



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the CABINET will be held at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX
Thursday, 18th July, 2019 at 10.30 am

Contact: Emma Wilkins - Principal Executive & Regulatory Business Officer (Tel No. 01443 424110)

Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Tuesday, 16 July 2019 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh.

It must be noted that the facility to address the Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chair and each request will be considered based on the agenda items being considered, the public interest/interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. To make such a request please email:- ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest; and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they **must** notify the Chairman when they leave.

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 18th June 2019 as an accurate record.

3. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

To receive the report of the Chief Executive, advising Members of the outcome of the recent publication of four Statutory Notices in respect of proposals to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area.

(Pages 15 - 234)

4. TRANSFORMATION OF THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To receive the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services advising Cabinet on the progress with the Cwm Taf Early Years Co-construction Project, and to seek approval to implement the proposed changes to the existing model to deliver the transformation of the early years system in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

(Pages 235 - 258)

5. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE

To receive the report of the Director, Finance & Digital Services, providing Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2019/20 to 2022/23, based on current modelling assumptions in advance of formulating the detailed budget strategy proposals for 2020/21 during the autumn.

(Pages 259 - 304)

6. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 4

To receive the report of the Director, Finance & Digital Services, providing Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, for the financial year ended 31st March 2019.

(Pages 305 - 326)

7. DRAFT CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

To receive the report of the Chief Executive providing Members with the draft Corporate Performance Report which demonstrates the Council's progress against the delivery of agreed priorities and its legal duties in respect of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

(Pages 327 - 400)

8. DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

To receive report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services, presenting Members with the first draft of the revised reporting framework for Cabinet consideration prior to its content being made available for public consultation.

(Pages 401 - 446)

9. CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL PLAN

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services, providing Members with the Annual Plan for 2019/20 for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.

(Pages 447 - 472)

10. CWM TAF CARER'S ANNUAL REPORT

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services, requiring Member approval for submission of the 'Annual Report for 2018/19 in relation to Carers' to Welsh Government.

(Pages 473 - 524)

11. A4119 ELY VALLEY ROAD DUALLING - LLANTRISANT BUSINESS PARK TO COED ELY ROUNDABOUTS

To receive the report of the Group Director, Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services, updating the Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major transportation project: A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts.

(Pages 525 - 536)

12. RCT SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

To receive the report of the Director, Education & Inclusion Services, providing information to Members on the Council's statutory duties to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

(Pages 537 - 576)

13. TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

"That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act".

14. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN INTERIM UPDATE

To receive the report of the Director, Corporate Estates containing exempt information, advising Members of the progress against the key themes of the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/23.

(Pages 577 - 598)

15. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert A. ...". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

Councillors: Councillor A Morgan (Chair)
Councillor M Webber (Vice-Chair)
Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor M Norris
Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon

Officers: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Gio Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Nigel Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Andy Wilkins (Legal), Director of Legal Services
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 18 June 2019 at 10.30 am at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypanyd, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor M Norris	Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis	Councillor C Leyshon

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor Andrew Morgan made the following personal declaration of interest in relation to the agenda item 6: " I am the Chair of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Regional Cabinet"

2 MINUTES

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 8th May 2019 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

3 LEADERS SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Members noted the Leader's Scheme of Delegation for the 2019-20 Municipal Year, following the amendments reported at the Council's 24th Annual General Meeting.

4 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 2019 - 2020

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided Cabinet Members with a draft work programme for the 2019-20 Municipal Year, which listed matters requiring consideration by Cabinet. The Service Director

commented that utilising the programme assists with openness and transparency of the decision making process within the Council and gives greater opportunity for Pre-Scrutiny.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report and were advised that the programme is a live document to allow for any additional / deletion of reports throughout the year.

The Deputy Leader commented on the draft programme and the need for the document to be a fluid document, taking into consideration new and emerging priorities and timescales to allow for pre-scrutiny. The Deputy Leader also spoke positively of the benefits of producing the work programme to assist Cabinet and scrutiny going forward.

1. To approve the Cabinet Work Programme for the 2019-20 Municipal Year and to receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis

5 FRONTLINE SERVICES - HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Service Director Frontline Services presented Members with his report, which outlined the highway improvement schemes and presented an update on the progress made so far.

The Service Director advised that the Highway Improvement Scheme continues to deliver the enhanced levels of investment under the 'RCTInvest' initiative, delivering sustained improvements to the resilience and durability of the Council's highways and transportation infrastructure, promoting sustainable transport opportunities and network efficiency.

Members were advised that the Highways and Streetcare Services would coordinate and deliver significant investment in a number of important areas during 2019/20 and the proposed additional programme of schemes would further improve the condition of our highway network, with the officer referring Members to the Appendices of the report.

The Service Director concluded that given the excellent progress made with the schemes capacity now exists to undertake the additional schemes as listed in Appendix 2, with the value of the additional schemes comprising of approximately £1.3 million.

The Leader commented positively on the report, adding that the network has now benefitted from eight years of enhanced levels of investment and this critically important additional funding would continue into 2021/22, improving and protecting the fabric of the highways network and dealing with the impact of winter weather conditions.

Other Members of the Cabinet also spoke on the item, commenting on the positive position of the Council and the hard work and dedication of the staff delivering on the schemes.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the excellent progress made to date as detailed within the report.
2. To note the additional schemes brought forward for implementation as

previously delegated to the Group Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Digital Services.

6 PROPOSALS FOR A STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION

The Director of Prosperity and Development provided Members with an overview of his report, which presented a proposal for a strategic development plan for the Cardiff Capital Region.

Members were advised that the Welsh Government have invited all Local Planning Authorities to submit proposals for SDPs, stating that the ability to plan strategically to support the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) would be essential to ensure that key economic, social and environmental outcomes are achieved in a cohesive and evidence based approach, across the wider region.

The Director advised that the City Deal Agreement gave a commitment to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for the region and to work collaboratively on strategic transport and strategic planning issues. He added that a statutory SDP provided certainty to developers, investors and communities that key strategic decisions around housing, transport, employment and infrastructure provision are being taken at an appropriate regional level, whilst still allowing key decisions on planning proposals to be taken locally through Local Development Plan allocations and policies and thereafter in development management decisions.

The Cabinet were informed that a proposal to proceed with an SDP for the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) could only be put forward to Welsh Government, by an identified Responsible Authority, once all Councils have formally given approval. Members were advised that the Vale of Glamorgan were to become the 'Responsible Authority' and the director provided Members with details and reassurance in respect of the governance arrangements going forward of the Strategic Planning Panel, the representatives, including voting rights.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing spoke of the need for the SDP to be put in place and the benefits such a plan would have for RCT and the City Deal region. The Cabinet Member spoke of the importance surrounding governance and confirmed that the Panel would have no planning application powers over a Local Authority.

The Leader spoke of the hard work by officers and Members from all of the 10 regions culminating in the current position and the work needed to be taken forward, commenting on the position of Welsh Government in taking the development of the SDP forward.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That Rhondda Cynon Taf Council endorse the content of the report and agree that the Responsible Authority be authorised to submit the Proposal for a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the Cardiff Capital Region to the Minister on behalf of the 10 Local Planning Authorities in the region.
2. That Rhondda Cynon Taf Council endorse the Vale of Glamorgan

Council as the Responsible Authority for the Cardiff Capital Region Strategic Development Plan.

3. That Rhondda Cynon Taf Council endorse that the strategic planning area should comprise the 10 local planning authority areas within the Cardiff Capital Region as shown on the map at Appendix A of the report.
4. That Rhondda Cynon Taf Council authorise relevant officers to engage with the Welsh Government in drafting the Strategic Development Plan Regulations to establish the governance arrangements for the SDP and Strategic Planning Panel (SPP) as set out in paragraphs 5.10 to 5.24 of the report.
5. That a Regional SDP officer team is established to progress the preparation of the SDP to be appointed by representatives of Interim Strategic Planning Panel, with appropriate human resource support from the Responsible Authority.
6. That the cost of preparing the SDP is shared across the 10 Authorities on a proportional cost based on the voting representation on the Strategic Planning Panel, to be reviewed on an annual basis. This would mean an initial contribution of £6,520 by Rhondda Cynon Taf towards a collective £50,005 to cover the start-up costs likely to be incurred in this financial year 2019/20. Details of these costs and the further annual costs are set out in paragraphs 5.30 to 5.40 of the report.

(**N.B** as minutes No.157 refers the Leader of the Council made a personal declaration of Interest in relation to this item.)

7 PROPOSALS TO UNDERTAKE A FORMAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Director of Prosperity and Development informed Members of the need to review Rhondda Cynon Taf's (RCT) Local Development Plan and sought Members agreement for officers to commence work on the preparation of a formal Local Development Plan (LDP) Review Report and Delivery Agreement, which it would then recommend to Council, for approval.

He advised that the proposal to develop the plan had been prepared alongside the proposals for the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the region. Members were advised that the LDP ended in 2021, which meant a potential period without any LDP coverage.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing welcomed the proposal commenting on the need for the LDP and the SDP to complement each other and spoke of the continuation period needed for the LDP as an interim measure. He spoke of the importance of bringing together all strategies and supplementary guidance's as one full policy statement going forward.

The Deputy Leader commented on the concerns of the Local Member for Treforest in respect of HMOs and commented that the review and development of the LDP and SDP provided an opportunity for more robust strategies to be put in place in respect of HMOs.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the contents of the report on the need to review the RCT Local Development Plan (LDP) and agree for officers to commence work on the preparation of a formal LDP Review Report and Delivery Agreement.
2. That upon completion, the Review Report and Delivery Agreement will be presented to Cabinet for their consideration. Following this, the report will be recommended to Council in the Autumn 2019.

8 THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO NET ZERO - THE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The Chief Executive referred Members to his report, which presented the opportunities available for the Council to respond to the challenges posed by the Committee on Climate Change in its Net Zero report.

Members were reminded that in March 2018, the Council signed up to the UK100 Clean Energy Commitment to take appropriate action in order to transition towards being a fully environmentally responsible Authority by 2050, and the Chief Executive commented on the significant world wide escalation of environmental pressures over the past six months.

The Chief Executive commented on the recent Welsh Government publication adding that it was essential that the Council began to plan and take the necessary steps to ensure Rhondda Cynon Taf was able to take full responsibility for becoming a "Net Zero" Council and supporting the UK and Welsh Government to achieve their respective targets.

An overview of the work done to date by the Council in respect of 'Net zero' was provided and Members were advised of the opportunity for the Council's response to the Committee on Climate Change report to be incorporated into the new Corporate Plan and for it to be taken into account in preparing the Council's Medium term Financial Plan for the period 2020/2023.

The Leader thanked the Chief Executive for his report and spoke of the work that the Council had undertaken to date in respect of energy efficiency savings and the reduction in the carbon footprint of the Council and the potential for the Council to do more in the future.

The Deputy Leader also referenced the new school buildings under the 21st Century School programme which ensured not only the best education for the young people of the County Borough but also introduced measures that had positive environmental impacts and lower the carbon footprint, with sustainable energy.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing confirmed that the actions needed to be taken forward in respect of 'Net Zero' would also be addressed through the LDP and SDP.

Other Members of the Cabinet discussed the report commenting on the work undertaken in respect of sustainable energy and the infrastructure in place across the County Borough to support and the practicalities with low carbon emission vehicles going forward and charging facilities to which the Leader responded.

Following detailed discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the contents of the report;
2. That a new draft Corporate Plan, that takes into account the Medium Term Financial Strategy is presented to a Cabinet meeting in October 2019 that sets out the Council's response to the findings of the Committee on Climate Change as set out in its report – Net Zero.

9 A LOCAL TOILETS STRATEGY FOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF

The Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services advised the Cabinet of the Council's duty to comply with the statutory requirement to develop and publish a Local Toilets Strategy, as required by Part 8 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017.

Members were advised that a draft strategy had been prepared that incorporated the feedback following a public consultation as part of the Assessment of Need that was undertaken for four weeks, beginning in October 2018. The strategy also incorporates feedback following a statutory 12 weeks public consultation on the draft strategy, which began in February 2019.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-Being and Cultural Services commented on the detailed consultation that was undertaken in respect of the item and spoke on the investment of public conveniences across the County Borough by the Authority. Members were also advised of the facilities available within the Community Hubs. The Cabinet Member also referenced the facilities available via the private and 3rd sector.

The Deputy Leader, as Cabinet Member for Equalities and Diversity spoke of the feedback from residents when undertaking the Strategic Equality Plan and the focus residents put in respect of the provision of public conveniences across the County Borough and its importance.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the Local Toilets Strategy 2019.
2. To approve the publication of the Local Toilets Strategy 2019

10 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED**: "That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act".

11 PROPOSALS FOR THE COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF THE MUNI ARTS CENTRE, PONTYPRIDD

The Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services provided Cabinet with his report which contained exempt information, providing a summary and assessment of the business proposals received for the proposed community

asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre highlighting identified benefits and risks on each option and potential capital and revenue implications.

The Director provided further feedback to the Cabinet in respect of the comments of the Strategic Arts and Culture steering group following their meeting on the 13th June.

Following detailed discussions in respect of each of the business proposals identified within the report the Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. To take forward a tenancy with Awen Cultural Trust following consideration of the summary and assessment of the two business plans received in respect of the asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre.
2. To authorise Officers to enter into detailed negotiations with Awen Cultural Trust to agree the terms of the lease and necessary financial support requirements to secure a sustainable future for the Muni Arts Centre, and
3. That only if suitable terms can be agreed between both parties, authorise the Director of Public Health, Protection & Community Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being and Cultural Services to make the necessary arrangements to transfer the Muni Arts Centre to Awen Cultural Trust, and
4. That if suitable terms cannot be agreed, the Council to consider other alternatives for the future of the Muni Arts Centre.

12 EXTRA CARE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services referred Members to his report which included exempt information. The report provided an update on the progress taken forward with the Aberaman and Pontypridd extra care schemes as part of the Council's Extra Care Housing Strategy and development programme previously approved by Cabinet,

Members of the Cabinet spoke on the item and following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the progress made on the development of the Aberaman and Pontypridd extra care schemes.
2. To approve the funding package as outlined in Section 5 of the exempt report to develop the Aberaman extra care scheme.
3. To approve the funding package as outlined in Section 6 of the exempt report below, to develop the Pontypridd extra care scheme.
4. To include the Pontypridd extra care scheme within the 3-year capital programme (modernisation programme (Adults)).
5. To receive further update reports on progress in delivering the Council's Extra Care Housing Strategy and development programme and on individual scheme costs and funding requirements for consideration and approval.

This meeting closed at 11.35 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

Authors: Mrs Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services and Miss Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent publication of four Statutory Notices in respect of proposals to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area. The four Statutory Notices relate to:

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11 – 19 years to 11 – 16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision by September 2022;
- The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School by September 2022. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools by September 2022, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh medium Primary School on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School by September 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached Objection Report in Appendix A, which includes a summary of the 435 objections received during the statutory notice period, and the comments provided in response to the objections and Appendices B-D being the Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments.
- 2.2 Agree to implement the proposals as published in three of the Statutory Notices which would:
 - Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School by September 2022. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
 - Close Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and create a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools by September 2022, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol y Celyn Primary School, transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
 - Close Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School and open a new Welsh medium primary school on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School by September 2022.
- 2.3 Agree the associated catchment changes detailed in the explanatory notes to the Statutory Notices - such catchment changes becoming effective from 1st September 2022. This excludes the proposed change to the catchment area of Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School as agreed by Cabinet on 21st March 2019 which was not included within the Statutory Notices.
- 2.4 Note that as previously reported, the School Organisation Code makes provision for local authorities to determine their own statutory proposals, with the exception of the proposal relating to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School. The Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School proposal relates only to the removal of the sixth form, the implementation (or non-implementation) of which will not prevent or undermine the effective implementation of the other proposals. In accordance with the School Organisation Code this has been referred to Welsh Ministers for determination.

- 2.5 Note that, subject to a decision to proceed with any of the proposals, a separate report on funding arrangements would be presented to Council in due course which would also be subject to approval by Welsh Government.
- 2.6 Note that, subject to a decision to proceed with the proposal to construct a new Welsh medium primary, a separate report to establish a new ALN learning support class at the new Welsh medium school would be presented in due course.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To implement the proposals in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code).
- 3.2 Recommendations are aligned with the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme funding criteria. The priorities for this investment are:
- Addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
 - Reducing surplus capacity and inefficiency in the system;
 - Expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;
 - Addressing condition of educational assets;
 - Making assets available for community use where demand exists, to optimise the infrastructure and resources for public services;
 - Addressing specific demand for places in Faith Based provision.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd October 2018, approval was given to begin a process to formally consult on proposals to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area.
- 4.2 Following the conclusion of the consultation period, and at a subsequent meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st March 2019, a decision was taken to progress to the next phase of the statutory process and to publish four Statutory Notices.
- 4.3 The rationale for the proposals for change as consulted upon were well documented in the consultation document which was circulated widely in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. The rationale for the proposals were multi-faceted and were based on a number of factors, which are detailed in turn for consideration.

Sixth Form Changes

- 4.4 There are too many small and unviable sixth forms in the County Borough and a rationalisation would ensure that the needs of learners would be more effectively met if a larger sixth form provision was established. Diminishing retention rates of learners remaining in sixth form education continues to evidence that the majority of learners are not remaining in school to pursue Key Stage 5 studies. The most recent data sets suggest that the number of learners returning to year 12 in September 2018/19 were as follows:

	<u>Number of pupils at the end of Year 11</u>	<u>Number of pupils returning to year 12</u>
Bryncelynnog Comp	172	77
Cardinal Newman	119	43
Hawthorn High	112	40
Pontypridd High	153	49

- 4.5 Since the publication of the consultation report in October 2018, further All Wales Core Data Sets have been published for 2017/18. Details relating to key stage 5 outcomes are detailed below and clearly illustrate that Bryncelynnog has consistently strong performance data across both measures as detailed below. The data illustrates that whilst progress has been made over time for most of the schools, there is still scope for significantly improving outcomes, and ensuring that performance exceeds local and national averages in all schools.

School Name	3 A* – A Grades			3 A* - C Grades		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
Bryncelynnog Comp School	8.6	18.9	21.8	46.6	52.8	63.6
Pontypridd High School	5.9	5.6	7.5	27.5	42.6	50.7
Hawthorn High School	0.0	2.1	14.3	14.3	41.7	61.2
Cardinal Newman R.C.	2.7	4.4	4.8	21.3	58.8	57.1
RCT LA	4.0	5.5	10.2	29.0	45.1	54.3
Wales	6.7	10.5	13.4	38.3	54.7	57.9

- 4.6 Data relating to the Average Wider Point Scores is not referenced here as it is no longer utilised as an assessment criteria comparator. This decision was taken by the Welsh Government as so many different types of qualifications are used within this measure that it is not possible to fairly compare the performance of schools.
- 4.7 The FE Colleges Learner Outcomes Report was published by Welsh Government on 7th February 2019. It evidences further progress by Coleg Y Cymoedd across a wide range of curriculum areas including A

Levels. The data shows that the A-level performance at Coleg Y Cymoedd continues to improve with 74.8% of pupils achieving A*-C grades for A Levels.

- 4.8 Effective financial management continues to be an issue for three out of the four secondary schools, Cardinal Newman, Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High, and all have budget deficit recovery plans in place to rectify the budget position. The cumulative deficit for the three schools was £1.2M in 2017/18 and this has increased to £1.5M in 2018/19. All schools are required to make difficult staffing decisions to address this deficit, which will inevitably further impact on the capacity of the schools concerned to provide an extensive curriculum offer in post 16.
- 4.9 It is evident that the unsustainable nature of the sixth form provision in these schools is a significant challenge as low retention rates inevitably result in costly small class sizes which are heavily subsidised by resources intended for Key Stage 3 and 4 learners. This funding equates to on average £700 per pupil in Pontypridd and Hawthorn High School and escalates to £800 in Cardinal Newman. In essence, the decision to maintain unviable sixth form provisions in these schools is to the educational detriment of learners in key stages 3 and 4.
- 4.10 The alternative post 16 provisions at Bryncelynog Comprehensive and Coleg Y Cymoedd will offer students a broader curriculum choice for both traditional A Level and vocational subjects, will have the pupil numbers required to maintain financial viability, and will provide an opportunity for students to learn in a modern, accessible, 21st Century schools' environment. In addition, the Council's Home to School Transport policy will ensure that access to post 16 education is equitable across the County Borough and available to all who choose it.

Creation of 3-16 all-through schools

- 4.11 There remains to be significant challenges relating to surplus places in the Greater Pontypridd area and a total of 785 secondary surplus places alone are projected for 2023. In essence, the Council is funding one secondary school too many in the Greater Pontypridd area.
- 4.12 The condition, location and topography of the primary school buildings and sites included in these proposals are a limiting factor on the development of the curriculum and therefore have an adverse impact on further improvements in educational standards. The cumulative backlog maintenance figure for these four primary schools alone totals over £2.2M.
- 4.13 Investment in the school buildings and the external environments will ensure that learners have access to flexible environments fit for the 21st Century with external areas which will enable delivery of the new

curriculum. Furthermore, the new schools will be wholly inclusive and fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010, and will create modern spaces, both internally and externally, that will benefit not just the learners but also the wider community.

- 4.14 Establishing 3-16 all-through schools have countless benefits which include:
- access to a shared ethos across the 3-16 phase and consistent policies, procedures and protocols;
 - coherent and consistent approaches to teaching and learning across phases and stages will ensure greater continuity in learning which will be further strengthened by access to common approaches to assessment and tracking of learners' progress across the 3-16 phase;
 - enhanced flexibility to curriculum provision and delivery; and,
 - opportunities for learners to access a broader range of specialist accommodation, facilities and learning resources.

The visibility of all ages in an all-through context, where teachers know their pupils and their families well, reinforces the concept of a learning journey and a sense of authentic progression where best practice can be shared and collective opportunities for professional learning provided.

Welsh Medium Proposals

- 4.15 The construction of a new Welsh medium provision in this area affords the opportunity to create a fully accessible Welsh medium 21st Century school. The additional 93 Welsh medium spaces will contribute towards the Council's strategy aimed at enhancing Welsh Medium provision across the County Borough, and the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers target in Rhondda Cynon Taf. A Cabinet report detailing the 'Development of Welsh Medium Education Places' was considered by Cabinet in April 2019, and this proposal forms an important strand of the strategic approach adopted by Rhondda Cynon Taf to enhance the number of Welsh speakers and places in Welsh medium schools.
- 4.16 Following the recent consultation on the Welsh Government's draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019 guidance which advocates an increase in Welsh medium education provision for all learners, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and in accordance with the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, RCT will consult on establishing a Welsh medium Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 ALN provision in the new school.
- 4.17 The Council's Home to School Transport Strategy exceeds the Welsh Governments statutory obligations, and as such ensures that access to

Welsh medium education is equitable across the County Borough and available to all who choose it.

