

### 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	
Jonathan Morgan/Shaun Hughes	Leanne Roberts	Corporate Services	29/8/2023	

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 development and introduction of a Digital Transformation Strategy and Customer Services Strategy including Customer Service Standards and Customer Service charter. These will be embedded so that a clear description of the level of service customers can expect when dealing with the Council.



#### Section 1

Outline how the proposal will impact on any people or groups of people with protected charateristics, please refer to the Equalities Act 2010 (Wales) for further information Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (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.	
Age (people of all ages)	Yes	Positive impact – customers will be able to self serve as much as possible, but also for those unable to self serve alternative ways to contact us are available.	Customers will be able to take reponsibility for their own actions by intercting with us on-line as much as possible rather than waiting to see or speak to an agent. This can be 24/7, 365 days a year. The Contact Centre and Community Hubs only operate during working hours Monday to Friday.	
<b>Disability</b> (people with disabilities/ long term conditions)	Yes	Positive impact – clear guidance will show how customers will be able to self serve as much as possible, speak to an agent in the Contact	Customers will be able to take reponsibility for their own actions by intercting with us on-line as much as possible rather than waiting to see or speak to an agent. This can be 24/7, 365 days a year. The Contact Centre and Community Hubs only operate during working hours Monday to Friday.	



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		Centre or visit a	
		Community Hub.	
		Negative impact –	
		location of the	
		Community Hubs in town	
		centres may be	
		challenging to some	
		residents in terms of their	
		location.	
Gender Reassignment	Considered but no impact		
(anybody who's	identified		
gender identity or			
gender expression is			
different to the sex			
they were assigned at			
birth)			
Marriage or Civil	Considered but no impact		
Partnership (people	identified		
who are married or in			
a civil partnership)			
	Yes	Positive impact –	Customers will be able to take reponsibility for their own
Pregnancy and		customers will be able to	actions by intercting with us on-line as much as possible
Maternity (women		self serve as much as	rather than waiting to see or speak to an agent. This can be
who are pregnant		possible, but also for	24/7, 365 days a year. The Contact Centre and Community
and/or on maternity		those unable to self serve	Hubs only operate during working hours Monday to Friday.
leave)		alternative ways to	
		contact us are available.	



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		Negative impact – parking	
		in town centres near to	
		the Community Hub	
		maybe challenging due to	
		traffic restrictions.	
Race (people from	Considered but no impact	n/a	
black, Asian and	identified		
minority ethnic			
communities and			
different racial			
backgrounds)			
Religion or Belief	Considered but no impact	n/a	
(people with different	identified		
religions and beliefs			
including people with			
no beliefs)			
Sex (women and men,	Considered but no impact	n/a	
girls and boys and	identified		
those who self-identify			
their gender)			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Considered but no impact	n/a	
(lesbian, gay, bisexual,	identified		
heterosexual, other)			

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.
Low Income / Income Poverty (cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)	Positive – customers will have a choice to access services on their own devices, telephone or visit Community Hubs.	Negative – no access to digital technology due to financial constraints. Also, costly to travel to Community Hubs.  Customers will have a choice as to how best their circumstances allow them to interact with us.	Every case is treated on its own merits and the Customer Service delivery provided to our customers will depend on their individual circumstance.



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Low and/or No Wealth (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)	Positive – customers will have a choice to access services on their own devices, telephone the Contact Centre or visit Community Hubs	Negative – no access to digital technology due to financial constraints or personal choice. Also, costly to travel to Community Hubs  Customers will have a choice as to how best their circumstances allow them to interact with us.	Every case is treated on its own merits and the Customer Service delivery provided to our customers will depend on their individual circumstance
Material Deprivation (unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)	Positive – residents will be able to access services on their own devices rather than travel to Community Hubs	Negative – no access to digital technology due to financial constraints or personal choice. Also, costly to travel to Community Hubs  Customers will have a choice as to how best their circumstances allow them to interact with us.	Every case is treated on its own merits and the Customer Service delivery provided to our customers will depend on their individual circumstance
Area Deprivation (where you live (rural areas), where you work	Positive – residents will be able to access services on their own	Negative – no access to digital technology due to financial	Customers will a choice of how to interact with the Council



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(accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?	devices rather than travel to Community Hubs	constraints or personal choice. Also, costly to travel to Community Hubs and public transport services to town centres are limited in certain areas.	dependant on their individual circumstances.
Socio-economic Background (social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)	Considered but no impact identified	n/a	
Socio-economic Disadvantage (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)	Positive – residents will be able to access services om their own devices rather than travel to Community Hubs	Negative – no access to digital technology due to financial constraints or choice.	Customers will a choice of how to interact with the Council dependant on their individual circumstances.



