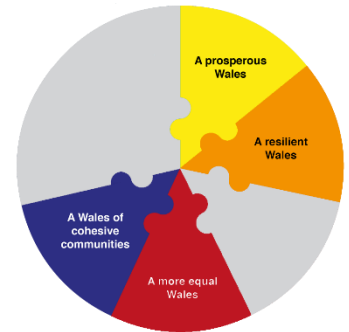
**Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Sustainable Development and the Five Ways of Working**

We will work in Partnership / Collaboration With...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent PSB • Local Authorities in Wales • Trade Unions • Town and Community Councils • Welsh Government • WLGA • Audit Wales • SRS
We will work with a focus on Long term planning	<p>The Council is committed to supporting communities in the long term and looks to achieve this through active engagement with the community, understanding data and need and by developing plans and strategies that will be implemented over a number of years to ensure the future investment and improvement of services in Blaenau Gwent.</p>
We will work with a focus on Integration	<p>The Council operates a 'One Council' approach whereby services work together to share resources and expertise and support one another to achieve the intended outcomes for the community.</p>
We will work with a focus on Prevention	<p>The Council uses a preventative approach to the services it provides to the community. This can cover a number of areas such as education, social services, poverty, infrastructure. The Council works to prevent problems getting worse.</p>
We will work with a focus on Involving the public and partners in all that we do	<p>The Council is proactive in how it engages the community. The Council has developed an Engagement Strategy 2018/22 which outlines the approach to engagement for the community, stakeholders, staff and members. Effective engagement is crucial to ensure the Council runs effectively, the services delivered are appropriate and meet the needs of those that use them. The Council also has a Corporate Engagement Calendar in order to map the type and level of activity being delivered across the organisation. This is then used to maximise the use of resources and value of engagements and to promote a 'One Council' approach.</p>

Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient



What We Aim to Achieve - An increase in the resilience of Communities, where everyone is welcome and safe and which minimises dependency and maximises independence



Why This is Important - Identified Need

- Promote awareness and understanding and encourage and celebrate diversity
- Strengthen community spirit and resilience
- Community Safety
- Blaenau Gwent:
 - Is a welcoming, diverse and thriving place to live and visit
 - Creates volunteering opportunities to empower residents to have control over their own communities

How We Will Know How Well We Are Doing

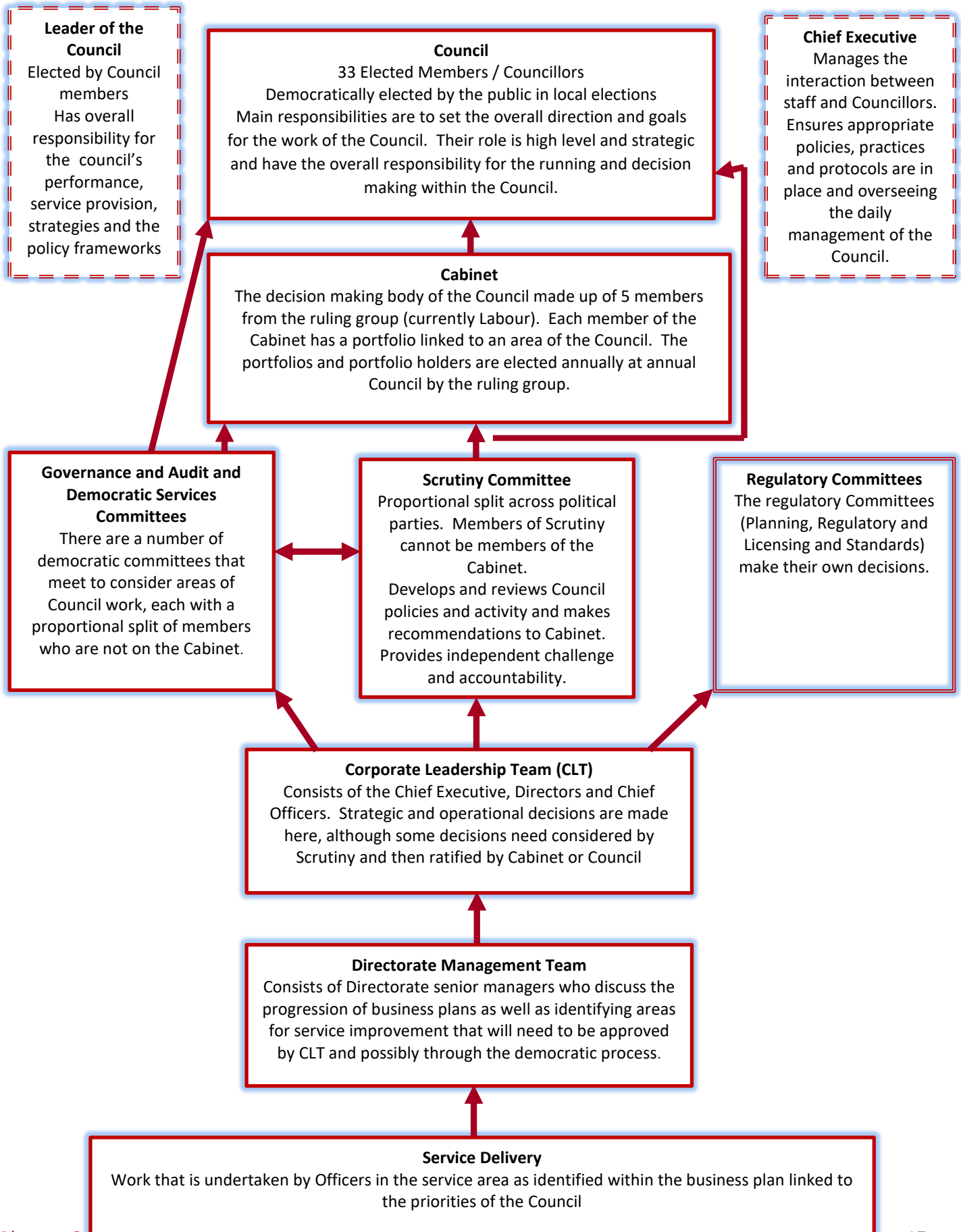
- WIMD
- Equalities
- Community Safety
- Community Well-being
- Data Unit Self Assessment Indicators

**Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Sustainable Development and the Five Ways of Working**

We will work in Partnership / Collaboration With...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent PSB • West Gwent Community Cohesion Programme • Local Community Safety Partnership • Safer Gwent • Gwent Community Cohesion Team • Other Local Authorities • Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan priorities • Wales Strategji Migration Partnership • UK Resettlement Scheme Programme • Home Office
We will work with a focus on Long term planning	<p>The Council's community safety initiative is to support crime reduction whilst also implementing preventative measures to ensure long-term reductions in crime and disorder.</p>
We will work with a focus on Integration	<p>Blaenau Gwent Council, together with its fellow local authorities across Gwent, have worked with schools, not only to challenge racism and hate crime, but to also promote inclusion and celebrate the region's diversity. Last year schools were involved in producing an anti-racism poster competition which was organised by Race Equality First. Schools across the region produced some powerful art work which displayed messages that promoted equality and showed that hate has no place in rugby or the community.</p>
We will work with a focus on Prevention	<p>Home and fire safety services have been provided to victims of crime, anti-social behaviour and domestic violence in the area. Initiatives have also been provided in order to protect, support and empower those who are vulnerable to exploitation, violent extremism or terrorism, as well as human trafficking and modern slavery.</p>
We will work with a focus on Involving the public and partners in all that we do	<p>The Council has successfully raised awareness and understanding of numerous International and National Equality and Cohesion Campaigns via social media, as well as delivering on specific initiatives with staff, communities and stakeholders (for example, the Youth Forum, Citizen Panel etc.). Examples of the campaigns supported includes Holocaust Memorial Day, Show Racism the Red Card, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer +) History Month, Pride, White Ribbon Day (campaign to end domestic violence), Black History Month and International Children's Day.</p>

The Council's Governance Framework

Blaenau Gwent Council operates through a Governance Framework which brings together an underlying set of legislation, governance and management processes. The Framework provides a clear line of accountability throughout the Council for monitoring, reporting and decision making. As part of this, the Corporate Plan acts as the Council's overarching strategic document which provides a framework for all that we do and all of the decisions that are made.



Although the Corporate Plan is the overarching strategic document for the Council, it is supported by a number of other key policies and strategies that work together to create a golden thread, these documents include:

- The **Communications Strategy** looks to deliver excellent, innovative and cost effective two-way communications, building a positive reputation and increasing trust and confidence that the Council is delivering services that meet resident, businesses and visitor's needs.
- The **Strategic Equalities Plan** aims to put fairness and equality at the heart of everything the Council does and this is central to maximising well-being outcomes for residents, local communities, staff and visitors, now and in the future
- The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** is a key and integral part of the Council's planning arrangement and provides an assessment of the spending requirements the Council is likely to face to deliver its priorities and the level of potential cuts.
- The **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy aims** of the Blaenau Gwent's Welsh Language Strategy are linked with the Welsh Government's vision to create a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.
- The **Workforce Strategy** looks 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.

At the heart of everything the Council does is the community of Blaenau Gwent. **Engagement, participation and customer experience** feature as a key theme which runs across the Council in order to shape services and make decisions.

Legislative Requirements

The **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021** sets out a new performance and governance regime which is a fundamental component of empowering local government by firmly defining principal councils as self-improving organisations through a system based on self-assessment and panel performance assessment. This approach is intended to build on and support a culture in which councils continuously challenge the status quo, ask questions about how they are operating, and consider best practice in Wales and wider. It will be important for the sector as a whole to take the lead in the implementation of the new regime, in supporting improvement and in sharing innovations and best practice.

As part of this requirement, the Council has undertaken a corporate self assessment process to consider the progress made and the further areas for improvement since 2021/22. The learning from the self assessment has helped to develop the priority areas within this Corporate Plan. The self assessment is meant to be used as a continuous method to keep performance under review and the Council has in place arrangements to achieve this throughout the year via its performance management framework and reporting methods.

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** (WCFG) is ground-breaking legislation which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales and create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. We have used our priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan to act as our Well-being Objectives.

The **Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Section 15)** places a duty on all Local Authorities in Wales to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. As part of this, the Council is required to develop a Corporate Plan. The report also uses the Outcome Statements within the Council's Corporate Plan as its Improvement Objectives.

Contact Information

This document is available electronically and in hard copy by request.

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Providing Feedback

We welcome any feedback you might have about the Council's Corporate Plan 2022/27. Your views are important to us and we want to know what information you would like to see and how you would like to see it reported. Please contact the team on the details above if you would like to give feedback on the Corporate Plan, if there is any information you think could be considered for inclusion in the future, 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'r Cynllun Gwella ar gael ar wefan y Cyngor.

This document acts as Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's Well-being Statement, prepared under section 7 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and related guidance issued by the Welsh Government.

The Council is satisfied that the information given in this plan is accurate based on the information available at the time of publication.

This Council's Corporate Plan 2022/27 has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment screening.