- 4.18 The majority of pupils attending YGG Pont Sion Norton will be unaffected as nearly 70% of pupils currently attending the school do so utilising school transport. In fact, there will be daily net reduction in the travel distances for the majority of pupils who already access YGG Pont Sion Norton via school transport by nearly 1 mile. It is acknowledged that for some pupils who currently attend YGG Pont Sion Norton there will be an increase in the distance travelled to the new school.
- 4.19 The information outlined in paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13 is also relevant here.
- 4.20 If agreed, these proposals will result in an investment of £37.4m in building new school buildings and making significant improvements to existing learning environments to ensure learners have access to high quality 21st Century educational settings.
- 4.21 There is clearly a need to continue to significantly invest in the Council's educational assets, to provide equity so that all RCT pupils can benefit from 21st Century learning environments; to support an enriched curriculum; to facilitate broader pupil choice and enhanced pastoral support. The investment aims to create environments that meet individual needs and promotes learner retention, achievement and progression.

5. THE STATUTORY PROCESS

- 5.1 The four Statutory Notices for this proposal are outlined in paragraph 1.1 above.
- 5.2 The four statutory notices were published on 30th April 2019, with the period for receipt of objections ending on 31st May 2019. Objections to the statutory notices were received during this period and all have been reviewed by Cabinet Members. In accordance with the School Organisation Code the appended Objection Report includes a summary of the statutory objections received and the Local Authority's response to them.
- 5.3 A total of 435 objections were received during the 31 day objection period. To provide context, the number of directly affected consultees that received information on the proposals was over 3,300, this number does not include the associated schools. Further detail in relation to the breakdown of objections is included in the appended report. To note no MPs or local AMs, directly representing the areas affected by the

proposals, registered an objection. Only one objection was received from a regional AM.

- 5.4 348 of the 435 objections received were generated by a website which facilitated a prewritten objection to be sent directly to the Council's 'schoolplanning' mailbox.
- 5.5 The Objection Report will be published on the Council website within 7 days of the confirmation of the decision. If the proposals are agreed, the Council must also publish a Decision Notice that formally outlines the reasons for the implementation of these proposals at this time.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Equality, Community and Welsh Language Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of the proposals and were published on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposals in detail.
- 6.2 These documents have been revisited for the purpose of this report. Copies of the three Impact Assessments are attached at Appendices B-D to this report for Members consideration.
- 6.3 Cabinet Members will of course be fully aware and mindful of the general equality duty introduced by the Equality Act 2010 (the "Equality Act") and the specific public sector equality duties applicable to the Council as a local authority in Wales.
- 6.4 In accordance with the Equality Act, the Council (and consequently Cabinet) when exercising its functions has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.5 The duty covers the following eight protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.
- 6.6 The Equality Act outlines that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; or
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

6.7 In addition to the general duty the Council must:

- assess the likely impact of proposed policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty;
- assess the impact of any policy which is being reviewed and of any proposed revision;
- publish reports of the assessments where they show a substantial impact (or likely impact) on an authority's ability to meet the general duty; and
- monitor the impact of policies and practices on its ability to meet that duty.

6.8 Members will be aware that the Welsh language has official status in Wales which means that the Welsh language should not be treated less favourably than the English language in Wales. The Equality Impact Assessment considers the potential impact of the proposals on the Welsh language. Members should also have regard to the Council's [Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020](#).

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on the 1st October 2013 and recently updated in November 2018.

7.2 Consultation took place between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019 and full details of this process were published in a Consultation Report, which was presented at the meeting of Cabinet held on 21st March 2019 and subsequently published on the Council website.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 If the proposals proceed, it is proposed that £37.4 million be invested in building new and refurbishing / remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environments capable of facilitating the effective implementation of the new curriculum for Wales. This will be funded by the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, which includes

a contribution of up to 65% from Welsh Government. The Council's share of the capital costs will be met through prudential borrowing.

- 8.2 As outlined in paragraph 2.5, this funding is subject to approval by the Welsh Government following the submission of the relevant Business Cases.
- 8.3 Any revenue and capital costs that accrue in completing the consultation and preparing financial business cases for Welsh Government approval will be met from within existing budgets.
- 8.4 There will be financial benefits from the sale of assets, economies of scale from managing all through-schools and sharing resources, specialist staff and professional learning opportunities. Revenue savings realised will predominately be premises related as there will be a reduction in the number of buildings that have to be maintained. In addition, the majority of the backlog maintenance costs of over £4m will be removed. Any savings realised from delivering these proposals will be ring-fenced and reinvested in the Council's educational asset portfolio.

9 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 9.1 The Council's Corporate Plan commits to "Continue to invest in improving school buildings, to ensure the County Borough's pupils have the learning environment fit for the 21st Century."
- 9.2 The proposals considered in the report contribute to all 7 well-being goals within the Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 and due regard has been made to the Five Ways of Working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This is evidenced below:
 - A prosperous Wales
Improving educational outcomes and educational provision are priorities for every project delivered within the 21st Century Schools Programme, contributing to the development of a skilled and well-educated workforce.
 - A resilient Wales
Newly constructed schools are built to BREEAM excellent standards and include features such as photovoltaic cells, rain water harvesting systems, and a biodiverse forest schools' area, contributing to a healthier natural environment.

- A healthier Wales
The 21st Century Schools Programme delivers modern and multi-use sports provision and flexible external facilities that not only benefit the school but also the wider community. The benefits of which have a positive effect on health and well-being.
- A more equal Wales
All of our new 21st Century Schools are wholly inclusive and fully accessible. All pupils and parents have the opportunity to choose the school of their choice, be it English medium, Welsh medium or a faith provision. In addition, RCT's home to school transport, which exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory requirements, ensures that all pupils have equitable access to any school regardless of social, economic or geographical factors.
- A Wales of cohesive communities
Community facilities are included within our new schools so that schools can provide an additional role within its community and act as a catalyst for creating a local community focus. Facilities include dedicated community rooms, childcare settings, as well as sports facilities that can be used out of hours thus increasing the connectedness of learners and non-learners from different communities.
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
RCT's WESP sets out the Council's vision and objectives to increase the number of Welsh learners; improve the quality of the provision and the educational outcomes; and ensure there is suitably trained and qualified educational workforce. This Plan is a key policy and informs the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme. The proposals will increase the availability of Welsh medium school places in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- A globally responsible Wales
The larger 21st Century Schools projects are procured using the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). This is the publication in which all tenders from the public sector which are valued above a certain financial threshold according to EU legislation, must be published, advertising opportunities on a global scale.

9.3 An assessment of the proposals on The Well-being and Future Generations Act five ways of working follows:

<p><u>Long Term</u> (The importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?</p>
	<p>Maintaining the existing provision of educational premises within Rhondda Cynon Taf places enormous strain on the Council resources. It is recognised that there is an opportunity through the 21st Century Schools funding to manage these pressures more efficiently in future years.</p> <p>The long term vision for RCT education is to provide all learners with the best opportunity possible to achieve their full potential through the means of education by providing access to the very best learning opportunities with modern, flexible, accessible facilities appropriate for delivering the new curriculum.</p> <p>Improved learning environments will act as a stimulus to creating a better future for through delivering brand new 21st Century Schools facilities for our young pupils through all phases of their educational journeys from foundation phase through to delivering a more efficient and effective post-16 provision. It offers choice and an improved curriculum of opportunities.</p>
	<p>How does your project / activity put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?</p>
<p><u>Prevention</u> (How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives)</p>	<p>The Council recognises the challenges of providing everyone with the facilities and opportunities to receive an excellent education in 21st Century facilities. These proposals will enhance and improve the educational environments for all 3-19 year olds affected.</p>
	<p>How does your project / activity deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes together?</p>
<p><u>Integration</u> (Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the wellbeing goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies)</p>	<p>The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh language as a vital element to achieve and reinforce social and cultural benefits. These proposals will deliver more Welsh medium places in the Pontypridd area, opportunities for wider community collaboration and participation, a more sustainable and accessible educational building meeting BREEAM targets all providing a more integrated and improved learning experience.</p>
	<p>How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p>
<p><u>Collaboration</u> (Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being objectives)</p>	<p>As a part of this school organisation programme the Council has already consulted with thousands of learners, staff, and parents and carers, throughout the Pontypridd area. If these proposals are to go ahead then this collaboration will continue when further consultation</p>
	<p>How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p>

	will be undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to shape the 21 st Century Schools' provision to ensure benefits and well-being opportunities are maximised.
<u>Involvement</u> (The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves)	<p>How does your project / facility involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do those stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?</p> <p>Consultation meetings were held with the student councils of all of the schools directly affected by the proposals, as well as with staff and governors, and open evenings were held in various locations throughout the area which were open to the public. All comments that were submitted during the consultation process were considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>Moving forward, engagement with learners, staff and RCT residents will continue and input and information gleaned from these sessions will shape the new school facilities. In addition information gathered will influence and inform our future projects so all consultation undertaken shapes the legacy of the 21st Century Schools Programme.</p>

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The Council is responsible for delivering high educational standards and efficient primary, secondary and sixth form education provision that serves our local communities. This is achieved by ensuring that the right schools, are the right size, are in the right location and are fit for the 21st Century learner.

10.2 Following a robust and comprehensive school reorganisation consultation process in respect of the proposals in the Greater Pontypridd area, the evidence clearly suggests that the rationale for implementing proposals for change as outlined in the Consultation Document and summarised in this and previous reports remains entirely appropriate and valid. The evidence clearly suggests that:

- The sixth form provisions in the three secondary schools remains financially and educationally unviable.
 - There is unnecessary duplication of sixth form provision across schools and colleges.
 - Class sizes are too small and resources intended for learners in key stages 3 and 4 are being utilised to subsidise unsustainable sixth form provisions in settings.
 - The poor retention rates at post 16 is having a detrimental impact financially and educationally.
 - The cumulative deficit position of Cardinal Newman RC School, Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School is in excess of £1.5M.

- The creation of the new 3-16 all-through schools will deliver 21st Century School learning environments that will:
 - provide buildings that are fully accessible and which meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010,
 - remove surplus places,
 - create financially sustainable provisions,
 - improve transition,
 - enable greater continuity in teaching and learning opportunities across all key stages, and
 - provide opportunities for developing a wholly inclusive community facility.

- The creation of a new, larger, Welsh medium primary school will:
 - deliver a fully accessible, modern and flexible 21st Century School environment,
 - support the Equality Act 2010 and the inclusion of learners with additional learning needs,
 - provide external spaces to facilitate the delivery of the new curriculum,
 - increase the number of Welsh medium school places in the Pontypridd area in line with Welsh Government legislation and strategy, and
 - provide opportunities for developing a wholly inclusive community facility.

10.3 Members are asked to:

- i. Formally approve the following proposals as consulted upon and agree to:
 - Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School by September 2022. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
 - Close Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and create a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools by September 2022, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
 - Close Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School and open a new Welsh medium Primary School on the site of the current Heol y Celyn Primary School by September 2022.

- ii. Agree the associated catchment changes detailed in the explanatory notes to the Statutory Notices - such catchment changes becoming effective from 1st September 2022.
- iii. Note that the Objection Report plus the relevant statutory objections relating to the proposed alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11 – 19 years to 11 – 16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision from this school, has been forwarded to Welsh Government Ministers for determination.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People

Background Papers

The paper included as an appendix to the report is:

- **The Objection Report**

Contact Officer

Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager - 01443 744062

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

Item:

Background Papers

Cabinet – 3rd October 2018.

Officer to contact:

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OBJECTION REPORT

PROPOSAL: REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE PONTYPRIDD AREA

1. Purpose of the Objection Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 006/2013. Its purpose is to:

- Inform the outcome of the publication of the statutory notices published for these proposals, which were published on April 30th 2019 for a period of a minimum of 28 days; and
- Include a summary of the statutory objections received and the Local Authority's response to them.

In accordance with the School Organisation Code, Statutory Notice 1 requires determination by the Welsh Government Ministers. In line with statutory obligations all information pertaining to this was submitted to the Welsh Ministers for approval within 35 days of the end of the objection period.

2. The Statutory Notices

The Statutory Notices to progress this proposal, which were published on April 30th 2019 are reproduced below:

Statutory Notice 1

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education Directorate, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon CF45 4UQ

Notice is given in accordance with section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC), having consulted such persons as required, proposes to make a regulated alteration to Cardinal Newman R.C. Comprehensive School, Dynea Road, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd, CF37 5DP so that the age range of the pupils it can admit is amended from 11-19 years to 11–16 years and that the Sixth Form provision be removed.

Post-16 students from Cardinal Newman R.C. Comprehensive School will have the option of attending another school's sixth form provision of their choice, or the local college, Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw, Heol y Coleg, Nantgarw CF15 7QY for their post-16 education. Pupils

who wish to continue their post-16 education through the Catholic faith could choose to attend St David's Sixth Form College, Ty Gwyn Road, Penylan, Cardiff CF23 5QD.

RCTCBC undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposer's responses and the views of Estyn is available on the Council's website at <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

It is proposed to implement the proposals on 1st September 2022.

The capacity of Cardinal Newman R.C. Comprehensive School after this proposal is implemented will be 900 pupil places. Some of the school buildings could be removed to reduce the surplus or the Archdiocese of Cardiff could use the space to develop or transfer primary school provision on the site. From September 2022 the proposed admission number for the school will be 180 for pupils age 11 (Year 7).

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Transport Policy. At present, RCTCBC provides free transport for pupils who attend their relevant Secondary school if they reside beyond 2 miles walking distance to that school. The relevant school is the catchment school or the nearest suitable school. This distance criterion is also applied to transport provision for post-16 students at present. RCTCBC will provide free transportation to the nearest provision that offers the chosen post-16 selection of courses for RCT-resident students, providing that they meet the initial qualifying distance criteria of residing more than 2 miles from that provision.

Within a period of 28 days of the date on which this proposal is published, that is to say by May 31st 2019 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to the Director of Education and Inclusion Services, 21st Century Schools, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4UQ, e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk.

RCTCBC will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

RCTCBC will submit the proposal to the Welsh Ministers for determination.

Gaynor Davies

Signed: _____

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

For Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Date: April 30th 2019

Explanatory Note of the Proposals

RCTCBC has recently undertaken a comprehensive consultation exercise in respect of the proposed reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd area of the County Borough as part of its proposals under the 21st Century Schools Programme.

RCTCBC's Cabinet has agreed to publish the following statutory notices:-

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11–19 years to 11–16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision;
- The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol Y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School.

To reduce any disruption to learners, prior to September 2022, the Council will ensure that the Year 12 students, who will be most affected by the change will be undertaking programmes of study that will be continued in their new sixth form.

Statutory Notice 2

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education Directorate, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon CF45 4UQ

Notice is given in accordance with sections 41 and 43 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC), having consulted such persons as required, propose to:

1. Discontinue the following schools currently maintained by RCTCBC:

- Hawthorn High School, School Lane, Hawthorn, Pontypridd CF37 5AL
- Hawthorn Primary School, School Lane, Hawthorn, Pontypridd CF37 5AL

2. Establish a new English Medium Community 'all through' School, to be maintained by RCTCBC at School Lane, Hawthorn, on the sites of Hawthorn Primary School and Hawthorn High School, for boys and girls aged 3-16 years.

RCTCBC undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposer's responses and the views of Estyn is available on the Council's website at <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

It is proposed to implement the proposals on 1st September 2022.

RCTCBC will be the admissions authority for the new 'all through' community school, and the admission arrangements will make no provision for pupil banding.

It is proposed that pupils currently attending the two schools listed above should transfer to the new Hawthorn 'all through' School, on 1st September 2022, subject to parental preference. It is also proposed that those pupils currently attending the English Medium stream of Heol Y Celyn Primary School should transfer to the new Hawthorn 'all through' School, on 1st September 2022, subject to parental preference.

This school is proposed to be an English Medium Community 'all through' School (3-16) with a proposed total capacity of 1,260 pupils. Building adaptations and other modifications will be undertaken prior to this date to ensure the accommodation is suitable for the pupils of the age ranges indicated.

The proposed capacity of the Primary Department of the new 'all through' school shall be 540 pupils, including nursery. The admission number is proposed to be 67 for pupils age 4 (Reception Class). The proposed capacity of the Secondary Department shall be 720 pupils and the admission number is proposed to be 77 for pupils age 11 (Year 7) so that the secondary department will in effect be able to accommodate 144 pupils per year group.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Transport Policy. At present, the Council provides free transport for pupils who attend their relevant Primary, Infant or Junior School, if they reside beyond 1 ½ miles walking distance to that school; this distance is 2 miles for pupils attending Secondary schools. The relevant school is the catchment school or the nearest suitable school.

Within a period of 28 days after the publication of these proposals, that is to say by May 31st 2019 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to the Director of Education and Inclusion Services, 21st Century Schools, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4UQ, e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk.

RCTCBC will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Gaynor Davies

Signed: _____

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

For Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Date: April 30th 2019

Explanatory Note of the Proposals

RCTCBC has recently undertaken a comprehensive consultation exercise in respect of the proposed reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd area of the County Borough as part of its proposals under the 21st Century Schools Programme.

RCTCBC's Cabinet has agreed to publish the following statutory notices:-

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11–19 years to 11–16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision;
- The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol Y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School.

The dedicated ALN class (KS3) already in operation at Hawthorn High School will transfer to the new 3-16 'all through' school at Hawthorn.

To reduce any disruption to learners, prior to September 2022, the Council will ensure that the Year 12 students, who will be most affected by the change will be undertaking programmes of study that will be continued in their new Sixth Form.

From September 2022 for the purposes of primary education provision (3-11) the catchment area of the New Hawthorn 'all-through' school will be the combined existing catchment areas of Hawthorn Primary School and Heol Y Celyn Primary School (English Medium stream).

From September 2022 for the purposes of secondary education provision (11-16) the Graig area of Pontypridd that is currently in the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School and

Hawthorn High School will be added to the catchment area of the new 3-16 school on the site of the Pontypridd 'all-through' school. This change formed part of the consultation.

From September 2022 for the purposes of secondary education provision (11-16) the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School that is currently in the catchment area of Hawthorn High School will be added to the catchment area of the new 3-16 school on the site of the Pontypridd 'all-through' school. This change formed part of the consultation.

For the purpose of applying admissions criteria, any child living in the areas to be transferred from the current Hawthorn catchment area who has an older sibling still attending Hawthorn High in the July prior to the opening of the new school (i.e. September 2022) will have their application considered as if they still resided in the Hawthorn catchment area. This protection will continue until all older siblings have left the school but excludes any siblings in Years 12 and 13 at July 2022.

The catchment areas of both Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools for post-16 provision will be amended to place these areas in the sixth form catchment area of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School, Beddau. The post-16 facilities of Bryncelynog will be improved and upgraded. This change formed part of the consultation. Pupils may attend Coleg y Cymoedd, or another school Sixth Form centre of their choice, but free transportation will only be provided to either Bryncelynog, or Coleg y Cymoedd or the nearest centre that offers the selection of subject choices that they choose, providing that they reside more than 2 miles from this provision.

Statutory Notice 3

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education Directorate, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon CF45 4UQ

Notice is given in accordance with sections 41 and 43 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC), having consulted such persons as required, propose to:

1. Discontinue the following schools currently maintained by RCTCBC:

- Pontypridd High School, Albion Community Campus, Cilfynydd, Pontypridd CF37 4SF
- Cilfynydd Primary School, Ann Street, Cilfynydd, Pontypridd CF37 4EN

2. Establish a new English Medium Community 'all-through' School, to be maintained by RCTCBC at Albion Community Campus, Cilfynydd, on the site of Pontypridd High School, for boys and girls aged 3-16 years.

RCTCBC undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal.

A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposer's responses and the views of Estyn is available on the Council's website at

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

It is proposed to implement the proposals on 1st September 2022.

RCTCBC will be the admissions authority for the new 'all through' community school and the admission arrangements will make no provision for pupil banding.

It is proposed that pupils currently attending the two schools listed above should transfer to the new Pontypridd 'all-through' School, on 1st September 2022, subject to parental preference. This school is proposed to be an English Medium Community 'all-through' School (3-16) with a proposed total capacity of 1,200 pupils. Building adaptations and other modifications will be undertaken prior to this date to ensure the accommodation is suitable for the pupils of the age ranges indicated.

The proposed capacity of the Primary Department of the new 'all-through' School shall be 210 pupils, including nursery. The admission number is proposed to be 26 for pupils age 4 (Reception Class). The proposed capacity of the Secondary Department shall be 990 pupils and the admission number is proposed to be 172 for pupils age 11 (Year 7) so that the secondary department will in effect be able to accommodate 198 pupils per year group.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with the Council's Transport Policy. At present, the Council provides free transport for pupils who attend their relevant Primary, Infant or Junior School, if they reside beyond 1 ½ miles walking distance to that school; this distance is 2 miles for pupils attending Secondary schools. The relevant school is the catchment school or the nearest school.

Within a period of 28 days after the publication of these proposals, that is to say by May 31st 2019 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to the Director of Education and Inclusion Services, 21st Century Schools, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4UQ, e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk.

RCTCBC will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within the period of 28 days after the end of the objection period.

Gaynor Davies

Signed: _____

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

For Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Date: April 30th 2019

Explanatory Note of the Proposals

RCTCBC has recently undertaken a comprehensive consultation exercise in respect of the proposed reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd area of the County Borough as part of its proposals under the 21st Century Schools Programme.

RCTCBC's Cabinet has agreed to publish the following statutory notices:-

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11–19 years to 11–16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision;
- The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol Y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School.

To reduce any disruption to learners, prior to September 2022, the Council will ensure that the Year 12 students, who will be most affected by the change will be undertaking programmes of study that will be continued in their new Sixth Form.

From September 2022 for the purposes of primary education provision (3-11) the catchment area of the New Pontypridd 'all-through' School will be the existing catchment area of Cilfynydd Primary School.

From September 2022 for the purposes of secondary education provision (11-16) the Graig area of Pontypridd that is currently in the catchment area of Maesycloed Primary School and Hawthorn High School will be added to the catchment area of the new 3-16 school on the site of the Pontypridd 'all-through' school. This change formed part of the consultation.

From September 2022 for the purposes of secondary education provision (11-16), the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School that is currently in the catchment area of Hawthorn High School will be added to the catchment area of the new 3-16 school on the site of the Pontypridd 'all-through' school. This change formed part of the consultation.

The catchment areas of both Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools for post-16 provision will be amended to place these areas in the sixth form catchment area of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School, Beddau. The post -16 facilities of Bryncelynog will be improved and upgraded. This change formed part of the consultation. Pupils may attend Coleg y Cymoedd,

or another school Sixth Form centre of their choice, but free transportation will only be provided to either Bryncelynnog, or Coleg y Cymoedd or the nearest centre that offers the selection of subject choices that they choose, providing that they reside more than 2 miles from this provision.