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Section 3-Corporate Plan  Please outline any Corporate Plan linkages of the proposal -BG Corporate P	lan 22-27
<b>Priority 1</b> - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent	Priority 2 of the Digital Strategy – "To be a digitally enabled Borough" – To develop digital and data skills to deliver services that meet customer and business needs. We have a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement.
<b>Priority 2</b> - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities	The Customer Service Strategy will link into the Decarbonisation Plan.
<b>Priority 3</b> - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place	Both strategies emphasise the importance of investing in our staff and developing a culture that supports digital improvement and a seamless, positive customer experience.
<b>Priority 4</b> - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient	Allowing customers to have the choice of how they interact with us but with the knowledge that, as Priority 2 of the digital Strategy says, all data is protected appropriately and only shared when it is safe and appropriate to do so.



	peing 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?
	Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.  The Digital and Customer Service landscape has changed dramatically over recent years and is constantly evolving with higher expectations of standards of service and accessibility, including the way the public receive council services.
Long Tern	The Pandemic changed customer behaviour, and the way in which public services needed to respond has given momentum to shaping a new vision for the Councils customer offer.
	The lasting impact of COVID-19 has accelerated the need for the review of the Digital and Transformation and Customer Service delivery model.
	Closely aligning the strategy with understanding our demographics utilising new technology will provide a pathway for future proofing the Council moving forward into the 21st Century



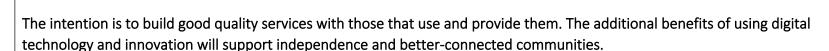
the Council.

Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from ocurring or getting worse  $% \left( 1\right) =\left( 1\right) \left( 1\right) \left$ 

The demands and expectations of customers and staff and the speed of digital innovation means that we need to be able to deal with the rising volume of customers' requests, who want faster, more comprehensive services across a growing range of channels

The key principles and priorities of the Digital and Customer Services Strategies are aimed at those that need and want to access

Prevention



Through our customer-centred design approach we will consider each element of a process and how customers use our services. Having the right culture and leadership to drive our ambition will support the development of customer-centred services.

Improved use of data, better engagement and collaboration will allow us to join up services to remove barriers between organisations so that customers can easily access what they need, supporting behaviour change where possible

Integration



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)

The strategies take a whole council approach and promotes knowledge sharing across service areas.



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Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities. The strategies will be shared with key partners to support working towards a more joined up public services experience for customers.

Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.

The Strategies, has been developed with engagement via;

- An externally facilitated organisational review of the customer experience and access involving a range of service areas and engagement through journey mapping with customers who use our services
- Feedback from customers, non-users, learners, businesses, partners, staff and data gathered during various service design projects;
- User research with customers including that gained through service re design projects
- Evidence from work undertaken on service design projects, i.e Planning and content design;
- Wider CLT session facilitated by Centre of Public Digital Services to understand current position, opportunities, barriers and objectives;
- Senior management and Elected member feedback
- Feedback from elected members, MCS induction session;
- Digital self-evaluation, facilitated by WLGA;
- Digital Exclusion project across Gwent;
- Customer Experience and Access review;
- Review of agile working
- Community feedback on budget proposals 62% want easy access to digital services

### Involvement





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User research will be a key part of the strategy implementation moving forward.	

