

Committee: **Cabinet**  
 Date of meeting: **10 February 2025**  
 Report Subject: **Revenue Budget 2025/2026 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy**  
 Portfolio Holder: **Leader and Cabinet Member Corporate and Performance**  
 Report Submitted by: **Corporate Director Corporate Services**  
 Report Written by: **Service Manager Accountancy**

| Reporting Pathway           |                           |                          |                              |                               |                    |           |           |                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| Directorate Management Team | Corporate Leadership Team | Portfolio Holder / Chair | Governance & Audit Committee | Democratic Services Committee | Scrutiny Committee | Cabinet   | Council   | Other (please state) |
|                             |                           | 30.01.25                 |                              |                               | 7/2/2025           | 10/2/2025 | 20/2/2025 |                      |

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report is presented to Members to: -

- i) provide an update on the provisional local government settlement for 2025/26 and its impact upon the Council's budget.
- ii) consider and agree the detailed revenue budget for 2025/26 including cost and service pressures, and Bridging the Gap proposals
- iii) agree the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2025/2026 to 2029/2030.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 The report covers the following:

| Section                | Contents   |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>2.6 – 2.16</b>      | National Aggregate External Finance (AEF) Position |
| <b>2.17 – 2.25</b>     | Blaenau Gwent AEF position                         |
| <b>5.1.1 - 5.1.10</b>  | MTFS Assumptions                                   |
| <b>5.1.11 – 5.1.18</b> | Cost Pressures and Growth                          |
| <b>5.1.19 - 5.1.20</b> | Funding Gap Assessment                             |
| <b>5.1.21 – 5.1.26</b> | Bridging The Gap Programme                         |
| <b>5.2</b>             | Risks  |

2.2 The Provisional Settlement contains details of the revenue funding that Welsh Authorities can expect to receive in 2025/26 to allow them to set their budgets and determine levels of Council Tax for that year. It also provides details of the Capital funding that Authorities can expect to receive to fund their Capital Programmes. Indicative settlements for 2026/2027 financial year onwards have not been provide. The written statements from the Minister for Finance and Local Government is attached as Appendix 1.

- 2.3 Revenue funding from Welsh Government (WG) is provided in the form of Aggregate External Finance (AEF) which is made up of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). This AEF funding is un-hypothecated i.e. it is not earmarked for specific services, and it is up to individual Councils to decide how to allocate to services to fit with their priorities (while considering statutory responsibilities).
- 2.4 Revenue funding also comes in the form of specific grants, in which case the funding is earmarked for a particular purpose. It is the long-term intention of the WG that the number of specific grants is reduced, with funding being transferred into the AEF, giving Local Authorities more flexibility on distributing funding to services. Hence, this form of funding should diminish over time.
- 2.5 Capital funding is provided in the form of General Capital funding, made up of an Un-hypothecated Supported Borrowing (USB) approval and General Capital Grant approval. The USB approval is a borrowing approval for which revenue support is provided within the AEF to cover debt financing costs i.e. principal and interest. It is un-hypothecated, meaning that borrowing can be carried out for any capital purpose. The General Capital Grant is, as its name suggests, a grant that can be used for any capital purpose.
- 2.6 **National Position (All Wales)**
- 2.7 On the 11 December 2024, the Minister for Finance and Local Government published the provisional local government settlement. The overall headline increase in AEF quoted by WG is 4.3% (£253m). Compared to the Welsh average, the 4.8% increase for Blaenau Gwent places us 6<sup>th</sup> in the all-Wales table, with the lowest increase being 2.6% for Monmouth. At this stage, no floor mechanism has been put in place.
- 2.8 A number of grants have transferred into the provisional settlement including:
- Housing – No-one left out £15m
  - Discretionary Homelessness Prevention - £5m
  - Strategic Coordinator – £1.32m
  - Teachers Pay - £18.16m to continue to fund the teachers' pay award
  - Teachers Pensions - £60.7m to fund the increase in employers' contributions to the teachers' pension scheme (SCAPE)
  - NJC pay - £52.3m
  - Fire Pay & Pensions - £4m
  - Implementation of the Performance and Improvement Framework - £0.88m funding removed from the settlement
- 2.9 Certain Specific Revenue Grants data has only been published on an all-Wales basis, totalling £1.1b for 2025/2026, there are no individual authority allocations at this stage. However, the assumption is that services will need to manage within the funding allocations awarded.
- 2.10 In terms of capital grants, the non-hypothecated general capital funding for 2025-26 has increased by £20m to £200m.