Statutory Notice 4

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education Directorate, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon CF45 4UQ

Notice is given in accordance with sections 41 and 43 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC), having consulted such persons as required, propose to:

1. Discontinue the following schools currently maintained by RCTCBC:
 - Heol Y Celyn Primary School, Holly Street, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd CF37 5DB
 - Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton, Heol Pont Sion Norton, Pontypridd CF37 4ND
2. Establish a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School, to be maintained by RCTCBC in a new school building to be constructed for this purpose, to be located on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School, Holly Street, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd for boys and girls aged 3-11 years.

RCTCBC undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish these proposals. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposer's responses and the views of Estyn is available on the Council's website at <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

It is proposed to implement the proposals on 1st September 2022.

It is proposed that a new school building be constructed to accommodate the children who will attend the new school, on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School, Holly Street, Rhydyfelin. It is proposed that pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and those pupils currently attending the Welsh Medium stream of Heol Y Celyn Primary School should transfer to the new Welsh Medium Community Primary School in Rhydyfelin on 1st September 2022, subject to parental preference.

The proposed new school will be a Welsh Medium Community Primary School.

RCTCBC will be the admissions authority and there will be no arrangements for pupil banding.

The proposed capacity of the new Welsh Medium Community Primary school shall be 540 pupil places, including nursery.

The admission number for pupils aged 4 to the Reception Class at the new school in the first school year in which the proposals have been implemented is proposed to be 67.

Pupils will be provided with transport in accordance with RCTCBC's Transport Policy. At present, RCTCBC provides free transport for pupils who attend their relevant Primary, Infant or Junior School, if they reside beyond 1.5 miles walking distance to that school. The relevant school is the catchment school or the nearest suitable school.

It is proposed that those pupils currently attending the English Medium stream of Heol Y Celyn Primary School should transfer to the new 3-16 'all through' School at Hawthorn on 1st September 2022, subject to parental preference. (The proposed 3-16 'all-through' school at Hawthorn is the subject of another statutory notice).

Within a period of 28 days of the date on which these proposals were published, that is to say by May 31st 2019 any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to the Director of Education and Inclusion Services, 21st Century Schools, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash CF45 4UQ, e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk.

RCTCBC will publish a summary of any such objections made (and not withdrawn in writing) within the objection period, together with their observations thereon, within 7 days of the determination of the proposal.

Gaynor Davies

Signed: _____

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services

For Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Date: April 30th 2019

Explanatory Note of the Proposals

RCTCBC has recently undertaken a comprehensive consultation exercise in respect of the proposed reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd area of the County Borough as part of its proposals under the 21st Century Schools Programme.

RCTCBC's Cabinet has agreed to publish the following statutory notices:-

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11–19 years to 11–16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision;

- The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol Y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school;
- The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School.

3. Details of Objections Received

During the Statutory Notice period, a total of 435 objections were received by the closing date of May 31st 2019 and consisted of 432 objections and 3 petitions. A further 10 objections were received after the deadline and in line with the statutory process these will not be considered. The objections received related to the various proposals as detailed within the Consultation Document, and the subsequent Statutory Notices published on April 30th 2019.

A small number of the objections received made reference to proposal 5 which was a proposal included within the Consultation Document. This proposal falls outside of the scope of this Objection Period. No Statutory Notice is required for catchment area changes, and any changes are carried out in accordance with the Welsh Government’s School Admissions Code.

The Statutory Notices are as follows:

- Statutory Notice 1: The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, from 11–19 years to 11–16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision.
- Statutory Notice 2: The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools, with the Local Authority designated ALN specialist class located in Hawthorn High School, as well as the current pupils receiving education through the medium of English at Heol Y Celyn Primary School transferring to the new school. There will be no sixth form provision at this school.
- Statutory Notice 3: The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School on the site of the current Pontypridd High School. There will be no sixth form provision at this school.

- Statutory Notice 4: The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the site of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School.
- Proposal 5: Catchment area changes
Carried out in accordance with the Welsh Government’s School Admissions Code. No Statutory Notice required.

A number of objections received were ambiguous in that they did not specify which Statutory Notice was being objected to. A summary of these have been included in Section 4 within the ‘General Objections’ section.

Two of the three petitions submitted had been organised by a group called ‘Our Children First - Ein Plant Gyntaf’. There was no information provided on the petition to specify which Statutory Notice was being objected to so it is assumed that the petition was objecting to all 4 Statutory Notices. The third petition was solely objecting to Statutory Notice 3.

A website created by the ‘Our Children First - Ein Plant Gyntaf’ group provided a link so that objections to the Statutory Notices could be submitted directly to the Council’s ‘SchoolPlanning’ mailbox. The website included a prewritten objection template and visitors to the website simply had to enter their name, email address, and click submit to register an objection. None of the official consultation documentation was available on the website, or any information included on the website advising where further information on the proposals could be found. The template provided objected to all four of the Statutory Notices and to the proposed changes to the catchment areas. Out of the 435 objections received 348 had been generated via this website. Copies of both the Welsh and English versions of this email are attached at appendix A. It should be noted for transparency purposes, where more than one objection had been submitted by the same person, with the same comments, with the same contact details, only one objection has been registered and is included in these figures.

Each Statutory Notice was objected to 348 times via an email generated through this website. The table below provides a breakdown of the number of objections each Statutory Notice received in addition to the generated email.

<u>Statutory Notices</u>	<u>Objection via website</u>	<u>Petition</u>	<u>Additional objections</u>	<u>Total</u>
1: The changes to sixth form provision	348	2	17	367
2: Create a new 3-16 all-through school for Hawthorn	348	2	23	373
3: Create a new 3-16 all-through	348	3	38	389

school for Pontypridd				
4: Create new Welsh Medium provision	348	2	50	400

Where we have received objections with further information attached to support the objections, we have included a summary of the specified objection within the summary table and included the supporting information as an appendix for information.

It is perhaps significant to highlight that the total number of objections received is relatively small when considering the number of potential consultees associated with the schools at the heart of the proposals. To put this into context, there are over 3,300 pupils attending the 7 schools, which suggests that the opposition to the Statutory Notices is from a relatively small group.

In accordance with the School Organisation Code a summary of the statutory objections are included below within this report. They have been grouped in the following table by proposal, and where appropriate also grouped thematically. It should also be noted that Cabinet Members have been given the opportunity to undertake a thorough and robust review of all objections received during the Objection Period prior to the meeting of Cabinet on July 18th 2019. This ensures that due consideration has been given to all the arguments presented in respect of the proposals and the salient factors as set out in the Code.

4. Summary of the Objections and Responses

Objections detailed in the report reflect the language used in the submission. The following table reflects this.

<p><u>Hysbysiad Statudol 1 - Tynnu'r chweched dosbarth o Ysgol Cardinal Newman.</u> <u>(mae gwrthwynebiadau i Hysbysiadau arall wedi eu cynnwys yn yr adran hon ar gyfer cyflawnder)</u></p> <p><u>Statutory Notice 1 - The removal of the sixth form from Cardinal Newman.</u> <u>(sixth form objections relating to the other Notices have been included in this section for completeness)</u></p> <p>If the objective of the Council is to increase the number of our young people continuing in education post-16, I fail to see how moving sixth form provision further away from those young people helps.</p> <p>The proposed substitute provision at Coleg y Cymoedd and Bryncelynnog is too remote for many learners and, in the former case, falls outside the oversight of the local education authority. Many children, such as my eldest daughter who is diagnosed with</p>
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ASD, benefit from being able to remain in a familiar, local environment with academic and pastoral staff who know them.

Response: The objectives of the sixth form proposals are clearly set out in the Consultation Document and increasing participation is just one of the outcomes that are noted within this document. Other benefits include, raising standards, increasing curriculum choice, providing equality of provision and delivering an efficient and sustainable sixth form provision. The proposals aim to deliver each of these objectives and the case for change defined within the Consultation Document is clear. Poor retention rates in current sixth form provisions suggest that the majority of learners in the Pontypridd area are already opting for post-16 education in settings other than school and alternative post-16 pathways.

RCT's Home to School Transport Policy exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations and it has been confirmed that all learners currently residing within the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School will qualify for free transport to Bryncelynnog should they wish to continue their post-16 education in school. This policy also provides free transport to Coleg Y Cymoedd and St David's College for those students who meet the specified criteria.

Meaningful and positive transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school settings with little disruption to their well-being and education. This is supported by providing effective pastoral and academic support and structured opportunities for learners to become familiar with the new school environment and staff. For learners with additional learning needs, person centred plans will be central to ensuring their successful transition into a new school setting. This will require careful planning and liaison with the young person, families, school staff and external agencies where appropriate.

Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all the schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and seamless as possible.

The proposals aim to provide opportunities for learners to access a wider and more diverse curriculum within a 21st Century learning environment. This will ensure that learners with the most diverse needs are able to pursue the most appropriate pathway suitable to their needs.

I also have concerns over the extent to which Rhondda Cynon Taff Council can hold Coleg Y Cymoedd, a likely beneficiary of these plans, to account for the service they provide.

Response: The relationship between the College and the Council is stronger than ever with opportunities for collaboration between both parties being developed in many new areas. The Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Education are governors on the College Board. The Council will continue to ensure that they have an effective working relationship with Coleg Y Cymoedd. The College, schools and Local Authority are all accountable for the outcomes achieved by the learners in their care and are subject to inspection by Estyn.

To note, all schools and further education institutions will be subject to the same performance indicators from 2019/20.

It should also be noted that Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School already have a joint sixth form that works well across both schools. Basing these at the same site would remove the need for transport between the two schools, but retain a provision in Pontypridd. We therefore urge the Council to retain.

Response: The rationale for the changes to sixth form provision is specified within the Consultation Document. The Council is aware of the consortia arrangements between both schools but despite these arrangements being in place for a number of years, concerns in relation to outcomes, pupil retention rates, small class sizes and the financial unviability of both provisions persist. The rationale specified in the consultation documents remains unchanged and valid.

Merging the sixth form provision across these two schools would not provide an efficient and effective model for delivering sixth form provision as the numbers would still be too small due to the low post-16 retention rates in these settings. There is currently too much duplication in provision in this area and the proposal offers an opportunity to make more efficient use of existing resources, to redirect much needed resources to learners in key stages 3 and 4 and to provide an extensive key stage 5 offer which provides greater choice for learners.

We have deliberately chosen Cardinal Newman as the school we wish for our children to complete the WHOLE of their high school education. Cardinal Newman has shown consistently that an excellent level of education can be achieved with little financial investment/support. Cardinal Newman also has a very special ethos which will be very difficult or even impossible to instil elsewhere (as if that were not the case then other schools in the area would already be following the same principles). We also feel that these proposals are taking away the right for our children to fulfil their post-16 education at a school that has been classified as 'Green/Excellent'.

Response: The decision to propose the removal of the sixth form at Cardinal Newman is set out within the Consultation Document. The case for change is multi-faceted and it is acknowledged that Cardinal Newman is a good school. The sixth form retention rates at the school are low which has had a detrimental impact upon the school budget, which is in a significant deficit. The school is not able to sustain a sixth form provision based on existing numbers.

The success of Cardinal Newman and the ethos that exists within the school community is not in question. Retaining sixth form provision in this setting is not viable as it is heavily reliant on resources intended for learners in key stages 3 and 4. The financial challenges faced by the school due to the reducing post-16 retention rates are such that the curriculum offer will have to be significantly reduced which will inevitably have a further negative impact on curriculum choice and pupil numbers. The proposals offer an option to attend St David's College, which is another good educational setting that offers strong pastoral support, a positive Catholic ethos and good outcomes for its learners.

We understand that an option to attend St David's college for existing Catholic pupils will be made available, however can it be guaranteed that sufficient capacity will exist? It is

our belief that the college is already at capacity and therefore cannot see how this is a feasible option.

Response: The Principal of St David's College has confirmed that there will be sufficient capacity.

Even if space is guaranteed we understand that pupils will need to find their own way to Cardiff should a 'suitable' school be nearer?, Firstly I think it should be the parents who decide what is 'suitable'; and the logistics could possibly prevent our children going to the school we wish them to.

Response: Free transport will be provided for those who meet RCT's Home to School Transport criteria. Pupils that do not live in RCT will have to contact their own Council's School Transport Department for further information on criteria and eligibility. Parental choice is at the heart of the School Admissions Code and should a faith education be deemed as 'suitable' then transport will be provided in accordance with the above.

Cardinal Newman has been discriminated against as a faith school as they are the only school not to receive funding with the sixth form closure.

Response: Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School is a voluntary aided school and is governed and managed by the Roman Catholic Church. It is the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Diocese to apply to Welsh Government for capital funding to improve the quality of the buildings. However, despite this, RCTCBC has made significant investments into the school to ensure that the buildings are suitably maintained.

Welsh Government has a capital funding allocation available at favourable terms for church schools, where 85% of the capital investment requirements are met by Welsh Government. The Council is supporting the Diocese to develop a business case to secure 21st Century Schools funding for investment in this school and will work in partnership with them to present a strong case for improvement.

It discriminates against people of faith and these children are being treated unfairly by making them travel to Cardiff to complete their education.

In relation to Cardinal Newman it is unacceptable that this administration should choose to be so dismissive of the further education needs of the students there – it borders on flippant to suggest that they should just go to Cardiff if they wish to continue being educated in a faith school. Surely there is a duty of care, or at the very least some sense of responsibility that extends beyond this.

Pupils who travel from Merthyr Tydfil and other areas will also be stopped from their right to follow an education that confirms with their religious beliefs. You are not just taking away this education from local children but from a much wider community as it is the only catholic school covering a very large catchment area.

The closure of Cardinal Newman's sixth form will have a detrimental effect on the Catholic community. Many will choose not to send their children there for secondary school, this could be seen as trying to remove catholic faith schools from RCT.

Response: School Organisation and School Admissions are administered through Statutory Codes and are requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Council has ensured that all procedures are in line with this Code and that due diligence has been undertaken so that no pupil is unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. This consultation has been carried out in accordance with this Code and the Diocese has been fully consulted with throughout this process.

The Local Authority has every confidence that Cardinal Newman will continue to attract high numbers of learners for key stages 3 and 4 as it is a good school. Despite drawing learners from other County Boroughs, the retention rates for post-16 are still low in comparison and this is a contributory factor in the provision not being sustainable or financially viable. A new approach to post-16 education is now needed which offers choice for learners.

To note, the January 2019 PLASC records only 3 pupils from Merthyr attending the sixth form in Cardinal Newman.

Cardinal Newman's school meeting was after the initial consultation. It was not the wishes of the Archdiocese to close and parents' wishes and concerns were not considered.

Response: This is not the case. The meetings held at Cardinal Newman with pupils, staff and governors, were held on November 22nd 2018; and in addition, the open evening at the school was held on January 15th 2019. The consultation period ended on January 31st 2019. No formal response from the Diocesan was received in relation to the proposals during the consultation period; and no objection to the Statutory Notice has been received.

The consultation document fails to recognise that attempts have been made by Cardinal Newman to move their sixth form to Coleg y Cymoedd, but then had to restart their own sixth form due to problems. We would ask the Council to examine this in further detail, and learn lessons from this experience.

Similarly to above in relation to Cardinal Newman, representations have also been made to us in relation to the fact that different consortium models with Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw have been initiated and then abandoned, with the individual schools choosing to return to teaching their own pupils, following doubts having been raised about student support.

Response: The decision to end the collaboration between Cardinal Newman and Coleg Y Cymoedd for post-16 education was a decision taken by the Diocese. Any suggestions that this decision was made as a result of any problems or lack of support for pupils at the College is speculation. The main issue was that the provision in the College was provided by teachers employed by 3 different organisations. Coleg Y Cymoedd now employ all its teachers and is responsible for the day to day management of the workforce which has seen a significant improvement in the quality of learning, as evidenced by the College's A-Level results in 2018.

Feedback received from learners in the College and the Estyn Inspection suggest that student support services are good.

Many students and parents have contacted us to raise concerns about the plans to remove the sixth form from Pontypridd High School, Hawthorn High School and Cardinal Newman and base all at Bryncelynog High School. Given that Bryncelynog is already partnered with Y Pant for sixth form provision, many are questioning how merging five sixth forms will work in practice.

Response: Bryncelynog Comprehensive does currently collaborate successfully with Y Pant for a number of subjects in a consortia arrangement. However, the current proposals do not suggest the merger of 5 sixth forms. Y Pant do not form a part of these proposals.

The sixth form pupil retention rates at the 4 schools that are included within the proposals are low, as are the post-16 pupil projections. However, cumulatively they will provide the numbers needed to deliver a sustainable and viable sixth form, both educationally and financially, providing greater options for learners by enabling a greater breadth of subject choice. Through the planned investment the proposal will offer learners a more diverse curriculum and enhanced opportunities in a 21st Century School environment.

Though the status quo is not sustainable, this public consultation could have been an opportunity to have a frank discussion over a series of different options for post-16 education in Pontypridd, instead it was focused around just one option, which the Cabinet adopted, without exploring a range of alternatives.

That on the basis of the information presented the rationale for proposing Bryncelynog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd as post-16 centres of excellence from September 2022 remains unclear.

Response: No proposals have been adopted. The decision by Cabinet was to progress with the School Organisation Code statutory protocol and publish the Statutory Notices and commence the Objection Period.

The criteria for the school organisation review, the educational case, and the benefits for all proposals put forward for consideration were included within the Consultation Document, as were alternative options for all proposals.

Estyn's response in this regard is *'The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to improvement in educational provision and the effective and efficient use of resources. They also explain clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for the review of school provision as part of its 21st Century Schools programme. The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the local area.'*

Issues relating to the unviability of sixth form provision in this area have been the focus of discussions with the headteachers concerned for many years. Despite numerous discussions and collaborative approaches, difficulties persist and radical changes are now needed.

The proposals offer an opportunity to significantly invest in the development of a post-16 centre of excellence in Bryncelynog School. The decision to select this school is based on

a number of factors including the outcome data, budget position and retention rates. The school is a green school and is considered to be best placed to deliver on these exciting proposals for change.

The consultation process has presented information about PHS (and the PSF) which is inaccurate, unfair and misleading.

Response: This was raised during the consultation stage and responded to within the Consultation Report. This response is still valid. The data and information contained within the Consultation Document is factual, accurate and formed the basis for the case for change for the reorganisation proposals. The format adopted by the Council for presenting school reorganisation proposals for change is consistent and standardised and these proposals are aligned with this approach. Data included in the consultation report is based on All Wales Core Datasets and references to benchmarking data is included for key stage 4 datasets.

For key stage 5 data sets, the FSM profile is very different to that of key stage 4 and despite representations made by the school in relation to the key stage 5 outcomes, it is the Local Authority's view that key stage 5 outcomes are in need of further improvement. For clarity, the performance of Pontypridd High School in relation to the percentage of learners achieving 3A*-A and 3A*-C was below the all Wales average for 4 consecutive years (2015-2018). When considering local averages for the same period, the percentage of learners achieving 3A*-A was above the local average from 2015-17, and below the local average in 2018; and, Pontypridd High was below the local average for the last 4 consecutive years for the percentage of learners achieving 3A* – C grades.

It is acknowledged that results in the school were more favourable on the Level 3 and Average Wider Points Score (AWPS). In terms of the Average Wider Points Score, this measure is no longer utilised as an assessment criteria comparator by the Welsh Government as the measure includes such a wide variety of level 3 qualifications that includes academic A-level courses along with vocational and other courses. This decision was taken by the Welsh Government as so many different types of qualifications are used within this measure it is not possible to fairly compare the performance of schools.

Comparisons across schools in relation to the outcomes at key stage 5 are entirely appropriate as the fsm profile of schools are very different from key stage 4 to post-16.

It is important to note that the rationale for these proposals are multi-faceted and not solely based on outcome measures. Collectively, the key stage 5 datasets, post-16 retention rates, small class sizes, surplus spaces and the deficit position in Pontypridd High School all highlight that there is strong evidence to suggest that the post-16 provision is not efficient or sustainable. Due to the low retention rates, the post-16 provision is heavily subsidised by resources intended for key stages 3 and 4 learners and this inevitably impacts on the quality of provision on offer for statutory school age learners. Whilst Pontypridd High School has a number of strengths, the wealth of data collated to inform the proposals for

change and the ongoing deficit position in the school clearly illustrates that the current post-16 arrangements are impacting on the resourcing of provision in all key stages.

The removal of Sixth Forms will make Pontypridd a less desirable place to live for parents and is likely to lead to falling house prices and deprivation.

Response: There is no evidence that this will be an outcome of these proposals. This has not been reported to be the case in other areas of RCT that have been through a rationalisation of post-16 education. However, issues relating to house prices should be raised with the HMRC Valuation Office.

The proposals offer a sustainable plan for improving the quality of provision in the area and considerable investment in school facilities. If the proposals proceed, £37.4m will be invested in school buildings across the County Borough so that pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environment. The proposals offer an opportunity to improve schools in the locality and school investment elsewhere has impacted very favourably on the demand for school places and learner and parental perceptions of new provisions have been very positive.

I am concerned that local children will not get the same opportunities to attend a 6 form in their own school as children in other areas do. Making children travel a longer distance will put some children especially poorer children at a disadvantage.

I would have thought that reducing the number of young people who are NEET would be high on the agenda of RCT. How is reducing the number of providers offering courses going to improve the situation? There are growing number of young people suffering with anxiety and mental health difficulties. Many of these would opt out of education if they are forced to attend a different educational provider than one that they know well and feel comfortable in.

Instead of closing these Sixth Forms, extra effort should be made to encourage young people to carry on into further education.

I believe it represents an abnegation of responsibility on the part of RCT Council for A Level education within the town, and will have a deleterious impact on both the numbers of pupils staying on post-16 and the education of those who do, at a time when such matters must be a target for investment rather than cost-cutting. This in turn will have a concomitant impact on the numbers proceeding to higher education from the borough and the wider benefits to the local area of that process, for example at the University of South Wales campus in Treforest.

Response: Data on the number of pupils that choose to stay in Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman for their sixth form provision is very low. Over 60% of all pupils in all 3 schools chose not to return to sixth form in September 2018 and opted to pursue post-16 education in settings other than schools, many of whom were eligible for free school meals.

The proposals are aimed at offering choice to learners and creating schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity and providing educational and financial stability. This investment will improve school facilities and enhance opportunities.