# 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 strategy will contribute towards the requirements and standards set out in the following: > Well-being and Future Generations Act > Digital Strategy for Wales > Digital Service Standards for Wales > Welsh Language Act Whilst delivering this Strategy, we will ensure the decisions we make consider the well-being goals and five ways of working: Long Term, Integration, Involvement, Collaboration and Prevention. We will ensure that our decisions are evidenced-based and consider the social and economic impact on our communities. The key principles and priorities of this strategy are aimed at those who need and want to access the Council. The intention is to build good quality services with those who use and provide them. The additional benefits of using digital technology and innovation will support independence and better-connected communities. Through our customer-centred design approach we will consider each element of a process and how customers use our services. Having the right culture and leadership to drive our digital ambition will support the development of customer-centred services. Improved use of data, better engagement and collaboration will allow us to join up services to remove barriers between organisations so that customers can easily access what they need

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.

#### Considered but no impact identified

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 strategies will provide our residents with a choice of how they interact with us dependant on the individual circumstances and needs.

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 strategies will provide our residents with a choice of how they interact with us dependant on the ondividual circumstances and needs.

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

We aim to ensure our technology and digital infrastructure is responsive, secure and adaptive to meet changing needs of our customers, business and staff and we will aim to do this by working with communities, developing a digital infrastruture to support 21<sup>st</sup> century services, collaborating with partners but maintaining our systems so they are always safe and secure

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.

Improving customer digital skills can open many doors to opportunity and skills developme

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

The Digital Strategy will contribute towards the requirements and standards set out in the following: > Well-being and Future Generations Act > Digital Strategy for Wales > Digital Service Standards for Wales > Welsh Language Act



# 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	Please demonstrate any evidence used to form this opinion.
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. Specifically Standards 88 - 93	Positive – the strategies support the Welsh language and support the equalites agenda.	Ensuring the Welsh language standards are adhered to and embedded into every service area.	Customers will be given the choice of communicating in their preferred language of choice.
What opportunities are there to promote the Welsh Language? e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community	Correspondance will be provided in the language of choice.		
What opportunities are there for a person or person to use the Welsh Language? e.g. staff, residents and visitors	Customers will be able to deal with queries in their preferred language of their choice	Whilst there are already Welsh speakers in the LA, front line customer service staff are currently under-going Welsh language training.	Customers will be able to converse with customer service staff in their preferred choice of language.



considered in order to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?  Customer service staff are currently under-going Welsh language training.  Customer service staff are currently under-going Welsh language Tommissioner	language no less favourably than the	Yes	currently under-going Welsh	We are currently following an action plan following intervention from the Welsh language Commissioner
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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.
Participation (child or young person as someone who actively	Considered but no impact identified		



contributes to society as a citizen)		
Provision	Considered but no impact	
(the basic rights of children	- 1	
and young people to		
survive and develop)		
Protection	Considered but no impact	
(children and young	identified	
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.
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Crime (consider impact on each: victims, offenders and neighbourhoods)	Considered but no impact identified		
Anti-Social Behaviour and	Considered but no impact		
behaviour adversely	identified		
affecting the local			
environment			
(consider impact on each:			
victims, offenders,			
neighbourhoods and green			
spaces)			
Misuse of drugs, alcohol	Considered but no impact		
and other substances	identified		
(Think vulnerable children,			
adults, families and			
communities)			
Do offending	Canaidanad but na immaat		
Re-offending (Think young people and	Considered but no impact identified		
adults, victims, families,	luentineu		
communities)			
Serious Violence	Considered but no impact		
(Think vulnerable young	identified		
people, vulnerable adults,			
victims, families,			
communities)			
,			



Counter Terrorism (People and places that are vulnerable to terrorism or violent extremism)	Considered but no impact identified		
<b>Community Cohesion</b>	Considered but no impact		
(Asylum seekers, Migrants,	identified		
Victims or Hate Crime,			
Community tensions)			

Section 8- Armed Forces C	Covenant Duty AFC Draft Statu	tory 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.
<ul> <li>Health</li> <li>Provision of services</li> <li>Planning and funding</li> <li>Co-operation between bodies and professionals</li> </ul>	Considered but no impact identified		