- 2.11 This is a significantly better settlement than was anticipated at the beginning of the year, and the funding provided through this settlement:
- Focusses on pay and pressures in front line services
  - Supports the delivery of removing profit from children's care
  - Support the real living wage and maintaining the care cap at £100 per week alongside supporting the 'whole system' approach to care closer to home
  - Provides £31m to fund the teachers' pay award
- 2.12 There is specific reference in the Minister's letter regarding teachers' pay for 2025/2026 and this confirms that all available funding has been provided within the settlement and there will be no further in year funding. Authorities' budget planning must therefore accommodate these costs.
- 2.13 The settlement does not provide any funding towards the increase in employers national insurance contributions. HM Treasury have confirmed it will provide additional funding early in 2025/2026 financial year, therefore the assumption in the MTFS is that these costs will be fully funded.
- 2.14 The Minister's statement refers to the payments due in 2025/2026 under the Extended Provider Responsibility Scheme (EPR) to cover costs for managing packaging waste, stating that it is WG's intention that this is additional funding to unlock investment to improve recycling against the 70% minimum statutory target and support wider action to decarbonise and grow the green economy. The scheme is administered by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. No funding / costs have been included in the MTFS at this stage.
- 2.15 The provisional settlement announcement marked the start of a six-week consultation period which ended on 31 January 2025. The Minister will consider whether further amendments are to be made before the final settlement is announced.
- 2.16 The Minister recognises the increased costs of delivering services from high inflation, pay and increasing demand and acknowledges that Authorities will need to make difficult decisions on services, efficiencies, and council tax in setting their budget.
- 2.17 **Blaenau Gwent AEF Position**
- 2.18 The headline increase included within the provisional settlement for BGCBC after adjustments to the tax base was 4.8% (£7.09m), compared to the all Wales increase of 4.3%. Whilst this increase is welcomed, given the current economic climate and cost of living crisis, the Council is faced with significant financial challenges for the foreseeable future. The details included within this report identifies budget cuts / efficiencies of £1.53m for 2025/2026.

2.19 The Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) increase, quoted is 7.9%, compared to an all Wales increase of 8.1%.

2.20 The SSA is the detailed funding formula that is intended to reflect variations in the need to spend which might be expected if all Welsh Authorities responded in a similar way to the demand for services in their area. Indicators of need include population, pupil numbers, deprivation factors, population dispersion etc. The SSA is the mechanism for distributing RSG which enables Authorities to **theoretically** charge the same council tax for the provision of a similar standard of service. However, if Authorities don't spend at SSA level, then council tax levels will not be the same, which in practice, is what happens.

2.21 The Council's settlement reflects a range of unfavourable re-distributional movements in population indicators and free school meal numbers, with favourable movements in pupil numbers and benefits:

**Population** – Blaenau Gwent's population increased by 0.5% compared to the all Wales increase of 1%, the previous 3 years have been a population decrease.

Population indicators make up a large proportion of the cost driver indicators within the SSA formula and has resulted in a decrease of £0.13m in SSA.

**Education Demographics** –

- Nursery & Primary pupil numbers have increased by 0.5% compared to the all Wales decrease of 1.6%.
- Secondary school pupil numbers have increased by 1.7%, compared to the all Wales increase of 0.8%.
- Free School meals pupils have decreased by 0.2% in the Primary Sector and increased by 8.3% in the Secondary Sector, compared to the all Wales increase of 1.6% and 8.6% respectively.