The NEETS data for post-16 learners in RCT is favourable and with the vast majority of learners opting to go into further education, training and employment. Nevertheless, the majority of school leavers are not choosing to attend their local sixth form provision in the Greater Pontypridd area. There is a need to improve this offer so that more learners opt to pursue sixth form study in school settings. The proposals under consideration provide an exciting opportunity to improve and extend the local offer within a 21st Century School environment, offering choice to learners and the most appropriate pathway for their needs. It is recognised that mental health issues are an increasing challenge for our young people. Finding the right course and educational pathway is critical for engaging our most vulnerable learners. Larger school settings often provide enhanced opportunities for pursuing the most appropriate curriculum choices and qualifications, and accessing pastoral support and more specialist staff, due to the economies of scale that are afforded in larger settings. The proposals offer an opportunity to significantly invest in the future of our young people by creating new 21st Century learning environments, and greater opportunities for learners with a wide range of needs and abilities.

How many pupils from Tonypany, Porth and Ferndale are choosing to stay on now that they have to travel to Treorchy or Tonyrefail for sixth form education? Surely these figures would have formed a more relevant basis for your consultation.

Response: The data below replicates the trend for post-16 learners in the Pontypridd area, in that the majority are already opting to choose their relevant learning pathway and continue their education in a further education college.

Ferndale – Of the 97 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 40 returned to sixth form and 57 went to college, employment or other.

Ysgol Nant Gwyn – Of the 102 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 23 returned to sixth form and 79 went to college, employment or other.

Porth – Of the 134 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 44 returned to sixth form and 90 went to college, employment or other.

Tonyrefail – Of the 157 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 79 returned to sixth form and 78 went to college, employment or other.

Treorchy – Of the 250 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 155 returned to sixth form and 95 went to college, employment or other.

The schools admissions data shows that over 350 students returned to Rhondda sixth forms in September 2018, sufficient for two financially and educationally sustainable sixth forms. The Rhondda schools reorganisation retained two sixth forms in Treorchy and Tonyrefail and the sixth form admissions data evidences the rationale as set out in the Consultation Document is that students are attracted to larger sixth forms, that create a great offer and are academically and financially viable.

Aspects of the consultation process have not followed the ‘School Organisation Code’ (2013)

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

We feel very disappointed of the proposed closure of the sixth forms in Pontypridd. We currently have two children in Pontypridd High School and we have nothing but praise for the dedication and commitment of the staff and governors.

Response: It is acknowledged that the staff and governors are dedicated and committed, and care about their learners and the education they receive. Pontypridd High School has many strengths as a school. However, the datasets used to underpin the rationale for change clearly highlight that there are significant and long standing issues relating to post-16 provision and escalating budget deficit positions in schools that have diminishing numbers of learners. It is not sustainable and viable in its current form, even with consortia arrangements in place.

We appreciate that the current situation of the sixth forms needs to change, but we don't understand why there can't be a sixth form in a town the size of Pontypridd, which would allow the children in the three schools to attend.

There is a University in Treforest but no sixth form in the immediate vicinity for the children to attend.

Response: Coleg Y Cymoedd is based on Treforest Industrial Estate within the catchment area of Hawthorn High. It offers a range of A-Level and vocational courses. Data clearly indicates that retention rates for post-16 education in schools in the Greater Pontypridd areas are relatively poor and there are insufficient numbers to justify retaining post-16 provision in the locality. Data suggests that the majority of learners are opting to attend further education, training or other opportunities. Cumulative data suggests that a viable provision could be established by removing the post-16 provisions in the identified schools and establishing a centre of excellence in Bryncelynog School. It is likely that a significant number of learners from Cardinal Newman will seek post-16 education in a faith setting.

The inclusion of the student comments from Coleg Y Cymoedd was not in line with the formal consultation process and made public comments about staff and students which were misleading, unfair, unsubstantiated, deeply upsetting and in opposition to the duty of care role that the LA assumes on behalf of our school.

Response: In relation to compliance and adhering to the statutory consultation process, the School Organisation Code lists those consultees who must be consulted with, but there is no list identified within the Code that stipulates who should not be consulted with. However, Coleg Y Cymoedd are named as a consultee in the Consultation Document.

The decision to discuss the proposals with students from the College was made following feedback from the meetings held with pupils, staff and governors at the schools affected by the proposals. It was felt prudent that all learners affected by these proposals were included, and as such learners from the College were given an opportunity to express their views so that they too could be represented within the consultation process, and their experiences of the College put on record.

The learners' comments were noted and were included solely within the appendices of the Consultation Report and were not explicitly referenced within the overarching Cabinet report. This record reflects the personal opinions of learners based on their unique personal experiences, as are all of the comments that were made and received by other stakeholders during the consultation process. This is clear from the language used and the contributions recorded in the notes of the meeting. The LA did not edit the perceptions of college learners, school councils, school staff or governing body representatives. It could be argued that some of the views articulated during other consultation events were also unsubstantiated and potentially upsetting to other parties but these comments also remained as transparency is central to consultation and an individuals' right to have their say. It is acknowledged that consultation processes can be very emotive but all views are recorded and included for transparency.

Mae diffyg cydraddoldeb o ran mynediad a gwariant ar addysg ôl-16.

There is a lack of equality of access and expenditure on post-16 education.

Sixth form pupils attract more money per head, and that without this, and the pupils themselves, job cuts would be required, possibly leaving the schools with too few high quality staff to teach GCSE's as well, to the detriment of all, as many teachers do not wish to be restricted to purely teaching up to GCSE level only.

Ymateb: Mae mynediad i addysg ôl-16 ar gael ar hyn o bryd, a bydd yn parhau i fod ar gael, i bawb sydd am barhau ar y llwybr dysgu yma.

Mae cyllid ôl-16 yn cael ei ddyrannu'n deg rhwng pob ysgol gan ddibynnu ar nifer y disgyblion ar y gofrestr yn y mis Hydref ar ôl dechrau'r flwyddyn ariannol a dechrau'r rhaglen astudio. Mae ymgodiad amddifadedd ychwanegol yn cael ei ddyrannu yn ôl y plant sy'n byw yn yr ardaloedd cynnyrch ehangach haen is. Dylid nodi bod Addysg Ôl-16 yn cael ei hariannu'n uniongyrchol gan Lywodraeth Cymru yn seiliedig ar nifer y disgyblion a'r rhaglenni astudio. Mae hyn yn sicrhau ecwiti. Dylid nodi bod modd i ysgolion pob oed ddarparu cyfleoedd dysgu a gyrfa proffesiynol ardderchog i staff a chyfleoedd o ran dysgu ar draws y cyfnodau yn yr ystod 3-16 oed. Fel arall, fyddai'r cyfleoedd yma ddim ar gael mewn ysgol gynradd neu ysgol uwchradd. Bydd cyfleoedd i ddysgu ôl-16 mewn nifer o ysgolion uwchradd a safleoedd 3-19 oed yn Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Mae pwysau anochel ar gyllidebau sy'n gysylltiedig â chyfraddau isel o ran cadw disgyblion y chweched dosbarth a dosbarthiadau â nifer isel o ddisgyblion. Rhaid rheoli diffygion cyllidebau ysgolion trwy weithredu cynlluniau adfer diffygion sydd, o bosibl, â goblygiadau ar lefelau staff a chynaliadwyedd pynciau sy'n llai poblogaidd. Mae'n anochel felly nad yw grwpiau dysgu bychain yn gynaliadwy yn y tymor canolig ac mae angen gweithredu'n gyflym ym mhob ysgol lle mae yna ddiffyg ariannol.

Response: Access to post-16 education is currently, and will remain to be, available to all who wish to continue on this learning pathway.

Post-16 funding is allocated equitably across all the schools dependant on the number of pupils on roll in the October preceding the start of the financial year and the programme of study being undertaken. An additional deprivation uplift is also allocated which is weighted to those children who live in the lower super output areas. It should also be noted that post-16 education is funded directly by Welsh Government based on the number of pupils and the programmes of study being undertaken. This ensures equity. It should be noted that all through schools can provide excellent professional learning and career opportunities for staff and opportunities for cross phase teaching across the 3-16 age range that wouldn't generally exist within primary or secondary school settings. There will continue to be opportunities for post-16 teaching within a significant number of secondary school and 3-19 settings in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

There are inescapable budget pressures associated with low retention rates in sixth form and small class sizes. Budget deficits in schools have to be managed through implementation of deficit recovery plans, which potentially have implications for staffing levels and the sustainability of less popular subjects. Inevitably, small teaching groups are not sustainable in the medium term and swift action is necessary in all the schools where significant deficit budgets are evident.

Mae yna ddiffyg archwiliad o'r effaith ar gydraddoldeb a faint fydd am gymryd llefydd oherwydd problemau trafndiaeth.

There is a lack of examination of the impact on equality and take up of places because of transport.

Ymateb: Fydd dim effaith ar gydraddoldeb o ganlyniad i gludiant ysgol neu fel arall. Mae Polisi Cludiant o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol hael RhCT yn rhagori ar rwymedigaethau statudol Llywodraeth Cymru. Cadarnhawyd y bydd disgyblion sy'n byw yn nalgylchoedd y Ddraenen Wen ac Ysgol Uwchradd Pontypridd yn gymwys am gludiant am ddim i Ysgol Gyfun Bryncelynnog os ydyn nhw am barhau â'u haddysg ôl-16 mewn ysgol. Mae gan yr Uned Cludiant Ysgol feini prawf clir a manwl sy'n sicrhau cysondeb o ran gwneud penderfyniadau.

Response: There will be no impact upon equality as a result of school transport or otherwise. RCT's Home to School Transport Policy exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations and it has been confirmed that all learners who reside within the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School will qualify for free transport to Bryncelynnog should they wish to continue their post-16 education in school. The School Transport Unit has clearly set and well defined criteria that ensures consistency in decision making.

Another consequence of these proposals is that many young people will have to travel further to receive their post-16 education, yet the increased congestion on our roads and the inevitable increase in vehicle emissions as a result is something that has not in my view been considered in as great a detail as should be expected. How can we even attempt to present RCT Council as a local authority that takes its obligations to the environment seriously when on one of the major decisions it makes the environment is not taken into consideration to any meaningful extent.

Response: Planning applications will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this there will be Traffic Impact Assessments undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding areas. This assessment will look at the current capacity of the highway, and also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on not just the highway but also on pedestrian and cycling routes.

The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance with statutory Air Quality Objectives, set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact on residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above.

The criteria used by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to determine the eligibility to receive free school transport is based on walking distance, measured by the shortest, available walking route, with free transport being provided to secondary school learners whose home address is more than 2 miles from the nearest or catchment school. RCT's Home to School Transport Policy exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations and as such it has been confirmed that all learners who currently reside within the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School will qualify for free transport to Bryncelynnog should they wish to continue their post-16 education in school. This equates to fewer individual car journeys and so we anticipate that there will be a net loss in the number of vehicle journeys made.

Hysbysiad Statudol 2: Cau Ysgol Gyfun Y Ddraenen Wen ac Ysgol Gynradd Y Ddraenen Wen a creu ysgol pob oed 3 – 16

Statutory Notice 2: The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School

In many of the areas where schools are going to be closed the schools are a big part of the community and the closure will have a negative impact locally.

Response: A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken and this information is still available on the Council website. There is no reason why any community links will be adversely affected by these proposals.

This is a terrible, terrible idea. It means that children will have to travel further to get to school which takes more of their time and will lead to more pollution and stress from extra travel.

Response: It is acknowledged that a number of pupils will have to travel further to school, however there are numerous benefits to these proposals including school modernisation, improved curriculum offer, improved transition and greater continuity in teaching and learning across the primary and secondary phase. These proposals also reflect significant investment in school buildings and educational facilities.

Planning applications will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this process Traffic Impact Assessments will be undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will look at the current capacity of the highway, and also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on the highway, pedestrian and cycling routes.

The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance to statutory Air Quality Objectives, which are set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact upon residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above.

The Council has deviated from due process (as stipulated by the Welsh Assembly 'School Organisation Code') with regard to the conduct of its consultation process about these proposals.

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. The consultation has been extensive and robust.

The Council has failed to treat individuals and organisations in a fair and equitable manner (as required by the Welsh Assembly 'School organisation code') during the consultation process

Response: This consultation has been carried out in full compliance with the School Organisation Code. There is no evidence whatsoever to support this statement. All processes have been transparent.

The Council has actively striven to create a negative portrayal of standards and provision at Hawthorn High School in an attempt to mislead consultees that the proposed reorganisation will achieve more positive outcomes than might otherwise be the case.

Response: This is categorically not the case. The rationale for the removal of the sixth form at Hawthorn High and to create a 3-16 all through school is based on a number of differing factors that are detailed in the Consultation Document.

The data used within the report detailing learner outcomes, pupil numbers, class sizes, retention rates and deficit positions were accurate and factual at the time of reporting. This information has not been used to negatively portray or mislead, but to provide a sound and robust rationale to inform the proposals for change and it is perfectly reasonable to make comparisons across schools for key stage 5.

It should also be noted that outcome data is only one aspect of the rationale for change and all data is based on published datasets. All Wales Core Data Sets are reported for key stages 4 and 5, including benchmarking positions based on fsm data. The fsm profile of learners in key stage 4 and 5 are vastly different in Hawthorn High School with 28.6% and 12.96% of learners in years 11 and 13 being efsm when considering the 2017/18 key stage 4 and 5 data.

It is noted that the percentage of learners achieving 3A*-A and 3A*-C in key stage 5 over a 4 year period in Hawthorn High School was below the all Wales average and local average for 3 consecutive years (2015-17) but significant improvement was evident in 2018. A more variable profile is evident when considering the Level 3 and AWPS over the same 4 year period. In comparison, Bryncelynog Comprehensive School has performed better than both Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School on key stage 5 measures for 3A*-A and 3A* to C from 2015-17 and above or equal for the Level 3 measure for 2 out of the 3

years. In 2018, Bryncelynog performed better than both Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School for the percentage of learners achieving 3A*-A and 3A*-C.

The retention rates at post-16 and the budget deficit position in the school clearly highlights that the school cannot sustain sixth form provision, even with consortia arrangements with Pontypridd High School. The majority of learners are opting to pursue post-16 provision elsewhere and the current sixth form retention rates of 36% and the large financial deficit mean that change is now needed.

The Council has failed to exercise its duty of care to employees at the school in its willingness to publish unwarranted allegations of poor performance, actively seek out criticism of the school and publicly undermine the teachers and leadership of the school in a variety of public forums.

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. To reiterate, the data used within the report to depict results and pupils numbers is accurate and factual. It has not been used to negatively portray or mislead, but to provide a robust basis to underpin the rationale for change.

The data used is based on published datasets and the retention rates and the unacceptable deficit position highlight that the sixth form provision is clearly unviable and unsustainable. The proposals provide an opportunity to modernise school facilities, offer greater sixth form choice and the opportunity to ensure that key stage 3 and 4 learners access the appropriate level of funding required. The Council strongly refutes the claim that there have been attempts to actively seek out criticism of the school and to undermine the teachers and leadership of the school in public forums. The school has many strengths but the sixth form provision is not sustainable or viable.

It is a bad idea to have infants in the same school as teenage children because of the negative and inappropriate behaviour they will be exposed to.

Response: The safeguarding and wellbeing of children is the highest priority for the local authority. There are a number of all-through schools operating in the County Borough and this is managed with appropriate segregation of the younger and older pupils. The schools are designed so that there are separate entrances, learning environments, toilets and outdoor learning and play spaces. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for utilising older children's skills within an all through setting which can also be very rewarding for all parties.

RCT currently has two 3-19 schools, two 3-16 schools, and another 3-19 school opening in September 2019. The headteachers at all of these schools are reporting many positive benefits, including the opportunity to break down barriers across key phases and stages thus ensuring greater continuity in teaching and learning, enhanced opportunities for sharing expertise and specialist staff, and flexibility in staff deployment.

These all-through schools are managed differently depending on the leadership style of the Headteacher concerned and the ethos and culture instilled within the schools. The schools operate in unique and creative ways, but are consistent in ensuring that opportunities for

cross phase collaboratively working are achieved. All projects are closely supervised and provide opportunities for older school children to act as positive role models to younger children through peer mentoring and buddying schemes.

All through schools also provide enhanced opportunities for developing cross-phase specialisms and for developing positive relationships between staff, children, young people and their families over time.

It will be much harder for parents to raise issues have a say in their child's education when dealing with a big organisation rather than a smaller local school.

Completely against super schools, they are not in the best interests of the children and completely discourage family engagement which is proven to improve education.

Response: On the contrary, creating larger schools can build capacity within staffing structures and enable opportunities for developing more specialist wellbeing and/or family liaison posts which will clearly benefit more vulnerable children and families.

There is a lack of detail on the financial savings provided by the proposal.

Response: The financial deficit position of the three secondary schools, currently circa £1.5million, is detailed within the Consultation Document. Currently the cost of delivering a sixth form provision in three of the secondary schools is greater than the income received from the Welsh Government. Our experience of the Rhondda schools following the reorganisation, is that the financial position of the school is greatly improved once the sixth form provision has been removed. Further savings realised will predominately be premises related as there will be a reduction in the number of buildings that have to be maintained. However there will be financial benefits from the sale of assets, economies of scale from managing through-schools, sharing resources etc.

Any savings realised from delivering these proposals will be ring-fenced and reinvested in the Council's educational asset portfolio.

My children both attend Heol-y-Celyn and I have a third child on the way and we personally believe that this will affect our children. This will also disrupt our children's education due to having to move schools and starting all over again.

Awful idea with no consideration for the wellbeing of children. The upheaval for some children with hidden disabilities (ASD, ADHD etc) will be too much and may extremely detrimental to their education.

Response: Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption. Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all schools involved to ensure that the transition processes are as smooth and seamless as possible for the pupils.

Schools' responsibilities in relation to meeting the additional learning needs of learners are very clear, and through effective person centred planning and partnership working between families and schools, any negative impact on learners with disabilities will be minimised. The substantial investment will provide improved and modern educational facilities and opportunities for all learners, including the most vulnerable.

Future consideration will also be given to establishing a Welsh medium ALN provision in the new school.

The children of Rhydyfelin who have no transport will suffer due to the fact that through the winter months they will have to walk to school in all types of weather. This will not only affect their health but also their education due to the fact that many children will become ill due to being soaking wet all day.

Response: This is the case for the majority of pupils that live within the County Borough. Walking to school is encouraged as this contributes to the health and well-being agenda. However, it is acknowledged that during the winter months appropriate wet weather clothing will be required.

The criteria used by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to determine the eligibility to receive free school transport is based on walking distance, measured by the shortest, available walking route, with free transport being provided to primary school learners whose home address is more than 1 ½ miles from the nearest or catchment school. The criteria for accessing school transport within the Council is above the statutory minimum.

The local authorities are clamping down on poor attendance but have not taken this in to consideration when planning to make Rhydyfelin children leave their local school if they are in the English department. Heol-y-Celyn has been a bilingual school since 1967 and all of our family has attended this school whether it has been the English or the Welsh department.

Response: All future learners living in this community will access modern school facilities that will benefit from substantial investment and improvement creating a positive 21st Century school environment. This type of environment will have a positive impact on teaching and learning, and learner wellbeing and engagement is likely to improve as a consequence.

The Council is required to produce a Welsh Education Statutory Plan ('WESP'), which sets out the Council's vision and objectives to increase the number of Welsh learners; improve the quality of the provision and the educational outcomes; ensure there is suitably trained and qualified educational workforce; and reduce the number of dual language schools within RCT. These proposals have been developed in order to assist in the delivery of these targets. These proposals will result in a much needed new Welsh Medium school and a new 3-16 school in this community. The local authority is committed to enhancing the numbers of learners accessing Welsh medium schools and to promoting the growth in Welsh language speakers.

There is currently, as the report made clear, a great number of surplus places at both Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High, however, even after these proposals there will continue to be considerable surplus capacity at both locations, leading to doubts over whether simply removing the sixth forms at these locations will actually resolve the situation of both schools running a deficit. If reducing surplus capacity is one of the key objectives of the Council, the Council should explore a range of options to see how this could best be achieved, rather than proposing just one option.

Response: The reduction in surplus places will not simply be achieved through the creation of the new all-through schools. £16.7million has been earmarked for investment in both

new all-through school sites and it is through the improvements and remodelling of the school sites and utilising the spare capacity available at the schools that the reduction will be achieved.

As stated in the consultation document the justification for the removal of the sixth forms relates to reduced demand and retention rates, improving educational standards, enhancing choice for learners and improving financial viability by developing a sustainable post-16 provision at Bryncelynnog. Current retention rates and the low numbers of post-16 learners in these settings has resulted in a significant drop in Welsh Government post-16 funding and unsustainable sixth form provisions with small class sizes and poor curriculum choice. The deficit position and restricted curriculum cannot be rectified without radical changes being made.

There's little evidence that "super schools" work for students or for teachers. By moving the children into larger schools we place more pressure on teachers, families, have to spend more time each day traveling to school, and - most importantly - we lose important one-to-one attention that is made possible with smaller classes.

The school size will be too overwhelming for many pupils, even more so for those with additional needs, learning difficulties and mental health problems- which are growing. I am concerned about the record of the current 3 to 16 schools which don't seem to be doing very well.

With respect to the 11 /16 year olds they would lose their role models in the sixth form which could reduce their determination and attitude to achieve that higher grade.

In terms of justification for your proposals you still refer to Ysgol Llanhari and to a through school in Lampeter – just as you were prior to the decision to change Rhondda schools. Are there no tales of success coming through from the Rhondda and Tonyrefail to back up your case? Or do the tales of staff leaving – as we predicted – not help?

Surely it would be prudent to hold off in any thought of such changes until the results of your experiment in the Rhondda are known?

Response: To clarify, the term 'super-school' was a term coined by the press and is not a term that has been adopted by the Council. The Council's first all-through school opened in Llanhari six years ago, and another three all-through schools opened in September 2018, with another due to open in September 2019. There are also a number of other Councils throughout Wales that have opened, are in the process of opening, or consulting on establishing all-through schools. As such it is acknowledged, as has been the case throughout the consultation process, that the data on all through schools is relatively new across Wales. However, discussions with Headteachers of these schools have highlighted the many benefits of leading an all through setting in terms of: opportunities of sharing skills and expertise across phases/stages; extended professional development and career opportunities; enhanced opportunities for developing specialist posts and accessing specialist classrooms and facilities; extended curriculum opportunities; and improved

transition. The views expressed by learners and staff also suggest that they are very happy in their new learning environments, with some describing the opening of their new school as a career defining moment. The opportunity for getting to know children/young people and parents over many years is an obvious benefit that will become more evident with the passing of time in the newly formed schools.

The Local Authority is gathering information in the form of educational outcomes and attendance data, and perception surveys are planned to evaluate the impact of the new schools. Robust monitoring procedures are in place and school improvement support is provided to ensure that the new schools continue on their school improvement journey and that support is provided where required. Early reports on the new schools are very favourable and progress is ongoing.

Reported benefits for learners include access to regular mentoring opportunities, tangible role models for the younger students and the provision of in-house work-experience opportunities for older learners. A sense of community has been established across all the new schools and this includes the wider community.