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These healthcare functions			
are within scope of the			
Duty in the following			
settings:			
NHS Primary Care			
services, including general			
practice, community			
pharmacies, NHS dental,			
NHS optometry services			
and public health screening			
services.			
NHS Secondary Care			
services, including urgent			
and emergency care,			
hospital and community			
services, specialist care,			
mental health services, and			
additional needs services			
(as applicable).			
<ul> <li>Local authority-delivered</li> </ul>			
healthcare services,			
including sexual health			
services and drug and			
alcohol misuse services			
Education	Considered but no impact		
Admissions	identified		
Educational attainment			
and curriculum			
Child wellbeing			



	,		County Borough Council
Transport			
Attendance			
<ul> <li>Additional needs support</li> </ul>			
Use of Service Pupil			
Premium funding (England			
only)			
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			
Housing	Considered but no impact		
Allocations policy for	identified		
social housing			
Tenancy strategies			
(England only)			
Homelessness			
Disabled Facilities Grants			



Data/evidence –What data/evidence was used? - provide any links.	What were the key findings?	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
<ul> <li>Feedback from customers, non-users, learners, businesses, partners, staff and data gathered during various service design projects;</li> <li>Evidence from work undertaken on service design projects, i.e Planning and content design;</li> <li>Wider CLT session facilitated by Centre of Public Digital Services to understand current position, opportunities, barriers and objectives;</li> <li>Feedback from elected members, MCS induction session;</li> <li>Digital self-evaluation, facilitated by WLGA;</li> <li>Digital Exclusion project across Gwent;</li> <li>Customer Experience and Access review;</li> <li>Review of agile working</li> </ul>	The external review undertaken in 2022 of customer experience across the Council found;  People value the interaction and the experience of in person customer service channels  There are many access points and it's confusing people  Some people lack the ability to use digital channels but not all  Customers who are able to self-serve are opting to call for reasons including difficulty in navigating the online experience  Often the content we communicate is misunderstood and causes confusion	All the evidence and data we have gathered has allowed us to consider our position in order to develop these strategies



•	Community feedback on budget proposals –
	62% want easy access to digital services

User research will be a key part of the strategy implementation moving forward.

• Closer working between Customer Services officers and service areas could alleviate frustrating and confusing experiences for people.

There will be a set of delivery plans against each priority set out in the strategy and will have a number of key success measures, such as % of customers accessing front facing services rating the service they receive as excellent or good; total number of complaints received per thousand populations (aligned to Council Complaints procedure)

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: -

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

<u>Principle 2</u>: 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 response effectively?
- 4. What were the findings?
- 5. Have the findings been considered in regards to the decision?

The Strategy, Standards and Charter has been developed with engagement via;

- An externally facilitated organisational review of the customer experience and access involving a range of service areas and engagement through journey mapping with customers who use our services
- User research with customers including that gained through service re design projects
- Senior management and Elected member feedback



- Undertaking desk top research and,
- Discussions with partner organisations

User research will be a key part of the strategy implementation moving forward



Section 11-Monitoring and Review				
How will the implementation of the proposal be monitored, including the impacts or changes made?	Information will be included in the quarterly Joint finance and performance report which is part of the committee forward work programme, including an annual quarter 4 position			
What monitoring tools will be used?	To be considered			
How will the results be used for future development?	Each year the strategy will have a set of Delivery Plans developed against each priority. A set of key success measures will also be developed.			
How and when will it be reviewed?	For the Customer Service strategy an annual quarter 4 position but with a mid-point review of the strategies to be undertaken.  The Digital strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure we keep pace with ongoing changes to digital innovation, technologies and customer expectation			
Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?	The Future Working Programme Board chaired by the Chief Executive will receive progress updates on the implementation of the Customer Services strategy.  The Service Design and Digital Leadership Board will oversee the delivery of the Digital Transformation Strategy.			

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 □X	No □			



Continue with proposal but take into account reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal

Yes 

No 
X

Name of person completing the IIA		
Name:	Jonathan Morgan	
Job Title:	Team Manager Customer Contact	
Date:	7/9/2023	

Head of Service Approval					
Name:	ame: Leanne Roberts				
Job Title:	Service Manager – Customer Experience & Transformation				
Signature:	L.C.Roberts	Date:	29/8/2023		

Please contact Policy & Partnerships should you require any further advice or guidance on completing your assessment via <a href="mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk">lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk">lissa.friel@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk</a>.