The impact on the SSA of these data changes is an increase of £0.66m.

**Deprivation Indicators** - IS (Income Support)/ JSA (Job seekers Allowance) /PC (Pension Credit)/ UC (Universal Credit)/ not in employment claimants have increased by 2.88%, which is above the all Wales increase of 1.41%.

2.22 The net impact of changes to the key data sets is an increase of £1.5m in the Council's proportion of the all Wales funding.

2.23 The Authority remains the highest receiver of Aggregate External Finance (RSG plus NNDR) on a per capita basis at £2,294.

2.24 The grants transferring into the settlement total £3.35m:

- Housing – No-one left out £326,000
- Discretionary Homelessness Prevention - £109,000

- Strategic Coordinator – £29,000
- Teachers Pay - £377,000
- Teachers Pensions - £1,259,000
- NJC pay - £1,209,000
- Fire Pay & Pensions - £79,000
- Implementation of the Performance and Improvement Framework, reduction of £40,000

2.25 General Capital Funding has increased to £4.293m, of which General Capital Grant is £2.387m and Supported Borrowing is £1.9m. Welsh Government is also providing revenue support to Local Authorities to support borrowing to invest in the Highways network. At this stage no confirmation has been received on the level of funding or borrowing that can be undertaken.

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

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

3.1.1 Members consider the report and the proposals and recommend to Council:

3.1.2 The assumptions applied in developing the 2025/2026 Draft Estimates (paragraphs 5.1.4 to 5.1.10).

3.1.3 The cost pressures identified in paragraphs 5.1.11 to 5.1.17 and shown in table 2 at 5.1.8 relating to:

- the Council - £2.3m
- Schools - £2.4m
- Aneurin Leisure Trust - £0.4m

3.1.4 The grants transferring into the Settlement for 2025/2026 be passported to the relevant services as detailed in paragraph 2.8 and included in table 2 at 5.1.16.

3.1.5 The Bridging the Gap budget cuts / efficiencies in paragraphs 5.1.18 to 5.1.23.

3.1.6 A Council Tax increase of 4.95% for 2025/2026.

3.1.7 The updated MTFS for 2025/2026 to 2029/2030 attached at Appendix 2.

#### 3.2 **Option 2**

3.2.1 Members consider and do not agree to recommend the proposals to Council contained in the report.

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

4.1 The budget setting process and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) supports the Corporate Plan outcome “an ambitious and innovative Council delivering the quality services at the right time and in the right place” and ensures

effective forward planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience.

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

4.3 To comply with statutory responsibilities, the Council must set a balanced budget and set its Council Tax for the forthcoming year by 11 March 2025.

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

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

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

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

5.1.3 The current MTFS 2025/2026 to 2029/2030 is attached at Appendix 2 and has been prepared based on a number of assumptions being applied to the 2024/2025 approved estimates.

#### 5.1.4 **Funding Assumptions**

5.1.5 The AEF funding for 2025/2026 is based on the provisional settlement. The final settlement is not expected to be materially different to impact on the proposals included within this report.

5.1.6 The provisional settlement did not include any information on indicative funding for 2026/2027 onwards. The assumption included in the MTFS is that the AEF will increase by 3% per annum.

5.1.7 The MTFS assumes an annual increase of 4.95% for Council Tax. The impact on household for 2025/2026 based on a Band D property would be an increase of £1.82 per week, £95.04 per annum. However, the overall increase will be affected by decisions from other public bodies including community councils and the Police & Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

#### 5.1.8 **Costs**

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

**Table 1 – Main Assumptions applied to Costs**

|  | <b>2025/2026</b> | <b>2026/2027<br/>Onwards</b> |
|--|------------------|------------------------------|
| Pay Award  | 3%               | 3%                           |
| Price Inflation                                      | 2%               | 2%                           |
| Individual Schools Budget – Pay                      | 3%               | 3%                           |
| Fees & Charges (in line with inflation)              | 2%               | 2%                           |
| Grants transferring in the Settlement are passported | £2,139,000*      | 0                            |
| Contribution to General Reserves per annum           | 0                | £200,000                     |