However, it can be confirmed that larger class sizes are not an outcome of the all-through school model. All class sizes will be built to accommodate up to a maximum of 30 pupils.

No due consideration been given to road safety.

Response: A planning application will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this process a Traffic Impact Assessment will be undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will consider the current capacity of the highway and will assess the impact of any increase in traffic flow, including the increase in school buses on the highway, pedestrian and cycling routes.

This assessment and the associated report will contain recommendations in relation to improving the existing highway infrastructure as well as incorporating pedestrian safety measures such as traffic calming initiatives or additional pedestrian crossing points etc.

In previous school organisations the Council has invested significant sums in improving safe routes to schools in the communities. This investment has also enhanced the area for the whole community and has created opportunities for the community to walk and cycle more safely.

Hysbysiad Statudol 3: Cau Ysgol Gyfun Pontypridd ac Ysgol Gynradd Cilfynydd a creu ysgol pob oed 3 – 16

Statutory Notice 3: The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School

Another key objective of these proposals is to reduce surplus places in our school system. The proposals agreed by Cabinet do not solve this problem to any meaningful extent. One proposal is to close Cilfynydd Primary School, which has a current capacity of 188 pupils, and replace it with 180 pupil places at the 3-16 school at the Pontypridd High School site.

To close a Primary School to save just 8 surplus places seems to be totally unnecessary and one has to question whether it is value for money to do so.

The Consultation Document refers to Estyn's instruction to reduce surplus places, and states that the only reason for the inclusion of Cilfynydd Primary School in these proposals is because of its surplus places. However, the figures in the consultation document show that the surplus places for Primary-aged children would actually be increased by the proposed changes. Therefore, no valid reason has been given for the closure of Cilfynydd Primary School, and it should remain open.

Response: The reduction in surplus places will not simply be achieved through the creation of the new all-through schools. £16.7million has been earmarked for investment in both new school sites and it is through the improvements and remodelling of the school sites that the reduction in surplus capacity will be achieved.

The current capacity of Cilfynydd Primary School is 188 and the current capacity of Pontypridd High is 1,338. The new school proposed will provide a capacity of 1,200. This is a net loss of 326 school places not the 8 as mentioned above.

It is correct that this is one of the key objectives of the 21st Century Schools Programme, as is addressing the condition of educational buildings and providing 21st Century School facilities. This funding will contribute to the achievement of each priority and the all through school will provide many benefits and opportunities as curriculum reforms begin to be rolled out.

There is no good reason to close Cilfynydd Primary School. It is a school that is working well and is currently on a green in the traffic light system. The building although old is in good condition. The school also works within its financial budget.

The structure of the building of Cilfynydd Primary School is well built, strong and has no health and safety issues, instead of closing a successful school I feel that if a little money was spent to upgrade a small number of things within the school it would help, it will also cost a lot less than moving the school.

Response: The closure of this school is one element of a wider school organisation proposal. The closure of this school has not been looked at in isolation but forms part of a wider strategic school organisation programme.

It is acknowledged that the school is performing well and even though the school may be structurally sound, that does not make it a school environment that is conducive to delivering a 21st Century School curriculum and providing the pupils with a modern and flexible learning environment internally or externally. As stipulated in the Consultation Document the external space at this school is particularly prohibitive and very limiting.

The backlog maintenance for Cilfynydd Primary alone is £850,989 and the proposals provide an opportunity for developing a 3-16 school fit for the 21st Century.

I do not agree with the changes you propose and believe this will have a detrimental effect on my child's education. Furthermore I believe this is just another cost cutting exercise by rctcbc.

Response: Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption to their education as well as their well-being. Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and seamless as possible for the pupils.

It is acknowledged that within the Consultation Document it states that addressing the deficit budgets of a number of the schools are one of benefits of delivering these proposals, as are addressing the condition of educational buildings, providing 21st Century School facilities, broadening the curriculum and providing more opportunities for staff to work across phases and share expertise. This however is not a cost-cutting exercise as any savings realised from the delivery of the proposals will be reinvested within the Council's education portfolio. To note, the Council and Welsh Government has invested over £200m to date in the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme.

Concerns have been raised over the effects of moving 3-11 pupils to the Pontypridd High School site, located just metres away from the heavily polluting A470. Indeed that road very recently was deemed to be such a problem that a 50mph speed limit was implemented on it in an attempt to reduce vehicle emissions. The Highways Department of RCT Council have stated that a pollution survey would be undertaken at this location to monitor the level of pollution, yet that report will not be published until after these proposals start to be implemented. In short, it will be too late. Can we really, given all the recent publications into the effects of pollution on the health of young people, proceed with these plans before we have all the relevant data to make an informed decision?

The A470 is a very busy road. The high school children only have a 20 minute morning break and a 35 minute lunch break, less than an hour all day. Factor into this time to eat lunch and go to the toilet etc. then they are outside even less. However primary school children will have a morning play time, a dinner hour and younger ones will also have an afternoon playtime. Foundation phase especially early years spend even more time outside learning through play. This is part of their curriculum. This will mean that the youngest children will be spending the most time in a playground that is right next to the A470 breathing in all the car fumes and pollution. This is not good for children's lungs and there are known health risks.

Response: Comprehensive and detailed information was included within the Consultation Report in response to concerns that were raised during the consultation period. This information remains valid and for ease of reference is included below:

The Local Authority conducts regular monitoring of ambient outdoor air quality in the County Borough and results of this monitoring are compared against health based Air Quality Objectives. The monitoring network is regularly reviewed to determine the most relevant locations to monitor, with regards to statutory guidance, previous assessments

and local knowledge. The monitoring has demonstrated that the vast majority of the County Borough experiences good air quality, with the areas of poor air quality being highly localised. A copy of the latest Air Quality Progress Report is available on the Council website.

Within the County Borough it has been acknowledged that Nitrogen Dioxide, an air pollutant often associated with road traffic emissions, can be elevated in some discrete locations. This is dictated by the volume of traffic, proximity of buildings/people, climate, topography of the area and the surrounding built environment. It is understood that the A470 can represent a significant source of locally experienced Nitrogen Dioxide along various parts of its length, however, a number of factors may affect its manifestation and dispersion. Therefore not all communities along the length of the A470 experience similar levels of Nitrogen Dioxide or are at risk of non-compliance with an Air Quality Objective. The Local Authority has identified three discreet areas, Cilfynydd (174 properties), Nightingales Bush (11 properties) and Treforest (8 properties) where the close proximity to the A470, the environment and topography of the area, have been significant factors in the need to declare associated Air Quality Management Areas. These three Air Quality Management Areas associated with the A470 all have resident populations in built up areas within 10-15 metres from the A470.

There is statutory guidance which has been utilised by the Local Authority to plan the required monitoring network in Rhondda Cynon Taf since 1998 and it assists with establishing the likelihood of compliance to an Air Quality Objective at a specific location. The current Guidance (Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance .TG16) implies that at locations such as Pontypridd High School, where members of the public/students would congregate beyond 20m from the used area of a major strategic road (the A470), they are likely to be compliant with Air Quality Objectives for Nitrogen Dioxide. There are other local factors, such as traffic flow, wind direction and topography of the area, which would also be taken into account when assessing air quality at this location. This area of the A470 has a relative free flow of traffic, compared to other more congested areas and the school is positioned on the windward side of the prevailing wind, with the wind commonly blowing in the direction to the opposite side of the A470 at this location. In addition the A470 is situated at a slightly higher elevation to the area occupied by Pontypridd High School, as a result it would benefit from improved dispersal in comparison to areas with a built environment in close proximity and directly adjacent or above the A470.

Therefore in line with statutory guidance and knowledge of the local area outlined above, no monitoring has been undertaken at Pontypridd High School, as it was not deemed to be at risk of breaching the relevant Air Quality Objective. However, to provide reassurance, a monitoring device has been set up at a potential worse case location on the campus since December 2018, to obtain the required air quality data, to enable the results to be compared against the annual Air Quality Objective for Nitrogen Dioxide.

Nowhere in the consultation document or in the report that went to Cabinet were there estimated figures on the costs that would be incurred by this Council to improve the safety of both the roads and walking routes near the proposed schools, even though the report acknowledged such work would be required. For example, the walking route between Cilfynydd and the Pontypridd High School site would require work to ensure that the walking route is safe for children aged 3-11, yet there were no estimated costs provided. How did the Cabinet meet its obligation of ensuring that taxpayers' money is well spent when they didn't even request the full estimated costs of these proposals?

Response: If the proposals are to proceed, then a review of this walking route will be commissioned to ensure the safety of pupils. This review will include an independent assessment of the route, and any recommendations made by the independent assessor will be implemented. No costs are available as this assessment has not yet been carried out.

Undertaking this specialist survey work can be a costly and so to ensure that taxpayers money is well spent, these assessments will be undertaken once a decision on the proposals are made.

All avenues to secure external grant monies will be explored to fund this work. The Council was successful in securing funding from the Welsh Government to deliver a number of the 'safe routes in the community' schemes that have been delivered to complement the Rhondda school organisation proposals.

The proposed closure of Cilfynydd primary will mean a huge increase in cars travelling back and fore to the high school site as the roads are too dangerous for children to cross safely. Children should be able to walk to school safely - this will not be the case for our youngest pupils.

There has been no due consideration been given to road safety.

Busy road through Cilfynydd – people travelling from North of Cilfynydd, bypass slow moving A470 by cutting through village. Primary age children expected to cross this busy road. Some pavements leading to the school are narrow and because roads are also narrow have cars approaching very close to the pavement edge – High school children have had accidents – some unrecorded.

Response: If the proposals are to proceed, then a review of this walking route will be commissioned to ensure the safety of pupils. This review will include an independent assessment of the route, and any recommendations made by the independent assessor will be implemented.

There is currently, as the report made clear, a great number of surplus places at both Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High, however, even after these proposals there will continue to be considerable surplus capacity at both locations, leading to doubts over whether simply removing the sixth forms at these locations will actually resolve the situation of both schools running a deficit. If reducing surplus capacity is one of the key

objectives of the Council, the Council should explore a range of options to see how this could best be achieved, rather than proposing just one option.

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

There's little evidence that "super schools" work for students or for teachers. By moving the children into larger schools we place more pressure on teachers, families, have to spend more time each day traveling to school, and - most importantly - we lose important one-to-one attention that is made possible with smaller classes.

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

It will be much harder for parents to raise issues have a say in their child's education when dealing with a big organisation rather than a smaller local school.

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

Awful idea with no consideration for the wellbeing of children. The upheaval for some children with hidden disabilities (ASD, ADHD etc.) will be too much and may extremely detrimental to their education.

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

With respect to the 11 /16 year olds they would lose their role models in the 6th.which could reduce their determination and attitude to achieve that higher grade.

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

Young children developed not only academically but need a secure, safe environment that is proud of its heritage and nurtures its pupils. Myself and my own children attended Cilfynydd Primary School and we all benefitted from an excellent education and we are all proud of our school. Professionally I have experience of the quality of the young individuals that this school has produced.

Response: This is acknowledged. These priorities are what the Council aims to deliver through its 21st Century School Programme. The proposed new school will aim to deliver continuity in learning, teaching and the high standards achieved to date.

In many of the areas where schools are going to be closed the schools are a big part of the community and the closure will have a negative impact locally.

The school is at the heart of the village community, a village that has lost many its amenities, its library, many shops, chapels and public houses. This closure would have an impact far bigger than the closure of a building, its impact will have serious consequences which cannot be undervalued.

Response: Community Impact Assessments have been completed for all proposals, and the reports formed a part of the Consultation documentation. Estyn considers these assessments to be appropriate.

The current primary school is not used by the community. The new 3-16 all through school will remain within the community. The improvements proposed will ensure that there are facilities to further encourage community use, and will significantly enhance the opportunities for community engagement including the provision of wrap around care, additional sporting facilities to improve the health and well-being of the community, and spaces for community learning.

This is a terrible, terrible idea. It means that children will have to travel further to get to school which takes more of their time and will lead to more pollution and stress from extra travel.

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

It is a bad idea to have infants in the same school as teenage children because of the negative and inappropriate behaviour they will be exposed to.

Bullying and influences from older children: The profanity which I hear from High School students, when they walk to and from school, is absolutely disgusting. It shocks me to think of primary aged children walking alongside this.

Response: Response: The safeguarding and wellbeing of children is the highest priority for the local authority. There are a number of all-through schools operating in the County Borough and this is managed with appropriate segregation of the younger and older pupils. The schools are designed so that there are separate entrances, learning environments, toilets and outdoor learning and play spaces. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for utilising older children's skills within an all through setting which can also be very rewarding for all parties.

RCT currently has two 3-19 schools, two 3-16 schools, and another 3-19 school opening in September 2019. The headteachers at all of these schools are reporting many positive benefits, including the opportunity to break down barriers across key phases and stages thus ensuring greater continuity in teaching and learning, enhanced opportunities for sharing expertise and specialist staff, and flexibility in staff deployment.

These all-through schools are managed differently depending on the leadership style of the Headteacher concerned and the ethos and culture instilled within the schools. The schools operate in unique and creative ways, but are consistent in ensuring that opportunities for cross phase collaboratively working are achieved. All projects are closely supervised and provide opportunities for older school children to act as positive role models to younger children through peer mentoring and buddying schemes.

All through schools also provide enhanced opportunities for developing cross-phase specialisms and for developing positive relationships between staff, children, young people and their families over time.

Hysbysiad Statudol 4: Cau Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton ac Ysgol Gynradd Heol Y Celyn a creu Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Gymraeg newydd

Statutory Notice 4: The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School

Thema: Problemau Ymarferol/Lleoliad

Theme: Logistical Issues/Location

We have repeatedly called for RCT to consider alternative sites for the relocation of YGG PSN. We welcome the investment into Welsh education and we agree that the current facilities at PSN are not adequate for 21st Century education. However we have strongly

urged RCT to revisit the proposals and consider a site within the current catchment area of the school. We have suggested an alternative site in Glyncoch; we submitted several Freedom of Information Requests regarding its availability and the response was that there were no current plans for this site. We have also suggested keeping the current site at PSN for a smaller number of pupils and renovating the existing site to meet 21st Century facility expectations. Thus, splitting the current number of pupils between the current site and the alternative site in Glyncoch there by providing all pupils with accessible Welsh medium education within their communities. When asked at the Consultation event at Heol y Celyn, RCT education staff admitted no alternative sites had been considered, as it was deemed 'unnecessary'. How can transporting 300 pupils out of their communities and across town to access Welsh Medium education possibly be the only option considered by RCT? Furthermore when we raised the Glyncoch site at the Cabinet meeting the Chairman stated that there were already plans for this site, which wholly contradict the FOI responses we had. There is an alarming lack of transparency and accountability to this whole process.

It's hard enough for Children in these areas to break out of the poverty cycle. Having close accessible schools which give the choice of Welsh language is a human right for these children.

Families who have sought to give their children Welsh Medium Education feel they are being discriminated against by their County Borough Council. There are nine English medium primary schools in Pontypridd. Rather than increase the current three Welsh medium sites to offer more access to Welsh education RCT CBC are removing YGG PSN from the North of Pontypridd and expecting 300 children – as young as three years old - to travel up to six miles to access Welsh medium education. How is this a fair provision?

Parents have suggested an alternative site in Glyncoch; Several Freedom of Information Requests were submitted regarding its availability and the response was that there were no current plans for this site. We have also suggested keeping the current site at Pont Sion Norton for a smaller number of pupils and renovating the existing site to meet 21st Century facility expectations as already done at Trerobart Primary School. By splitting the current number of pupils between the current site and the alternative site in Glyncoch RCTCBC would provide all pupils with accessible Welsh medium education within their communities. However, when the proposal for the Glyncoch site was raised at the Cabinet meeting the Chairman stated that there were already plans for this site. This totally contradicts the FOI responses received. There is a serious lack of transparency and accountability to this whole process.

With Nursery education not guaranteed as full time, parents from Ynysybwl, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch and Cilfynydd are unlikely to even consider the proposed school as an option. Children in part time education are not entitled to free transport. Does this council really believe that parents/ grandparents/ carers will be able to access the new school easily if they have to travel over 24 miles daily? Without transport parents will have to rely on public transport to access the school – does this council seriously believe that this is in the best interests and well-being of our youngest children? The truth is that parents will find it difficult to access the new school especially without transport and relying on public

transport. This will mean that in all probability parents will send their children to their nearest local school – an English medium school.

Many children from North Pontypridd will be unable to access breakfast clubs or after school clubs because of travel issues and cost.

The welfare of the children - please take time to think how this move will affect our children. We are facing a precipice of mental health problems in the uk. How do you expect me to explain to an already anxious child that the school we have excitedly been introducing him to and explaining how close it is to our house will have to at some point move to another, larger school in a completely different area. Yes some of his friends will be moving as well, however, this will not stop the worry and anxiety of integrating him into another environment.

I object to Heol y Celyn being chosen as an appropriate school site for the traditional Pont Siôn Norton catchment communities.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu bod Heol y Celyn wedi ei ddewis fel safle ysgol addas ar gyfer y cymunedau sy'n bwydo ysgol Pont Siôn Norton yn draddodiadol.

I object to logistical barriers being put in place resulting in the poorest communities having their Welsh medium education effectively withdrawn.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu i'r rhwysyrau ymarferol sy'n cael eu gorfodi sy'n golygu y bydd ein cymunedau tlotaf yn cael eu hamddifadu o addysg Gymraeg.

I object due to the fact that at the meeting the CEO stated that wrap around care would be available for children in part time placements at the children's centre. I have noted that the Meithrin situated there does not offer wrap around care. Also, not all pupils are entitled to wrap around care and with the facility catering for children from Rhydyfelin, there is hardly likely to be sufficient space to cater for demand. There was no mention of this in published report. The proposed 60 Meithrin places is also a fallacy as in your own document it states that these places will be dual language. Thus, ensuring that nursery age children in the Rhydyfelin area will not have to travel to Hawthorn for their first years in school. This will obviously limit the number of places available for Welsh medium placements with children from North Pontypridd the most likely to suffer as they are furthest from the area.

Ymateb: Mae Trefniadaeth Ysgolion a Phroses Derbyn Disgyblion yn cael eu gweinyddu trwy Godau Statudol ac maen nhw'n ofynnol o dan Ddeddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013. Rydyn ni'n gwneud yn siwr bod ein holl weithdrefnu yn unol â'r cod yma sy'n sicrhau diwydrwydd fel nad ydyn nhw'n anffafrio unrhyw ddisgybl na'n gwahaniaethu yn ei erbyn. Cafodd yr ymgynghoriad yma ei gynnal yn unol â'r cod yma. Mae cyfnod pontio ystyrlon a llwyddiannus yn rhan annatod o sicrhau bod disgyblion yn ymgartrefu yn eu hysgolion newydd gyda chyn lleied o darfu ar eu haddysg a'u lles. Bydd yr Awdurdod Lleol yn cynnig cyngor a chymorth i bob ysgol sydd wedi'i heffeithio i sicrhau bod y broses bontio mor ddi-dor â phosibl ar gyfer y disgyblion.

Mae'r Cyngor wedi derbyn nifer o Geisiadau am Wybodaeth ers i'r broses ymgynghori ddechrau, roedden nhw'n gofyn am wybodaeth am y safleoedd eraill yn ardal Pontypridd. Mewn ymateb i'r ceisiadau yma, cadarnhaodd y Cyngor y bydd adolygiadau trefnu ysgolion a dalgylchoedd pellach yn cael eu cynnal yn y dyfodol agos. Mae argaeledd y safleoedd yma

yn darparu opsiynau i hwyluso'r broses yma, felly bydd y safleoedd yma yn cael eu cadw at y diben yma.

Does dim rhwystrau ymarferol wedi'u rhoi yn eu lle mewn perthynas â'r cynigion yma. Mae bron i 70% o'r disgyblion sy'n mynd i YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn defnyddio Cludiant o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol. Byddai lleoliad yr ysgol newydd yn Rhydfelen yn golygu y bydd 100% o'r disgyblion yma sydd yn nalgylch YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn gymwys am gludiant am ddim o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol. Felly fydd dim newid i'r rhan fwyaf o ddisgyblion YGG Pont Siôn Norton o ran manteisio ar glybiau ysgol a gweithgareddau allgyrsiol. Mae'n gyffredin i ddisgyblion addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg gael eu cludo i'r ysgol ac mae modd i fanteisio ar weithgareddau cyn/ar ôl yr ysgol fod yn heriol yn yr achosion yma.

Cyfrifoldeb yr ysgolion unigol yw darpariaeth clybiau brecwast a gweithgareddau ar ôl ysgol. Er bod y gweithgareddau yma yn bwysig, dylid nodi nad yw gweithgareddau cyn ac ar ôl ysgol yn ofyniad statudol. Dydy pob ysgol sydd wedi'i heffeithio gan y cynigion ddim yn cynnig darpariaeth ar ôl ysgol ar hyn o bryd, felly bydd y cynigion yn cynnwys cynlluniau i wella darpariaeth clybiau brecwast a chlybiau ar ôl ysgol, gan gynnwys manteisio ar gyfleusterau chwarae yn yr awyr agored, neuaddau chwaraeon, mannau cymdeithasol a chaeau chwarae. Bydd gan yr ysgolion newydd gyfleusterau gwell o lawer a rhagor o gyfleoedd o ran clybiau ar ôl ysgol, a bydd modd i'r gymuned ddefnyddio'r adeiladau. Mae tystiolaeth glir o hyn yn Rhaglenni Moderneiddio Ysgolion ac Addysg yr 21ain Ganrif Band A. Bydd darpariaeth addysg anstatudol yn cael ei gwella trwy sefydlu'r ysgol newydd yma. Mae hyn yn golygu bydd cyfleoedd gwell i hwyluso cynhwysiant cymdeithasol a'i gynyddu.

Mae Cylch Meithrin Rhydfelen yn cynnig gofal cofleidiol a bydd yr ysgol newydd yn cynnig rhagor o gyfleoedd i'r ddarpariaeth yma dyfu, ac i'r Meithrin gydweithio â'r ysgol newydd. Fydd darpariaeth feithrin yn yr ysgol newydd ddim yn ddwyieithog, bydd hi'n gyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae ysgolion cynradd presennol Heol-y-celyn a Phont Siôn Norton yn cynnig darpariaeth feithrin llawn amser ond does dim rheswm i ddisgwyl newidiadau i'r ddarpariaeth yma yn yr ysgol newydd. Y corff llywodraethu sy'n gwneud penderfyniadau mewn perthynas â hyd lleoliadau meithrin.

Response: School Organisation and School Admissions are administered through Statutory Codes and are requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. We ensure that all of our procedures are in line with this Code which ensures we undertake due diligence so that no pupil is unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. This consultation has been carried out in accordance with this Code. Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption to their education as well as their well-being. Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and seamless as possible for the pupils.

A number of Freedom of Information requests have been submitted to the Council, since the consultation process began, which asked for information on alternative sites within the

Pontypridd area. In response to these requests, the Council confirmed that further school organisation and catchment reviews will be undertaken in the near future and so the availability of these sites provide options to facilitate this process and so these sites will be retained for this purpose.

No logistical barriers have been put in place with regard to these proposals. Nearly 70% of the pupils that currently attend YGG Pont Sion Norton currently use Home to School Transport, and the location of the new school in Rhydyfelin would enable 100% of those pupils currently within the catchment of YGG Pont Sion Norton to qualify for free Home to School transport. Therefore, for the vast majority of pupils attending YGG Pont Sion Norton access to school clubs and extra-curricular activities will remain unchanged. It is common for learners accessing Welsh Medium education to be transported to and from school and access to before/after school activities can be a challenge in these cases.

The provision of breakfast clubs and after-school activities are the responsibility of the individual schools and whilst these activities are important it should be noted that pre and post school activities are not a statutory requirement. Not all schools affected by these proposals offer after-school provisions currently, so these proposals will include plans to enhance the breakfast club and after school provision, including access to improved outdoor play facilities, sports halls, social spaces and playing fields. The new schools will have significantly improved facilities and many more opportunities for after-school clubs and community use of the buildings will be available. This is clearly evidenced from Band A 21st Century School and Education Modernisation Programmes. There will be an improvement of the non-statutory education provision delivered through the realisation of this new school, and therefore greater opportunities to facilitate and increase social inclusion.

Cylch Meithrin Rhydyfelin does offer wrap around care and the new school will offer more opportunities for this provision to grow, and more opportunities for the Meithrin to work more collaboratively with the school. The nursery provision in the new school will not be dual language, it will be Welsh medium. The current Heol Y Celyn Primary School and YGG Pont Sion Norton both offer full-time nursery provision and there is no reason to expect changes in this provision in the new school. However, decisions relating to the duration of nursery placements is a governing body consideration.

Thema: Effaith ar Gludiant, ar Deithio ac ar yr Amgylchedd

Theme: Transport, Travel and Environmental Impact

At the Cabinet meeting Cllr Geraint Hopkins stated that children from these communities (Ynysybwl, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch) already travel by bus to PSN so it will be no different. We respectfully submit it is a backward view to say ‘they travel anyway – let them travel further’ In the current socio-environmental climate local authorities have a duty to make school transport cleaner and more sustainable.

RCT’s proposed closure and relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton will inadvertently cause Welsh Medium education in North Pontypridd to become a privilege for the few rather than a provision for all. These proposed changes will place impossible logistical barriers

for families who rely on public transport, leaving parents no option other than choose the local school – which will be English medium. Parents are already telling us this is what they will have to do. RCT is in effect withdrawing accessible Welsh medium education from some of the poorest communities in Pontypridd.

Councillors similarly raised many concerns regarding the additional travel necessary to reach the Heol y Celyn site which RCT Education staff repeatedly denied on a specific technicality. Namely that the morning buses have to travel up the A470 to then travel south towards PSN to be on the left-hand side of the road for the children to safely dismount. This blatant avoidance of the truth raised shouts of opposition from the public gallery. The fact that parents will not be able to access to the proposed school site unless they have a car has been utterly ignored. Parents, carers and grandparents relying on public transport could face up to a two-hour round trip in the event of a sick child or a special event; 'One car families' where the parent in work needs the car will be in the same predicament. Parental engagement in children's education is essential for the wellbeing of the child yet this aspect of the relocation was deliberately overlooked at the Cabinet and Scrutiny meeting.

The proposal that travel time to and from the new school will be shorter is not true. The travel time to the new school is based on children travelling down Holly Street which means that children will disembark on the opposite side from the school. This is against the policy of ensuring children's safety by ensuring they disembark on the school side (which is the reason buses presently go up the A470), so there would have to be an addition to the route to ensure the safety of the children and so a longer journey.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu i'r rhwystrau ymarferol sy'n cael eu gorfodi ar rieni sy'n golygu y bydd ein cymunedau tlotaf yn cael eu hamddifadu o addysg Gymraeg oherwydd na all rhieni fforddio y gost o gyrraedd eu plant yn ystod y dydd heb orfod dal hyd at 2-3 o fysus. Rwy'n gwrthwynebu na fydd y teuluoedd hyn yn gallu elwa ar ddarpariaeth gweithgareddau y tu allan i oriau ysgol fel clybiau brecwast a chlybiau ol-ysgol oherwydd na allent fforddio i gludo eu plant yno ar drafndiaeth gyhoeddus os nad oes gan y teulu gar.

I live in Glyncoch and take my children to school because of bullying by older children on the bus. I will not put them on a bus and in that position again. I take my children to school and go straight to work. Being so close allows me to do so. If you relocate so far away I will not be able to manage to get my children to school on time and I will be late for work. The area is already heavily congested and doesn't need any more traffic. Either I won't be able to continue my employment or you will be denying my children their right to education in the Welsh language locally.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu tynnu cyfle sydd yn annodd nawr oherwydd y pellter allan o cymuned Ynysybwl yn mynd o ddrwg i wawth gan ychwannegu i'r pellter sydd yn 'obstruction' nawr i rhai rhienni; i gael ein hysgol gynradd yn Heol y Celyn sydd yn tynnu'r dewis o rhienni Ynysybwl o gael addysg trwy Gymraeg i plant y dyfodol. Warthus!

For the children of Ynysybwl this will mean a longer and more arduous school day, as the new proposed Rhydyfelin site will mean that children as young as three will need to travel to and from school through two of the most traffic congested areas in Rhondda Cynon Taff at peak times of the day.

Although the distance of the new school may not look too far on paper or in a car, when you are relying on public transport, as I am, it is a significant distance and cost. I went to a birthday party at the Ilan Centre in Rhydyfelin on Saturday which is just up from the proposed school site and it cost me £4 and took over an hour. If my child wants to take part in any after school activities, I will need to do that journey every week, and I will need to pay for her too as she will soon be over 5. If there is a parents evening, I will need to do the same journey. If I want to be involved in the PTA and support the school I will need to do that journey. If she makes friends with children who live close to the school and wants to go and play after school, I will need to do that journey. What is a fairly simple trip if you have car will actually have a huge impact on our lives without the use of one. For this reason I will choose to move her to a local school rather than continue with Welsh medium education which is a huge disappointment, especially as I have started going to a Welsh class at the school in order to support her education and Welsh is beginning to become a part of our lives.

At present the time from YGG Pont Sion Norton to communities in North Pontypridd is much shorter than time taken to get there. So, the Council's transport time argument is invalid.

I object to children as young as three being bussed up to 6 miles away from their community to access Welsh medium education.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu fod plant mor ifanc â thair blwydd oed yn teithio ar fws hyd at chwe milltir i ffwrdd o'u cymunedau er mwyn gallu derbyn addysg Gymraeg

I am angry at the prospect of being forced to send my daughter on a bus for 30-45 minutes at the start and at the end of the school day in order for her to access Welsh medium education. How can that, in any way you dress it up, be a good thing for her?? It's absurd. We won't do it. So we will be forced to take her out of school, uproot her from friendships and move her to a local English medium school, outside our village but a walkable distance.

I object to 5 or 6 extra busses going through Pontypridd town at the busiest times of day. Are we not in a Climate Emergency?

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu bod 5 neu 6 o fysus ychwanegol yn mynd i orfod teithio drwy dref Pontypridd ar yr amseroedd prysuraf o'r dydd. Onid ydym wedi datgan Argyfwng o ran yr Hinsawdd?

Also the amount of traffic at the moment around the schools during the school run times are already bad. The a470 has also been reduced to 50mph between Pontypridd and nantgarw to try reduce the pollution so by bringing more traffic into the Rhydyfelin area is going to cause more pollution and disruption the roads and local people.

I'm a resident on Holly street Rhydyfelin, and find the prospect of increased traffic abhorrent. There is already carnage twice a day, which forces traffic into heavily pedestrianised areas other than Holly street. Increases in fumes from heavy fuel consuming buses, on an already busy bus route is madness. I fear that money and very little common sense is the reason for this decision and disagree totally with these plans.

I am writing this email to express my concerns of Heol-y-Celyn primary school being turned in to a Welsh only school. Firstly this will affect are community due to the higher

volume of traffic that is going to be in holly street, it is already a very bad road to be on during school run hours and this is with only local residents attending Heol-y-Celyn.
I would not want my young children on such a long bus ride. Although children currently do attend by bus the journey is not as long. Also the consultation didn't take into account the traffic to get to Rhydfelin at that time of day would make the bus journey even longer.
On paper it doesn't look far but with traffic I can assure you it takes forever. Children leave at 8am as it us and aren't home before 4.15 if mine went to Heol y Celyn they'd be leaving at 7.30 and home by 4.30 when they could easily build a school a lot closer.
The higher volume of traffic through the busses and car will also affect the environment due to the higher volume of emissions from the traffic.
While I've got no issues regarding the actual school becoming a Welsh only school, what does concern myself and most of the residents of Holly Street is the increased school transport and the many parents who are looking for parking spaces during the school run.
Increasing the school pupils to over 500+ will create even more issues with the above concerns unless something is done, drop off/pick up points within the school grounds, Holly Street being made one way from main gates to Dyffryn Road hill and Oak Street being made one way from Dyffryn Road hill to Beechwood Street etc
I object to RCT's decision to move forward with the 21st century schools reorganisation in Pontypridd as my children are due to start pont-sion Norton in sept this year and September next year, my older children and myself went to this welsh school , I think it's unfair for there to be so many English schools within a certain distance and our children will have to travel near enough ten miles to school and from school
I heavily object to Heol-y-Celyn being chosen as a school site for the traditional Pont Siôn Norton communities. I attended a protest march with protesters against the distance of the catchment area last month. It is far too far and secluded for any children to walk unaccompanied and on a regular basis.
It means that children will have to travel further to get to school which takes more of their time and will lead to more pollution and stress from extra travel.
Maureen Webber has stated that none of her constituents in Rhydyfelin are objecting the location of the new school or our concerns about the transport repercussions that will negatively affect the residents surrounding the proposed site, yet residents of Holly and Oak streets state that they were not consulted or informed of the likely impact of the proposals.
I object as the council have stated that there will be less distance travelled to the proposed new school site by virtue of fact that the current bus route to YGG Pont Sion Norton does not travel the shortest route so pupils are dropped off at the same side of the road as the school. Yet a Freedom Information request has revealed that no traffic survey has been completed for the proposed new school site and therefore no planned route. This survey has yet to consider the congested traffic that is around the Pontypridd area or the actual distance a bus will travel and the time of this journey is dropping the children off on the school side of the road.
No account appears to have been taken of this extra traffic. And RCT (along with other local authorities in Wales, and the Welsh Government) has a statutory obligation to

promote active travel (Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, subsection 10(1)(a)). This does not appear to have been addressed as it is not mentioned in the Cabinet papers.

Pollution is already a major issue, impacting many schools such as Evan James. This will make it worse.

Ymateb: Mae'r wybodaeth a gafodd ei chynnwys yn yr Adroddiad Ymgynghori mewn perthynas â'r cynnydd o ran pellter teithio yn nodi 'Rydyn ni'n cydnabod efallai bod hyn yn wir ar gyfer rhai disgyblion. Serch hynny, fydd mwyafrif y disgyblion ddim yn cael eu heffeithio oherwydd bod bron i 70% o'r disgyblion sy'n mynychu Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Siôn Norton ar hyn o bryd yn defnyddio'r gwasanaeth cludo disgyblion.

Bydd pellteroedd llwybrau bysiau ysgol y llwybrau newydd arfaethedig yn fyrrach na'r llwybrau bws ysgol presennol. Rydyn ni wedi cyfrifo'r llwybrau, a bydd y pellter cyffredinol cyfartalog ar gyfer y disgyblion hynny sydd eisoes yn defnyddio cludiant ysgol yn cael ei fyrhau ychydig o dros filltir y dydd.' Mae'r pellteroedd wedi'u nodi yn y tabl isod. Rydyn ni'n cydnabod bod modd i dagfeydd traffig achosi problemau i ddefnyddwyr ffyrdd ac effeithio ar gyfnodau teithio ar adegau penodol, ond dyma rywbeth sy'n anodd ei reoli.

Contract 163/01 – Terminws Ynys-y-bŵl	Milltiredd (am)	Milltiredd (pm)
YGG Pont Siôn Norton (Presennol)	10	5.5
Ysgol Gynradd Heol y Celyn (Arfaethedig)	7.1	7.3

Contract 163/02 – Ynys-y-bŵl / Coed y Cwm	Milltiredd (am)	Milltiredd (pm)
YGG Pont Siôn Norton (Presennol)	9.5	5
Ysgol Gynradd Heol- y-celyn (Arfaethedig)	6.6	6.8

Contract 163/03 – Glyn-coch	Milltiredd (am)	Milltiredd (pm)
YGG Pont Siôn Norton (Presennol)	8.3	3.8
Ysgol Gynradd Heol- y-celyn (Arfaethedig)	5.4	5.6
	Milltiredd (am)	Milltiredd (pm)
Amrywiad – Pellter ar Gyfartaledd	-2.9	1.8

Bydd y disgyblion nad ydyn nhw'n teithio i YGG Pont Siôn Norton ar fws ar hyn o bryd gan eu bod nhw'n byw o fewn pellter cerdded y dalgylch sef 1 ½ milltir, yn gymwys am Gludiant o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol am ddim i'r ysgol newydd. Y pellaf y bydd angen i'r disgyblion yma deithio i'r ysgol newydd fydd 4.5 milltir i'r ysgol ac yn ôl.

Dyma gadarnhau llwybrau'r bysys sydd ar gael, mae bws uniongyrchol i Ysgol Gynradd Heol-y-celyn o ardal Glyn-coch. O ardaloedd Ynys-y-bŵl a Chilfynydd, bydd angen newid bws yng Ngorsaf Fysiau Pontypridd. Dydy hyn ddim yn wahanol i'r sefyllfa bresennol i rieni o ardaloedd Glyn-coch ac Ynys-y-bŵl. Ar hyn o bryd, rhaid i rieni o ardaloedd Glyn-coch ac Ynys-y-bŵl y mae angen iddyn nhw gyrraedd YGG Pont Siôn Norton mewn argyfwng, newid bws yng Ngorsaf Fysiau Pontypridd. Rydyn ni'n cydnabod y bydd y newidiadau yma yn effeithio ar rieni sy'n byw yng Nghilfynydd, ond bydd y sefyllfa bresennol yn parhau o safbwynt y rheiny sy'n byw yn y cymunedau eraill wedi'u nodi yn y gwrthwynebiadau.

Anaml iawn ddylai fod angen i gasglu plant mewn argyfwng. Mewn sefyllfa o'r fath, mae gan staff ysgol ddyletswydd o ofal a chyfrifoldeb i sicrhau bod gofal a lles pob plentyn o'r pwys mwyaf. Bydd pob ysgol yn sicrhau'r gofal perthnasol ar gyfer unrhyw ddisgybl sy'n teimlo'n sâl neu sydd wedi anghofio ei ginio. Yn amlwg, os bydd plentyn yn sâl iawn, bydd angen i deuluoedd wneud trefniadau i'w gasglu, ond yn anaml iawn ddylai fod sefyllfaoedd o'r fath. O ran presenoldeb mewn clybiau brechwast/clybiau ar ôl ysgol, cyfrifoldeb y rhieni a gwarcheidwaid yw gollwng a chasglu eu plant. Mae hyn yr un peth â'r ddarpariaeth bresennol yn YGG Pont Siôn Norton a phob ysgol yn yr Awdurdod.

Mewn perthynas â'r gwrthwynebiadau sy'n gysylltiedig ag oedran ifanc disgyblion y mae disgwyl iddyn nhw deithio ar fws i'r ysgol Gymraeg newydd, dyma'r sefyllfa bresennol ledled y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Mae RhCT yn brofiadol o ran darparu cludiant diogel i ddisgyblion o 3 oed, ac mae'r gwasanaeth yn cael ei ddarparu yn unol â'r Polisi Cludiant Ysgol. Mae'r Cyngor yn cludo dros 2,000 o ddisgyblion oedran cynradd i'w hysgolion, mae dros 250 o'r rhain yn eu blwyddyn gyntaf yn yr ysgol (3-4 oed). Mae holl gontractau ysgolion cynradd yn cael eu cyflawni gan yrwyr a chynorthwyr teithwyr sydd wedi'u gwirio gan y Gwasanaeth Datgelu a Gwahardd. Mae diogelwch a lles ein disgyblion o'r pwys mwyaf i ni ar bob adeg. Fydd dim newid i drefniadau 69% o ddisgyblion sy'n mynd i YGG Pont Siôn Norton ar gludiant ysgol ar hyn o bryd. Bydd effaith ar y plant sy'n byw o fewn pellter cerdded dalgylch YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn unig, ac rydyn ni'n cydnabod hyn.

Rydyn ni hefyd yn cydnabod y bydd cynnydd yn nifer y bysiau ysgol sy'n mynd i'r ysgol newydd yn Rhydfelen. Bydd cais cynllunio yn cael ei gyflwyno ar gyfer yr ysgol newydd, ac yn rhan o'r broses yma, bydd Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig yn cael ei gynnal gan ganolbwyntio ar yr ardal uniongyrchol a'r ardal gyfagos. Bydd yr asesiad yma yn edrych ar y briffordd bresennol ac asesu effaith unrhyw gynnydd yn nifer y bysiau ysgol ar y briffordd ac ar lwybau i gerddwyr a beicwyr. Bydd yr adroddiad yma yn cynnwys argymhellion mewn perthynas â gwella seilwaith presennol priffordd, yn ogystal â chynnwys mesurau diogelwch i gerddwyr megis mentrau arafu traffig neu fannau croesi ychwanegol i gerddwyr, ac ati. Yn rhan o gynlluniau Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif eraill, mae mesurau wedi cael eu rhoi ar waith, gan gynnwys llefydd parcio ychwanegol ar y safle, manau gollwng i fysiau ar safle'r ysgol a manau troi. Byddwn ni'n sicrhau bod mesurau priodol yn cael eu rhoi ar waith mewn unrhyw ddatblygiad newydd.

Mae'r awdurdod lleol yn cynnal gwaith monitro ac adolygu ansawdd aer i wirio cydymffurfriad ag Amcanion Ansawdd Aer statudol wedi'u gosod gan lywodraeth genedlaethol i amddiffyn iechyd y cyhoedd. Bydd gwybodaeth ynglŷn ag Ansawdd Aer a'r effaith ar breswylwyr yn cael ei chynnwys yn yr Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig fel sydd wedi'i nodi uchod. I'r gwrthwyneb, dylai'r problemau o ran tagfeydd yn ardal YGG Pont Siôn Norton wella.

Cafodd yr ymgynghoriad ei gynnal yn unol â deddfwriaeth Llywodraeth Cymru, sydd wedi'i hamlinellu yn ei Chod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion statudol. Rydyn ni wedi ymgynghori â'r holl bobl y mae angen ymgynghori â nhw o dan y Cod yma. Doedden ni ddim wedi ymgynghori â phreswylwyr Ysgol Gynradd bresennol Heol-y-celyn yn Rhydfelen yn rhan o'r cynigion yma gan eu bod nhw'n canolbwyntio ar drefniadaeth ysgolion yn unig, felly dydy'r ysgol ddim yn un o'r rhai statudol y mae angen ymgynghori â nhw. Serch hynny, mae'r ddogfen ymgynghori wedi cael ei chyhoeddi ar wefan y Cyngor ac mae modd i unrhyw â diddordeb weld manylion y cynnig a gwneud sylwadau fel y bo'n berthnasol.

Rhaid nodi bod y broses ymgynghori statudol sy'n cael ei chynnal yn berthnasol i gynigion y Cyngor i ad-drefnu ysgolion yn ardal Pontypridd. Dydy hi ddim yn ymgynghoriad ar adeiladu adeilad newydd. Os bydd y cynnig yn symud ymlaen, bydd ymgynghoriad pellach yn cael ei gynnal â'r gymuned leol, gan gynnwys yr hyn sy'n ofynnol o dan Ddeddf Cynllunio Gwlad a Thref, fydd yn cynnwys preswylwyr yr ysgol arfaethedig newydd. Bydd yr Asesiadau o'r Effaith ar Draffig wedi'u nodi uchod yn rhan o'r arolygon ac asesiadau y bydd angen eu cynnal yn unol â'r cais cynllunio statudol y bydd angen ei gyflwyno.

Response: The information that was included in the Consultation Report in relation to the increase in travel distances states, 'It is acknowledged that this may well be the case for some pupils, however the majority of pupils will be unaffected as nearly 70% of pupils currently attending YGG Pont Sion Norton do so utilising school transport.

The school bus route distances of the new routes proposed will be shorter than the current school bus routes travelled. The Transport Unit have calculated the routes, and the average overall distance travelled for those pupils who already use school transport will be shortened by just over 1 mile per day.' The actual distances are recorded in the table below. It is acknowledged that traffic congestion can cause issues for all road users and impact on travel times at certain times of the day, however this is something that can be difficult to control.

Contract 163/01 - Ynysybwl Terminus	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pontsionnorton (Current)	10	5.5
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	7.1	7.3

Contract 163/02 - Ynysybwl / Coed y Cwm	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
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YGG Pont Sion Norton (Current)	9.5	5
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	6.6	6.8

Contract 163/03 - Glyncoch	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pont Sion Norton (Current)	8.3	3.8
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	5.4	5.6

	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
Average Overall Distance Variation	-2.9	1.8

Those pupils who currently do not travel to YGG Pont Sion Norton by bus, as they live within the 1 ½ mile in-catchment walking distance, will qualify for free Home to School Transport to the new school. The furthest that these pupils will have to travel to school will be 4.5 miles each way to the new school.

To confirm the available service bus routes, there is a direct bus to Heol Y Celyn from Glyncoch, but from Ynysybwl and Cilfynydd it would require a change of bus in Pontypridd Bus Station which is no different to the current situation for parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl. Currently parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl needing to attend YGG Pont Sion Norton in an emergency via public transport are currently required to change buses at Pontypridd Bus Station, as is also the case for learners who live in these areas attending secondary education in YG Garth Olwg. It is recognised that these changes will affect parents who live in Cilfynydd but for those that live in the other communities referenced in the objections the status quo will be maintained.

The need for emergency collections should be infrequent. In any event, all school staff have a duty of care and a responsibility to ensure that the care and wellbeing of all pupils is paramount. Every school will ensure that any learner who feels unwell or who has forgotten their lunch will be appropriately cared for. Clearly, if a child is very unwell then families will have to make arrangements for collections but incidents of this nature should be infrequent. For attendance at breakfast/after school clubs, it is the responsibility of parents and carers to facilitate drop offs and collections, which is the same as the current provision at YGG Pont Sion Norton and all schools within the Authority.