\*Excludes NJC pay award as these costs are built into the assumptions

5.1.10 There has been a change to the assumption relating to school budgets. It is proposed the increase in the ISB is based on the estimated cost of pay awards and increments, rather than an uplift linked to the Council's increase in AEF. This will ensure that pay pressures are fully funded and supports the Corporate Plan priority to *maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent*. The partnership between schools and the Local Education Authority will require Schools to manage non pay pressures.

5.1.11 **Service Cost Pressures and Growth**

5.1.12 Cost pressures are continually reviewed and updated considering new information, budget forecasts etc. Existing, new service cost pressures and growth items (excluding school cost pressures) totalling £2.3m for 2025/26 have been identified and are detailed in the table below. For 2025/2026 onwards, £3m per annum have been included in the MTFS.

5.1.13 Table 2 below details the cost pressures built into the draft estimates for 2025/2026:

**Table 2: 2025/2026 Cost Pressures - Council**

|  | <b>£'000</b> |
|--|--------------|
| Fee uplifts for Community Care           | 1,853        |
| Housing Services                         | 600          |
| Council Tax Premiums – Staffing Resource | 115          |
| Increase in Council Tax due to Premiums  | (397)        |
| General Offices – Income                 | 64           |
| SRS – Increase in SLA                    | 111          |
| ALN – Resource Base                      | 110          |
| Schools- Pupil Demographics              | (238)        |
| New Welsh School – Year 3 Implementation | 75           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             | <b>2,293</b> |
|  |              |

- 5.1.14 Schools are currently carrying approximately £5m of cost pressures in relation to pay and utilities, and as a result, school balances are decreasing with the latest forecast being an overall deficit of £3.5m by March 2025.
- 5.1.15 Maximising learning is one of the Council's key priorities and the positive settlement provides the Council with an opportunity to provide additional financial support to schools to rebalance budgets. Additional funding of £2.44m per annum has been built into the draft budget for 2025/2026 and 2026/2027. This will increase school funding in total by 8.45% (£4.67m) for 2025/2026 after allowing for transfers into the settlement.
- 5.1.16 Aneurin Leisure Trust delivers Leisure Services including Libraries and Adult Education on behalf of the Council. These services contribute to the Council's corporate plan priorities and links to the Marmot principles to reduce health inequalities across Wales. The Trust receives a Management fee from the Council of £3.17m per annum, however the Trust is facing significant financial challenges, particularly as a result of the increase in energy costs during 2023/2024 which has continued in the current financial year. It is anticipated that by March 2025, the Trust's reserves will be fully depleted, and the medium-term forecast based on the assumptions within the Council's MTFs and based on current service levels is a deficit of around £600,000 per annum for the next 3 years.
- 5.1.17 A Members working group has been established and are working to support the Trust with the challenges they are facing, considering a variety of options including reduction of services / closure of facilities, and during the budget engagement, Members have raised the need to provide additional financial support to the Trust to protect services.
- 5.1.18 It is therefore proposed to provide additional funding of £400,000 (equivalent to a 1% increase in council tax) for 2025/2026. The Trust will need to identify cost reductions through e.g. energy efficiency measures, and/or increase income generation to mitigate the remaining cost pressure.
- 5.1.19 Table 3 below details the impact the Provisional Settlement and the cost pressures have on the budget gap.