In relation to the objections associated with the young age of the pupils that will be expected to travel on the bus to the new Welsh school, this is currently the situation across the County Borough. RCT is experienced in providing safe transport for pupils upwards from the age of 3, and this service is provided in line with the School Transport Policy. The Council currently transports over 2,000 primary age pupils to school, of which over 250 are in their first year of school (aged 3-4). All primary school contracts are operated by drivers and passenger assistants that have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount to us at all times.

To reiterate, for the 69% of pupils that currently attend YGG Pont Sion Norton via school transport there will be no change to their transport arrangements. It is only the children that currently live within the 1 ½ mile walking distance of YGG Pont Sion Norton that will be affected by these changes and this is acknowledged.

It is recognised that there will be an increase in the number of school buses attending the new school in Rhydyfelin. A planning application will be submitted specifically for the new school, and as a part of this process a Traffic Impact Assessment will be undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will look at the current capacity of the highway and also assess the impact of any increase in traffic flow, including the increase in school buses, on the highway, pedestrian and cycling routes. This report will contain recommendations in relation to improving the existing highway infrastructure as well as incorporating pedestrian safety measures such as traffic calming initiatives or additional pedestrian crossing points etc. As part of other 21st Century School schemes measures have been put in place including additional on-site parking, dedicated drop off zones for buses within the school site and turning circles. Due consideration will be given to ensuring that appropriate measures are put in place on any new development.

The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance to statutory Air Quality Objectives, set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact upon residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above. Conversely, the traffic congestion issues in and around YGG Pont Sion Norton in Cilfynydd should improve.

The consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory School Organisation Code. All persons who are required to be consulted with under this Code have been consulted with. Residents of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School in Rhydyfelin were not consulted with as a part of these proposals as they solely focus on school reorganisation and as such, they are not one of the statutory consultees. However, the consultation documentation has been published on the Council website and any interested person could have viewed the details of the proposal and comment as deemed appropriate.

It must be noted that the statutory consultation process being undertaken relates to the Council's proposals to reorganise schools in the Pontypridd area and it is not a consultation on the construction of a new building. If this proposal does proceed, further consultation will be undertaken with the local community, including that required under the Town and Country Planning Act, which will include residents of the new school proposed. The Traffic Impact Assessments mentioned above will form a part of the surveys and assessments that will need to be undertaken in accordance with the statutory planning application that will need to be submitted.

Thema: Cydymffurfio a Gweithdrefnau

Theme: Compliance and Procedure

There was no meeting for parents held at YGG PSN, instead the meeting was held at the proposed site which was impossible for most parents to attend. The meeting was held between 4pm-6pm, therefore many working parents could not attend. Being two bus journeys away from our communities, parents who rely on public transport could not attend. The RCT Education representatives at the meeting could not our answer our questions regarding the added distance children would be expected to travel and had no knowledge of the extreme traffic build up that occurs around Pontypridd town centre during school run times. We were repeatedly told if we had concerns, we should make them known in the consultation questionnaire. As parents we left this meeting exasperated and angry at the lack of awareness displayed by the RCT Education staff.

125 questionnaire responses agreed with the proposal to relocate YGG Pont Sion Norton, compared to 427 official responses against. 500 signatures on a petition submitted against the proposals were not recorded in the Consultation document. 13 out of 14 members of the public allowed to speak at the Cabinet meeting spoke against the proposals, two of whom spoke specifically against the relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton to Heol y Celyn. Yet despite this overwhelming response from the public against the proposals they were passed by the Cabinet on March 21st as if there had never been any doubt.

A voting Cabinet member, Cllr Maureen Webber, is the Chair of governors at Heol y Celyn, the school earmarked to have millions of pounds of investment - How is this democratic? We submit that she had a vested interest in the passing of the proposal and should not have been allowed to vote.

The council did not ensure that all parents received a consultation document, they were not issued through the school and therefore not all parents were able to express an opinion. This council presumes that everyone has access to a computer and the internet - this is not the case.

This council is creating a two-tier Welsh education system in North Pontypridd while children in Rhydyfelin are given more opportunities to engage in Welsh medium education irrespective of distance or financial implication.

Ynysybwl is a rural community and RCT fails to recognise this and its distance from the proposed new school.

Children should be protected by The Future Generations Act to accessible education whether English or Welsh. It is discriminatory that RCT is placing logistical barriers for children from some of the poorest communities to access Welsh medium education.

How can a Cabinet that has totally ignored all objections in previous meetings or ensured that councillors answer relevant and important questions be entrusted to oversee fairly the objections raised. This cabinet has consistently refused to take time for proper discussion, To everyone on the outside, it is obvious that this Cabinet has no intention of allowing their decisions to be altered and therefore there will be no impartiality. This Cabinet has already made it intentions clear and once again I fear that this objection period is just a 'paper exercise' to meet legal requirements. These objections should be considered by an outside body.

RCT have chosen to ignore the views of the public.

<p>There continues to be a complete failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation.</p>
<p>Despite the number of objections raised at cabinet meetings, council meetings, orally during other meetings, via petitions, via written submissions etc, no consideration nor serious discussions have taken place to answer the points raised.</p>
<p>Cabinet proposed the decision, yet it is the same people who scrutinised the decision to continue with the proposals and the same group of people to “consider” these objections.</p>
<p>There is a lack of transparency within RCT in regards to these proposals, no answers to questions posed despite cabinet and council giving opportunities to ask questions.</p>
<p>I object to the fact that cabinet can push through plans without consideration being given to any of the suggestions raised by the public.</p>
<p>I believe that the consultation process undertaken by RCT Council on the 21st Century Schools proposals for Pontypridd has left a great deal to be desired. Not only did fail to provide multiple options for parents to give their views on, it also failed to provide all the necessary information that you would expect to see in a consultation of this size and was set out in such a way that multiple proposals came under one question, preventing those filling-in the consultation from filling all of it in.</p>
<p>It is a great shame that this opportunity to invest £37million on improving education facilities in Pontypridd has turned into proposals that the parents and residents of Pontypridd don't want, this is clear from your own consultation. I therefore request that the Cabinet do not proceed with these proposals and instead consults again on a series of proposals for the future of education in Pontypridd, so that this £37million can be spent as effectively as it possibly can.</p>
<p>I object the proposals on the basis that RCT feel it is acceptable to risk my children’s education given that Estyn’s opinion is that at best it is hoped that the new school will achieve the same standards as YGG Pont Sion Norton – shouldn’t any proposals at least improve the outcomes for our children?</p>
<p>The decision to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn and create only one school on the Heol y Celyn site has been based on the fact that the other proposed education changes frees up this space – and that this decision therefore has clearly not been made with the welfare of our children/the education of our children/the future of the Welsh Language/the future of our children in mind.</p>
<p>RCT has set out its wellbeing objectives and in particular the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More involved and resilient communities... (The steps for this include: Build stronger partnerships with community groups; and Coordinate and improve the support it gives to communities.) • Rhondda Cynon Taf’s schools will be amongst the best in the country, and with all children achieving the best they can. • Rhondda Cynon Taf’s children and young people will receive a great start in life. <p>I would like RCT to show how your actions as part of the 21st century proposals meet these objectives and how are your actions in this case a reasonable step to meet the objectives and how have you have mitigated any negative impact you decision may have on the objectives.</p>

The Wellbeing and Future Generations Act looks at the five ways of working. How has RCT Council demonstrated how they have taken these into account?

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. All persons who are required to be consulted with under this Code have indeed been consulted with.

Our consultation documentation has been published on the Council website and any interested person had the opportunity to view the details of the proposal and comment on it if they so wished. In addition, and in accordance with the Code, hard copies of the Consultation Document were distributed to all schools directly affected by the proposals, to distribute to parents and carers via 'pupil mail'.

There is no requirement, as specified with the Code, for proposers to hold consultation meetings, or open evenings, with consultees. This is something that the Council undertook over and above what was required statutorily in order to encourage further collaboration and to be able to speak directly to consultees. In addition to the 16 meetings that were convened at each school directly affected by the proposals, 5 public drop-in sessions were also held throughout the Pontypridd area.

The Consultation Report listed the details of the consultation responses that were submitted during the consultation period. These included the number of questionnaires that were received, as well as a breakdown in the number of the general correspondence that was also submitted. Petitions are acknowledged as a singular response and/or objection. The Report also confirmed that all responses were scrutinised by Cabinet prior to the meeting, so in addition to the summary of responses that was included within the Report, ALL consultation responses were provided to Cabinet in their entirety, prior to the Cabinet meeting.

As mentioned in one of the objections above, in terms of the numbers of consultation responses specifically in relation to Proposal 4, 125 people were 'for' the proposal, 427 people were 'against' the proposal, 333 people were 'unsure' and 1,283 chose not to respond. If we are to examine these figures in basic terms, just looking at those that chose to respond, 'for or 'against' then the split is 77:23, if those that responded with an 'unsure' are included in the calculations then less than 50% were 'against' the proposals, if all those that responded to the consultation are included in the calculations then then less than 22% of respondents were 'against' the proposals. If we were to widen the scope of the consultees in terms of how many people were directly consulted with then the figures increase to the thousands, and then the percentage of those that were against the proposals becomes even lower.

The proceedings at the Cabinet meetings were carried out in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure contained in the Council's Constitution. In accordance with the Constitution, Cabinet Members must maintain objectivity in decision making. Cabinet

Members were fully informed of the relevant issues before making their decision through the officer reports and afforded the opportunity to inspect all the Consultation responses received prior to consideration of the Consultation Report at the meeting itself. It is the Council's view that discussions relating to this proposal were open and honest and submissions made resulted in a thorough and robust debate on the proposals. The decisions of the Cabinet were reached through the democratic processes of the Council.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councillors must comply with the Member's Code of Conduct, contained within Part 5 (Codes and Protocols) of the Council's Constitution.

The Member's Code of Conduct requires a Member whilst carrying out their duties, to decide if they have a personal interest in an item of Council business and if so, whether they need to disclose it. The Code sets out when a Member will have a personal interest. A Member will have a personal interest where the business being considered relates to any body to which they have been elected, appointed or nominated by the Council. Therefore a Member who has been appointed by the Council as a Local Education Authority Governor will have a personal interest if the business being considered relates to the School to which they have been appointed.

Where a Member has a personal interest in any business of the Council and they attend a meeting at which that business is being considered a Member must disclose orally to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest before or at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

Where a Member has a personal interest in any business they will also have a prejudicial interest in that business, if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice their judgement of the public interest. However there are certain exemptions to this rule contained within the Code and a Member will not be regarded as having a prejudicial interest in any business where that business relates to a body to which they have been elected, appointed or nominated by the Council. Note this exemption does not apply where the business relates to the determination of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration (in this regard the Public Services Ombudsman For Wales has stipulated in his Guidance for County Borough Councillors on the Code of Conduct that he considers these descriptions to refer to a narrow category of decisions, such as granting planning consent and licensing decisions and that a wider interpretation of approval, for example, would cover almost every aspect of the Council's business and was clearly not intended).

Therefore a Member would not be prevented from participating in a meeting (and voting) where the business related to a School to which they have been appointed by the Council as a Local Education Authority Governor, but in order to comply with the Code of Conduct should disclose the existence of the personal interest.

The reference to Cllr Webber is incorrect. Cllr Webber is a governor of Heol Y Celyn Primary School but she is not the Chair of Governors.

The 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, which is the driver behind these proposals, contributes positively to RCTs' well-being agenda as well as each of the Well-being of Future Generation Act goals on a number of levels, an example of each is included below:

A prosperous Wales

Improving educational outcomes and educational provision are the priority for every project delivered within the 21st Century Schools Programme, contributing to the development of a skilled and well-educated workforce.

A resilient Wales

Newly constructed schools are built to BREEAM excellent standards and include features such as photovoltaic cells, rain water harvesting systems, and a biodiverse forest schools' area, contributing to a healthier natural environment

A healthier Wales

21st Century Schools include modern and flexible sports facilities that not only benefit the school but also the wider community. The benefits of which have a positive effect on well-being.

A more equal Wales

All of our schools are wholly inclusive and all pupils and parents have the opportunity to choose the school of their choice, be it English medium, Welsh medium or faith provision. In addition, RCT's generous home to school transport ensures that all pupils have equitable access to any school regardless of social, economic or geographical factors.

A Wales of cohesive communities

Community facilities are included within our new schools so that schools can provide an additional role within its community and act as a catalyst to create a local community hub. Facilities include dedicated community rooms as well as sports facilities that can be used out of hours thus increasing the connectedness of learners and non-learners alike from different communities.

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

RCT's WESP sets out the Council's vision and objectives to increase the number of Welsh learners; improve the quality of the provision and the educational outcomes; and ensure there is suitably trained and qualified educational workforce. This Plan is a key policy and informs the 21st Century Schools Programme.

A globally responsible Wales

The larger 21st Century Schools projects are procured using the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). This is the publication in which all tenders from the public sector which are valued above a certain financial threshold according to EU legislation, must be published, advertising opportunities on a global scale.

In addition, an assessment of the proposals on The Well-being and Future Generations Act five ways of working is below:

<p><u>Long Term</u> (The importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?</p> <p>Maintaining the existing provision of educational premises within Rhondda Cynon Taf places enormous strain on the Council resources. It is recognised that there is an opportunity through the 21st Century Schools funding to manage these pressures more efficiently in future years.</p> <p>The long term vision for RCT education is to provide all learners with the best opportunity possible to achieve their full potential through the means of education by providing access to the very best learning opportunities with modern, flexible facilities appropriate for delivering the new curriculum.</p> <p>Improved learning environments will act as a stimulus to creating a better future through delivering brand new 21st Century Schools facilities for our pupils through all phases of their educational journeys from foundation phase through to delivering a more efficient and effective post-16 provision.</p>
<p><u>Prevention</u> (How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?</p> <p>The Council recognises the challenges of providing everyone with the facilities and opportunities to receive an excellent education in 21st Century facilities. These proposals will enhance and improve the educational environments for all 3-19 year olds affected.</p>
<p><u>Integration</u> (Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the wellbeing goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes together?</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh language as a vital element to achieve and reinforce social and cultural benefits. These proposals will deliver more welsh medium places in the Pontypridd area, opportunities for wider community collaboration and participation, a more sustainable educational building meeting BREEAM targets all providing a more integrated and improved learning experience.</p>
<p><u>Collaboration</u> (Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being</p>	<p>How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p> <p>As a part of this school organisation programme the Council has already consulted with thousands of learners, staff, and parents and carers, throughout the Pontypridd area. If</p>

objectives)	these proposal are to go ahead then this collaboration will continue when further consultation will be undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to shape the 21 st Century Schools provision to ensure benefits and well-being opportunities are maximised.
<u>Involvement</u> (The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves)	<p>How does your project / facility involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do those stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?</p> <p>Consultation meetings were held with the student councils of all of the schools directly affected by the proposals, as well as with staff and governors, and open evenings were held in various locations throughout the area which were open to the public. All comments that were submitted during the consultation process were considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>Moving forward, engagement with learners, staff and RCT residents will continue and input and information gleaned from these sessions will shape the new school facilities. In addition information gathered will influence and inform our future projects so all consultation undertaken shapes the legacy of the 21st Century Schools Programme.</p>

Thema: Derbyn Disgyblion

Theme: School Admissions

Heol y Celyn is very likely to hit capacity over the next few years with Rhydyfelin families now choosing this new state of the art school on their doorstep rather than walking their children to the nearest English medium provision (Hawthorn) I refer to minutes taken at the Staff and Governors meeting with Heol y Celyn which is in Appendix 3 of the Consultation Report.

Gaynor Davies for RCT replied 'Admission criteria would be applied' she went on to say that 'Catchment areas may be reviewed regularly'

This leaves us as PSN parents in no doubt that our children in the furthest communities away from Heol y Celyn will be the last priority to be given a space at the new school should the school hit capacity. Will siblings then have to be sent to different schools? If one sibling is in Heol y Celyn but another is in Abercynon these schools feed different secondary schools. There are so many unanswered questions and we feel as parents that there will be repercussions to these proposals that have not been planned for; it is the well-being of our children at stake.

There is no guarantee that there is enough space for all the children and future children from this catchment area to attend. I am concerned that there would be no Welsh school available for my children to attend.

Parents in Rhyd are going to send their children there as it's close and new so what will happen to psn children then who have to travel in??

We are concerned with the direction the Cabinet debate went with regard to proposed changes to the traditional PSN catchment areas, which have not been put forward in the

Proposal Document. Cabinet debated whether YGG Evan James and YGG Abercynon could be alternative options for parents in the PSN catchment communities. It was agreed that these schools could serve the PSN catchment and the director for transport agreed that free school transport would be available.

6 Councillors called Cabinet's decision in for Scrutiny and on April 3rd we attended the Scrutiny Meeting. Many Councillors drew attention to the lack of clarity of any proposed catchment changes for Welsh medium education in Pontypridd and despite all the previous references to YGG Abercynon as a suitable alternative Gaynor Davies repeatedly denied any planned changes to catchment areas – this does not add up.

I have heard that Abercynon will be the next possible Welsh medium Primary for us if a place is not given at the new site, but this would be unthinkable for us due to an even longer distance to travel.

Response: The planning of School Places is a local authority responsibility and the Council has a statutory duty to match supply and demand for early years, primary, secondary and post-16 provision for parents that choose to educate their children through the Medium of Welsh or English. The Council prides itself on managing school places effectively and efficiently through the successful implementation of the School Admissions.

Based on current pupil numbers if the new Welsh Medium Primary School is built, with a capacity of 480 plus 60 Nursery, there will be an increase in capacity to meet any increase in demand. Nevertheless, if in the future the demand for places from in-catchment children for the Welsh Medium Primary School exceeds the supply, the site has sufficient land to accommodate additional classroom space. This has been the approach taken at other schools within the County Borough.

For clarity the process is that if the number of applications exceeds the Published Admission Number, the Local Authority's over subscription criteria is applied, which is detailed below for information. This information is detailed within the Council's 'Starting School' book.

However it should be noted that RCT have never had to apply this criteria, or the school admissions 'tie-breaker' scenario at primary level. No pupil within RCT has ever been denied a school place at compulsory school age in their in-catchment primary school.

Oversubscription Criteria

- Priority Category 1: 'Children Looked After (children in public care) and previously 'Looked After' children.
- Priority Category 2: Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2018.
- Priority Category 3: Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
- Priority Category 4 : Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2018.

- Priority Category 5: Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.

For the avoidance of all doubt the reference to 'home' in the oversubscription categories above and the 'tie breaker' refers to the actual location of the residential dwelling in which the child lives and to which Child Benefit is paid.

The Local Authority has an obligation to keep all catchment areas under review to ensure sufficient supply of school places across the County Borough. This offers choice to parents when there is surplus capacity within a school. These proposals however offer a growth in Welsh Medium places and are not reliant on surplus capacity elsewhere to meet need. The Local Authority is committed to meeting the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambitious target of achieving 1million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Thema: Effaith ar y Gymraeg

Theme: Welsh Language Impact

This will lead to a reduction in children attending Welsh medium education from North Pontypridd.

Dyma'r tro cyntaf yn hanes addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i gyngor ganoli darpariaeth cynradd. Mi fydd yn amddifadu cymunedau gogledd Pontypridd o addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn eu cymuned. Mae eisoes tystiolaeth fod teuluoedd yn cael eu gorfodi i ddewis addysg cyfrwng Saesneg i'w plant gan nad ydy'r cynlluniau hyn yn ymarferol i deuluoedd sydd yn gweithio neu deuluoedd tlawd heb geir. Mae nodi fod mwyafrif plant Pont Sion Norton yn derbyn trafndiaeth ar hyn o bryd yn dangos diffyg deallrwydd o addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg a pha mor allweddol yw gweithgarwch allgyrsiol i lwyddiant y fath addysg. Mae'r cynlluniau yn rhwystr i'r tlotaf ac i deuluoedd sy'n gweithio i fynychu gweithgarwch allgyrsiol ac felly mae'r cynlluniau yn gwahaniaethu. Mae'r cynlluniau hefyd yn mynd yn groes i bolisi Llywodraeth y Cynulliad tuag at filiwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg gan ei fod yn gosod rhwystrau tuag at fynediad at addysg Gymraeg.

In this day and age children should be entitled to an education in their own communities – they should not have to travel further than their grandparents did in 1951.

Your Welsh Language Impact Assessment is silent regarding the parents who have stated that this move will displace them from Welsh Medium provision. This silence is a fundamental error. You need to be clear on what you are putting in place to avoid such a negative impact. Just stating that the new location is less than 2 miles away is insufficient.

Mae'r cynnig hwn mynd i niweidio Cymreictod Pontypridd. Mae symud ysgol llwyddianus allan o'r Gymuned a creu rhwystrau ymarferol amhosib i rhieni yn anerbyniol ac yn mynd yn erbyn targedau y llywodraeth i ehangu y niferoedd o siaradwyr Cymraeg.

The proposed changes to Welsh Medium Provision would lead to a reduction in the number of schools providing Welsh Medium education from two and a half to two, and the removal of Welsh Medium education in north Pontypridd.

Whilst we of course welcome the new Welsh Medium school on the existing Heol-y-Celyn site, the net gain in the number of spaces is minimal in terms of what is needed to reach

the Council's own targets as set out in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan - namely to create 6,054 additional Welsh speakers within the county by 2021.

YGG Pont Sion Norton is too important a school to lose – it has ensured the Welsh language was protected and encouraged the growth of the language in North Pontypridd. The current proposals will deny children in north Pontypridd the same opportunities as their parents and grandparents and will ultimately lead to fewer Welsh speakers.

COFIWCH YSGOL PONT SION NORTON will be written in the history books. It will tell of a fight to ensure the survival of the Welsh language in Pontypridd and its success in the communities it served. The Welsh language as a result of the proposal will now no longer be secure in our communities and we need to remind ourselves that what is precious to us can be lost forever if we don't fight for it. RCTBC need to ensure the language is safe in all communities and this means ensuring that our communities in North Pontypridd are served by a Welsh medium school in our own area.

Dylai addysg Gymraeg fod ar gael yn lleol i bob blentyn yng Nghymru. I orfodi plant 3 oed i deithio mor bell o ardal Gogledd Pontypridd yn warthus. Dw i i methu deall sut mae'r polisi hwn yn hwyluso cyrraedd tardedau pendant y llywodraeth.

I feel strongly about sending my children to Welsh school, but think they should be able to access this locally. This decision may impact whether I continue to send my children to a Welsh school. This is disappointing as I am committed to Welsh education and was under the impression that all children in Wales should be able to attend Welsh school. However I feel this option is being taken away from me as the current proposal is not practical for my family.