**Table 3 – Assessed Budget Gap**

|  | <b>Medium Term Budget Gap</b> |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
|  | <b>2025/2026<br/>£'000</b>    | <b>2026/2027<br/>£'000</b> | <b>2027/2028<br/>£'000</b> | <b>2028/2029<br/>£'000</b> | <b>2029/2030<br/>£'000</b> |
| <b>Draft Expenditure</b>               |                               |                            |                            |                            |                            |
| Draft Estimates                        | 191,370                       | 203,741                    | 209,783                    | 217,161                    | 224,786                    |
| Grants Transferring into Settlement    | 2,139                         | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          |
| Cost Pressures - Council               | 2,293                         | 3,000                      | 3,000                      | 3,000                      | 3,000                      |
| Cost Pressures - Schools               | 2,445                         | 2,445                      | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          |
| Cost Pressure – Aneurin Leisure Trust  | 400                           | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          |
| <b>Adjusted Draft Budget</b>           | <b>198,647</b>                | <b>209,186</b>             | <b>212,783</b>             | <b>220,161</b>             | <b>227,786</b>             |
| <b>Draft Funding</b>                   |                               |                            |                            |                            |                            |
| AEF                                    | (154,532)                     | (159,168)                  | (163,943)                  | (168,861)                  | (173,927)                  |
| Council Tax                            | (42,185)                      | (44,821)                   | (47,040)                   | (49,368)                   | (51,812)                   |
| <b>Total Draft Funding</b>             | <b>(196,717)</b>              | <b>(203,989)</b>           | <b>(210,983)</b>           | <b>(218,229)</b>           | <b>(225,739)</b>           |
| <b>Budget Gap (Surplus)</b>            | <b>1,930</b>                  | <b>5,197</b>               | <b>1,800</b>               | <b>1,932</b>               | <b>2,047</b>               |
| Contribution to Reserves               | 0                             | 200                        | 200                        | 200                        | 200                        |
| <b>Adjusted Budget Gap – (Surplus)</b> | <b>1,930</b>                  | <b>5,397</b>               | <b>2,000</b>               | <b>2,132</b>               | <b>2,247</b>               |

5.1.20 There is a funding gap of £13.7m over the next five years, with budget reductions / cuts of £1.93m required for 2025/2026 to set a balanced budget. Any change to the assumptions, will impact upon the funding gap.

#### 5.1.21 **BRIDGING THE GAP**

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

5.1.23 Given the financial challenge facing the Council and the requirement to identify budget cuts of £13m over the next 5 years, the current programme of strategic business reviews have been updated based on a number of themes:

- Strategic asset management planning –taking an organisational approach to consider the use of our assets such as buildings and reducing or ceasing usage
- Digital innovation programme – the adoption of modern digital technologies to improve business processed. Digital innovation improves customer experience and performance and can be used to create new business models
- Shared / alternative service delivery models / Service redesign –it will work more closely with residents, community groups and community councils as well as other public bodies in designing and delivering services
- Energy projects – exploration / implementation of alternative energy sources (solar, wind) to reduce both costs and carbon footprint of buildings / services
- Route optimisation / use of fleet
- Commercial investment opportunities / growth strategy
- Managing demand – designing services around early intervention and prevention, enabling people to live with greater independence
- Review of Fees & Charges – full cost recovery

5.1.24 The table below provides a summary of the estimated achievement required from the Strategic Business Reviews for 2025/2026:

**Table 4: Bridging the Gap Themes**

| <b>Theme</b>   | <b>Estimated Achievement</b> |
|--|------------------------------|
|  | <b>£'000</b>                 |
| <b>Alternative Service Delivery / Functional Redesign / Spans &amp; Layers</b> | 550                          |
| <b>Managing Demand</b>   | 250                          |
| <b>Commercial / Growth Strategy</b>  | 380                          |
| <b>Digital Innovation</b>  | 200                          |
| <b>Energy</b>  | 50                           |
| <b>Fee &amp; Charges</b>   | 100                          |
| <b>Budget Management</b>   | 400                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>1,930</b>                 |

5.1.25 Factoring in the financial impact of the Bridging the Gap estimated achievement will provide a balanced budget for 2025/2026, with a funding gap of £5.4m for 2026/2027 and £11.8m over the remaining 4 years of the MTFs.

5.1.26 Achievement of these proposals will be reported as part of the Council's financial reporting framework where proposals within each of the themes require a Policy

change, investment or significant changes to service levels/delivery these will be reported through the political process.

## 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

- 5.2.1 Members do not approve the Council Tax increase of 4.95%. 1% decrease in Council Tax will increase the funding gap by approximately £400,000, which will require further budget cuts to be identified.
- 5.2.2 Members do not agree to the increase to school budgets detailed within this report. School deficit balances will continue to increase, and schools will need to identify cost reductions required to fund pay increases and reduce deficit balances. This is likely to impact upon schools' ability to deliver the curriculum and ultimately learner outcomes. Welsh Government have stated that the settlement includes funding to fund pay awards
- 5.2.3 Bridging the Gap proposals do not deliver the required efficiencies. Progress against proposals will be reported as part of the Council's financial reporting framework during 2025/2026.
- 5.2.4 Pay awards are higher than the current assumption applied, resulting in cost pressures during 2025/2026. Costs will be monitored and reported as part of the Council's financial reporting framework.

## 5.3 **Summary**

- 5.3.1 The better-than-expected settlement has allowed the Council to:
- Set a balanced budget for 2025/2026, including anticipated pressures with no requirement to draw from reserves
  - Protect services
  - Maintains a small contingency to mitigate unforeseen cost pressures e.g. cost increases over and above inflation, increase in employers' national insurance and the impact on suppliers/service providers, potential pay awards above the 3% built into budget, delay in delivering bridging the gap proposals etc.
  - Set a Council Tax increase of 4.95%
  - Invest in schools by rebalancing school funding over the next 2 years
  - Support services operated by Aneurin Leisure Trust

## 5.3 **Legal**

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

## 5.4 **Human Resources**

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

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

6.1.1 As detailed throughout this report.

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

6.2.1 The proposed budget will enable the Council to protect front line services in delivering its priority areas and to continue its work to become a more commercial and resilient organisation. All proposals will have some impact on the public, some people will be impacted more than others depending on what services they are in receipt of.

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

6.3.1 To support the Council to set a budget for 2025/26, there has been an engagement process carried out to inform people of the situation and get them involved. The information presented aimed to raise awareness of what may have to be done to set a balanced budget from April 2025, and to provide the opportunity for people to feedback on key issues to help decision-making, e.g. prioritising services, setting council tax, and potential saving proposals for now and the future.

6.3.2 A Budget Survey went live on 24 January 2025 for 2 weeks which was shared on social media, with the intention to get as many people as possible participating and sharing their views.

6.3.3 The final results from the public engagement will be available following closure of the survey and will be shared with Members prior to Council considering the budget. They will be included at Appendix 3 to this report.

6.3.4 Consultation has also been carried out with:

- Headteachers
- Members
- Trade Unions
- Town and Community Councils
- Scrutiny
- Cabinet

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

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

- The MTFs covers the period 2025/2026 to 2029/2030 and will roll forward one year, every year. The MTFs will be reviewed and updated during 2025/2026.

- The Bridging the Gap programme will continue to identify opportunities for development in the medium to long term.
- The current approved capital programme covers the period 2019/2020 to 2025/2026 in line with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools' programme. The capital programme is currently under review, proposals for 2026/2027 is currently being developed for consideration.

## 6.5 Preventative focus

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

The Council has become a Marmot Council and is adopting the principles of tackling inequality through action on the social determinants of health:

- Giving 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
- Create and develop healthy, sustainable places and communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
- Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together
- Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes.

## 6.6 Collaboration / partnership working

- 6.6.1 The report and accompanying information have been developed in partnership with officers across all service areas.

## 6.7 Integration(across service areas) N/A

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

- 6.8.1 Integrated Impact Assessments will be completed where required.

## 7. Monitoring Arrangements

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

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

Appendix 1 – Written Statement by Welsh Government

Appendix 2 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029-2030