Bydd y nifer o blant sydd am addysg Gymraeg yng ngogledd Pontypridd yn lleihau oherwydd eich penderfyniad afresymol i'w cludo yr holl ffordd i Rhydyfelin. Mae hyn yn golygu na fydd RCT yn cyrraedd ei nod o nifer siaradwyr Cymraeg ac yn llesteirio nod y Cynulliad

We urge the Council to urgently secure the future of Welsh medium education in north Pontypridd and support the call for a Welsh medium school to be opened in the north of Pontypridd, in either Glyncoch, Ynysybwl or Cilfynydd. This is in addition to the new school at Heol-y-Celyn, and suitable properties should be identified before other plans are progressed. This would provide assurances to parents who are now considering removing their children from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton or not enrolling them for the coming year because of the proposed closure.

We are calling for local Welsh education within the communities of Cilfynydd, Trallwn, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch and Ynysybwl. We are urging RCT to be aspirational and forward thinking with regards to the Welsh Language and be bold to make provision which will really support the Welsh Government aim to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. This will not be achieved by removing Welsh schools from communities and placing logistical barriers for families who would have considered Welsh medium education but will feel practically unable to make that choice.

We are all meant to be promoting the Welsh language, encouraging our children to use it and utilise it fully. It should be easily acceptable and the heart of every community. Schools themselves need to be encouraging the smaller village school setting, smaller numbers in classrooms etc.

It is disheartening that in 2019 we are having to campaign for equality for the Welsh Language.

It also directly contradicts the ambition of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and fails to address the Welsh Government's aims to increase the use of the Welsh language. Many benefits of being multi-lingual are known, and to risk reducing the number of multi-lingual children and families in our area carries with it risks to meeting the seven well-being goals.

It is making Welsh language education less accessible, in direct contrast to the government's plan to increase the number of Welsh language speakers.

I feel strongly about this because I believe the right for all children to access Welsh medium education is being eroded by this decision. When the Welsh Government is aiming for a million Welsh speakers Welsh medium education should be available and a natural choice to all.

I object as the Welsh Language Impact Assessment does not consider the negative impact that the proposals will have on Welsh Language in the communities of North Pontypridd.

Estyn's response to the proposals continuously state that it "does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with SEN": There are already problems with SEN - this should be looked at further. We also need to look at Welsh medium SEN.

Ymateb: Cyfrifoldeb yr awdurdod lleol yw cynllunio llefydd ysgolion ac mae gan y Cyngor ddyletswydd statudol i fodloni galw am ddarpariaeth y blynyddoedd cynnar, cynradd, uwchradd ac ôl-16 ar gyfer rhieni sy'n dewis addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg neu Saesneg i'w plant.

Ym mis Ebrill 2016, derbyniodd y Cabinet adroddiad a roddodd y diweddaraf i Aelodau ynglych bodloni'r galw am lefydd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Nododd yr adroddiad y sefyllfa bresennol gan gynnwys yr ysgolion yn ardal ehangach Pontypridd. Amlinellodd yr adroddiad gynlluniau'r Cyngor yn y dyfodol i gynyddu darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg a gwella ansawdd y profiad addysgol trwy gyflawni gwelliannau dysgu Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif.

Mae'r cynnig i adeiladu ysgol fwy newydd sbon ym Mhontypridd wedi cael ei ystyried yn ofalus i sicrhau bod llefydd ychwanegol yn ategu ein hysgolion presennol yn ardal Pontypridd. Mae ysgol gynradd cyfrwng Cymraeg ym Mhontypridd yn barod, sef YGG Evan James sydd â 81 o lefydd dros ben, ac YGG Abercynon yng ngogledd Pontypridd sydd â 54 o lefydd dros ben. Does dim modd cyfiawnhau'r galw am lefydd mewn ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg newydd yng Nglyn-coch na chynnal YGG bresennol Pont Siôn Norton yn y cymunedau yma. Mae ysgol fwy newydd yn ardal Heol-y-celyn, yn ogystal â'r ysgolion cynradd Cymraeg presennol ym Mhontypridd, sef YGG Evan James ac YGG Abercynon, yn bodloni galw yn y dyfodol o ran Pontypridd gyfan ac yn rhoi dewis i rieni. Er hynny, bydd hyn yn cael ei fonitro'n agos i sicrhau ein bod ni'n bodloni unrhyw gynnydd yn y galw trwy ymateb priodol ac ystyriol o safbwynt trefniadaeth a chynllunio ysgolion.

Mae'r Cyngor wedi ymrwymo'n llwyr i darged Cymraeg 2050 Llywodraeth Cymru ac i gynyddu ein llefydd cyfrwng Cymraeg trwy gynnal ein Rhaglen Addysg ac Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif. Mae ehangu ein darpariaeth y blynyddoedd cynnar yn sylweddol yn cynyddu nifer

y llefydd gwag mewn bylchau penodol i ddarparu manau mynediad ychwanegol ar gyfer addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. I bob diben, mae hyn yn gwneud i'r iaith dyfu ac yn cynyddu'r cyfleoedd sylfaenol.

Mae'r Cyngor wedi buddsoddi'n sylweddol mewn addysg Gymraeg, ac mae wedi ymrwymo i gynyddu darpariaeth a buddsoddi miliynau mewn gwella'r amgylchedd dysgu ar gyfer disgyblion presennol a nifer y llefydd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ein hysgolion.

Fel sydd wedi'i nodi yn yr adroddiad yma, mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod ei bod hi'n bosibl y bydd raid i rai disgyblion wedi'u heffeithio gan y cynnig deithio'n bellach. Wedi dweud hynny, mae bron i 70% o'r plant sy'n mynd i YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn cael defnyddio cludiant am ddim i'r ysgol felly fydd dim effaith ar y rhan fwyaf o ddisgyblion. Does dim modd gwarantu darpariaeth addysg feithrin ym mhob ysgol, serch hynny bydd cyfle i ddatblygu gofal cofleidiol cyfrwng Cymraeg ar safle'r ysgol newydd.

Felly i gloi, mewn ymateb i argaeledd clybiau brecwast a chlybiau ar ôl ysgol, bydd y Cyngor yn cynghori a gwneud argymhellion i gorff llywodraethu arfaethedig newydd yr ysgol i barhau i gynnig clybiau brecwast i ddisgyblion. Dylid nodi nad yw hyn yn ofyniad statudol. Mae clwb brecwast yn YGG Pont Siôn Norton ar hyn o bryd, ond does dim clybiau ar ôl ysgol. Serch hynny, bydd y Cyngor, unwaith eto, yn annog y corff llywodraethu i ddatblygu'r cyfleoedd yma gan y bydd cyfleusterau newydd Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif yn ategu sefydlu darpariaeth clwb ar ôl ysgol i bob disgybl. Eto, rhaid nodi nad yw darparu clybiau ar ôl ysgol yn ofyniad statudol ond mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod pwysigrwydd gofal cofleidiol i gefnogi teuluoedd sy'n gweithio.

Response: Planning of School Places is a local authority responsibility and the Council has a statutory duty to match supply and demand for early years, primary, secondary and post-16 provision for parents that choose to educate their children through the Medium of Welsh or English.

In April 2019, Cabinet received a report updating Members on the demand and supply of Welsh Medium Places in the County Borough. The report highlighted the current position including the schools in the greater Pontypridd area and also outlined the Council's future plans to ensure there is capacity to grow the existing Welsh Medium provision and to improve the quality of the educational experience by providing 21st Century School learning environments.

The proposal to build a brand new larger school for the Pontypridd area has been carefully considered to ensure that additional capacity supports and complements our current schools in the Pontypridd area. Pontypridd already has a Welsh Medium Primary School with surplus capacity of 81 at YGG Evan James and to the north of Pontypridd, YGG Abercynon also has surplus capacity of 54. The demand for pupil places specifically for a new Welsh Medium school in Glyncoch and maintaining the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton is not justified within these communities. A new larger school in the Heol y Celyn area, plus

the existing Welsh medium primary school in Pontypridd at YGG Evan James, and YGG Abercynon, meets future demand for the whole of Pontypridd and provides parents with choice. Nevertheless, this will be closely monitored to ensure that any growth in demand is met with an appropriate and measured response from a school organisation and planning perspective.

The Council is fully committed to the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 target and increasing our Welsh Medium Places through the delivery of our 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, as well as expanding our early years provision, significantly increases capacity at targeted gaps to provide additional access points for Welsh Medium Education. In effect growing the language and increasing the opportunities at 'grass roots'.

The Council has invested substantially since 2012 in Welsh medium education and is committed to increasing provision and investing millions in improving the learning environment for existing learners and the number of Welsh Medium spaces in our schools.

As already stated in this report, the Council acknowledges that some pupils affected by the proposal may have further to travel, however nearly 70% of the children attending YGG Pont Sion Norton currently have free transport to school and therefore the majority of learners will be unaffected. Full time nursery education provision in all schools is not guaranteed, however facilities will be provided to ensure there will be an opportunity to develop an on-site Welsh medium wrap around childcare service for parents within the new school.

To reiterate, in response to the availability of breakfast clubs and after school provision, the Council will advise and make recommendations to the proposed new school Governing Body to continue to offer breakfast clubs for pupils, although it should be noted that this is not a statutory requirement. There is currently a breakfast club but no after school clubs operating at YGG Pont Sion Norton. However the Council will again encourage the Governing Body to develop these opportunities as the new 21st Century School facilities will support the setup of the provision of a childcare after school club, or an activity club, for all pupils. Again, to note it is not a statutory requirement to provide after school clubs but the Council recognises the importance of childcare facilities to support working families.

Thema: Effaith ar y Gymuned

Theme: Community Impact

I am absolutely against the plans which I feel are ill conceived and being implemented in the face of strong and very reasonable objections. People are being ignored and communities are going to be devastated by these plans if they go ahead.

I live in Cilfynydd and my 4 year old daughter attends Ysgol PSN. It's absolutely disgraceful that you are even considering closing our only 2 primary schools in the village. It would tear a massive hole in our community. Young families will not move to the village and there will be even less sense of community and natural meeting points and shared communities for us to gather around.

The communities that serve YGG Pont Sion Norton have no links with Rhydyfelin and the distance will mean that children are excluded from clubs and cultural activities because of distance and cost.

It will take children out of their communities and break up friendship and peer groups, particularly if some parents take up the offer of sending their children to YGG Evan James or YGG Abercynon.

A vital positive feature of the existing education arrangements is the opportunity for the development of a community spirit. In the five years that we have lived close to Pont Sion Norton School, my wife and I have seen first-hand many, many friendships (including the friendships between school-going families and us – who do not have children of school age) develop, grow and nurture in Cilfynydd and Norton Bridge. These relationships have provided emotional, spiritual, physical, material and practical support in times of need, often grave need. It is my belief that these and similar strong relationships should be given the opportunity to develop and thrive, not be cut off because of an elitist, commuter-based approach to school access.

The benefits of a cohesive community filter through to the other well-being goals:

- they enable people to be more prosperous through gaining confidence, wider social networks and better employment opportunities**
- they enable the discussion and cohesion of people around climate and environmental concerns**
- they enable people to be healthier, particularly having better mental health, largely achieved through strong community support**
- these benefits in combination enable people to fulfil their potential, leading to greater equality**

Response: Community Impact Assessments have been completed for the proposals, and the reports formed a part of the consultation documentation which Estyn have deemed to be appropriate.

The 21st Century Schools Programme lists community benefits as one of its outcomes, and the Council aims to deliver this priority and achieve this target by providing buildings and facilities that are able to deliver shared community services. In essence, the Council aims to create the means to deliver fully integrated community hubs on our school sites. The new 21st Century Schools already delivered and operational in RCT include dedicated community rooms which can be used during the school day, as well as providing facilities which the community are able to utilise outside of the normal core school hours. These include school halls, community rooms, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) and 3G pitches.

In addition, the 21st Century Programme has facilitated and delivered numerous opportunities for job creation. It has enabled dozens of apprenticeships, supported pupil engagement especially in the STEM subjects, and has created a raft of work experience opportunities. This, coupled with the Welsh Government's delivery benchmark for local labour, and locally sourced business and supplies, ensures that not only are the schools a community facility once opened, but that throughout the delivery and construction

element of the projects the community benefits are embedded as a priority throughout every phase.

CYNNIG 5 – Newidiadau i Ddalgylchoedd

PROPOSAL 5 – Catchment changes

Mae'r cyd-ddibyniaeth o ran y cynigion wedi eu heffeithio gan y penderfyniad i beidio newid dalgyrch ardal Gwauncelyn.

The interdependence of proposals is affected by the decision not to change the Gwauncelyn catchment area.

Ymateb: Dydy'r penderfyniad i ddileu'r newid i ddalgyrch Ysgol Uwchradd y Ddraenen Wen, a hynny yn dilyn y cyfnod ymgynghori, ddim yn effeithio ar allu'r Cyngor i gyflawni'r cynigion trefniadaeth ysgolion a oedd yn destun ymgynghoriad.

Response: The decision to remove the catchment change to Hawthorn High School following the consultation period does not affect the Council's ability to deliver the school organisation proposals as consulted upon.

Why did RCT decide at the last minute to alter this proposal?

Response: This decision was not made at the last minute. It was made at the correct and appropriate time in accordance with the procedures carried out within the consultation period. The reasons for this change are included within the Consultation Report which is available on the Council website.

Roedd yno ddiffyg gallu i gynnig sylwadau ac atebion synwryol ar y cynigion unigol There was a lack of proper ability to comment on individual proposals.

Ymateb: Roedd y broses ymgynghori 2 ½ waith yn hwy na'r cyfnod ymgynghori arferol, sef 42 diwrnod. Trwy wneud hyn, roedd gan bobl fwy o amser i ymateb i'r cynigion mewn nifer o ffyrdd gwahanol, a hynny trwy ysgrifennu ymatebion a defnyddio'r cyfryngau cymdeithasol. Cafodd 5 noson agored gyhoeddus eu cynnal mewn lleoliadau amrywiol ac roedd ffurflen ar gael ar-lein, yn ogystal â'r ddogfen ymgynghori. Roedd copiâu papur hefyd ar gael yn ystod y noson agored. Dylid nodi y daeth dros 2,000 o ymatebion i'r ymgynghoriad i law.

Response: The consultation process exceeded that of the standard 42 days for a consultation period by 2 ½ times which allowed consultees more time to respond to the proposals in a number of different ways, via written responses and social media. 5 public open evenings were held at various locations and a pro-forma was available online, within the consultation document and also hard copies were available at the open evening. It should be noted that there were over 2,000 responses to the consultation.

Gwrthwynebiadau Cyffredinol i bob cynnig

General Objections to all proposals

Mae methiant i ystyried y cynnydd mewn traffig o ganlyniad i'r holl gynigion gan gynnwys ystyriaeth o lwybrau y bysys.

There is a failure to consider the increased traffic as a result of all proposals including consideration of bus routes.

Ymateb: Bydd ceisiadau cynllunio yn cael eu cyflwyno ar gyfer yr ysgolion newydd yn bennaf. Yn rhan o hyn bydd Aseiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig yn cael ei gynnal, gan ganolbwyntio ar yr ardal benodol a'r ardal gyfagos. Bydd yr aseiad yma yn asesu faint o gerbydau sy'n

defnyddio'r briffordd ar hyn o bryd ac effaith unrhyw gynnydd o ran traffig ar y briffordd, y llwybrau cerdded, beicio a bysiau.

Response: Planning applications will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this there will be a Traffic Impact Assessment undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will not only look at the current capacity of the highway, but also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on not just the highway but also on pedestrian, cycling routes and bus routes.

Mae yna ddiffyg asesiad o effaith y llygredd ar blant a phobl ifanc.

There is a lack of assessment of impact of pollution on children and young people.

Ymateb: Bydd hyn yn cael ei asesu. Mae'r awdurdod lleol yn cynnal gwaith monitro ac adolygu ansawdd aer i wirio cydymffurfiad ag Amcanion Ansawdd Aer statudol wedi'u gosod gan lywodraeth genedlaethol i amddiffyn iechyd y cyhoedd. Bydd gwybodaeth ynglŷn ag Ansawdd Aer a'r effaith ar breswylwyr yn cael ei chynnwys yn yr Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig fel sydd wedi'i nodi uchod.

Response: This will be assessed. The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance to statutory Air Quality Objectives, set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact upon residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above.

Mae yna ddiffyg ystyriaeth o'r cysylltiad sydd rhwng ysgolion lleol a'u cymunedau lleol

There is a lack of consideration of the links of local schools with local communities.

Ymateb: Mae Asesiadau o'r Effaith ar y Gymuned wedi cael eu cynnal ar gyfer pob cynnig, ac roedd yr adroddiadau yn rhan o'r ddogfen ymgynghori. Roedd Estyn o'r farn bod yr asesiadau yma yn briodol.

Response: Community Impact Assessments have been completed for all proposals, and the reports formed a part of the Consultation documentation. Estyn considers these assessments to be appropriate.

Mae yna fethiant i ddilyn y Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion

There is a failure to follow the School Organisational Code.

Ymateb: Mae'r broses yma wedi cael ei chynnal yn unol â Chod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion.

Response: This process has been carried out in full compliance with the School Organisation Code.

There continues to be a complete failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation.

Mae'r methiant llwyr i barchu barn y rhai a ymatebodd i'r ymgynghoriad yn parhau

I object to the manner in which the decision has been made in the face of the predominance of consultation responses that are opposed to the proposals. Your role as our elected representatives is to represent us. It is nothing short of outrageous that the

decision appears to be made in a self-serving way to suit the council's own ends, not to serve the people in the local area who elected you, and who you claim to represent.

Ymateb: Cafodd Adroddiad Ymgynghori ei lunio a oedd wedi crynhoi ymatebion i'r ymgynghoriad ac wedi ymateb iddyn nhw, a hynny yn unol â'r Cod. Cafodd yr holl ymatebion a ddaeth i law yn ystod y cyfnod ymgynghori eu rhoi i Aelodau o'r Cabinet er mwyn iddyn nhw graffu arnyn nhw cyn cyfarfod y Cabinet ar 21 Mawrth 2019.

Craffwyd ar y cynigion yma eto oherwydd codwyd amheuan ynghylch penderfyniad y Cabinet i barhau â'r gweithdrefnau statudol Trefniadaeth Ysgolion ym mis Mawrth. O ganlyniad i hyn, trafododd y Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu y cynigion ymhellach ar 9 Ebrill gan eu dadansoddi.

Response: A Consultation Report was written which summarised and responded to the consultation responses in accordance with the Code, and all responses that were received during the consultation period were given to Cabinet Members to scrutinise prior to the meeting of Cabinet on March 21st 2019.

There was further scrutiny of these proposals as the decision made by Cabinet in March to proceed with the School Organisation statutory procedures was called in, which meant that these proposals were subsequently put before Overview and Scrutiny Committee on April 9th for further discussion and analysis of the proposals.

These meetings, and all procedures pertaining to the decision making processes undertaken, were strictly carried out in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Mae ymateb Estyn i'r cynigion yn dweud yn barhaus "nad ydyw'n asesu yn briodol effaith y newidiadau ar ddisgyblion gydag AAA"

Estyn's response to the proposals continuously state that it "does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with SEN"

Ymateb: Mae newidiadau sylweddol yn cael eu cynllunio yng Nghymru mewn perthynas â'r ddarpariaeth statudol sydd ei hangen i fodloni anghenion disgyblion ag Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig (AAA) /Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol (ADY). Cafodd Deddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) ei chyflwyno ym mis Ionawr 2018. O dan y Ddeddf, mae'n ofynnol i awdurdodau lleol adolygu trefniadau i gefnogi disgyblion ag ADY yn eu hardal ac ystyried a ydyn nhw'n ddigonol. Bydd y Ddeddf yn cael ei hategu gan reoliadau newydd a Chod Ymarfer Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol statudol newydd.

Hyd nes i'r Cod Ymarfer ADY ddod i rym ym mis Medi 2020, mae'n ofynnol i Awdurdodau Lleol (All) gydymffurfio â Chod Ymarfer Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig presennol Cymru (2002) a chyflawni eu dyletswyddau statudol o ran plant ag AAA. Mae'r Cod yn nodi bod gan yr All ddyletswydd i fonitro ac adolygu ei ddarpariaeth AAA yn rheolaidd ledled RhCT i sicrhau ei bod yn defnyddio ei hadnoddau mewn modd effeithiol ac effeithlon i fodloni anghenion disgyblion y mae angen darpariaeth arbenigol arnyn nhw. Mae'r Cyngor yn parhau i gynnal ei ddyletswydd ar hyn o bryd, a bydd yn parhau i wneud hyn yn y dyfodol. Mae gan RCT ystod eang o ddarpariaeth AAA mewn ysgolion prif ffrwd a bydd yn parhau i gynnal ac adolygu darpariaeth yn rheolaidd.

Response: Considerable changes are planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) /Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) was introduced in January 2018. The Act requires local authorities to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. The Act will be supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code of Practice.

Until the anticipated implementation of the new ALN Code of Practice in September 2020, Local Authorities (LAs) are required to comply with the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and fulfil their statutory duties towards children with SEN. The Code states that the LA has a duty to continuously monitor and review its specialist SEN provision across RCT to ensure that it is utilising its resources efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of pupils who require specialist provision. The Council does and will continue to uphold its duty. RCT has an extensive range of SEN provision attached to mainstream schools and will continue to regularly maintain and review provision.

Following the recent consultation on the Welsh Government's draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019 guidance which advocates an increase in Welsh medium education provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and in accordance with the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, RCT will consult on establishing a Welsh medium Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 ALN provision in the new school.

APPENDIX A

OBJECTIONS

Copies of the mass email received.

- 1. Welsh and English versions of the emails generated via the website created by the 'Our Children First - Ein Plant Cyntaf' group**

348 received

Rydw i yn gwrthwynebu penderfyniad Cyngor RhCT i barhau gyda'r cynlluniau Ysgolion 21 Ganrif ym Mhontypridd am y rhesymau canlynol:

Cynnig 1 - Dileu'r ddarpariaeth chweched dosbarth o ysgolion uwchradd Y Ddraenen Wen, Ysgol Uwchradd Pontypridd ac Ysgol Gyfun y Cardinal Newman Eglwys Gatholig Rhufain: Mae yna ddiffyg archwilio opisynau eraill o fewn y cynnig. Mae diffyg cydraddoldeb o ran mynediad a gwariant ar addysg ôl-16. Mae yna ddiffyg archwiliad o'r effaith ar gydraddoldeb a faint fydd am gymryd llefydd oherwydd problemau trafniadaeth ac mae diffyg ystyriaeth wedi ei roi i broblemau llygredd a thraffig ychwanegol. :

Cynigion 2 a 3 – Creu ysgol newydd Pob Oed 3-16 ar gyfer y Ddraenen Wen a Phontypridd: Mae yna ddiffyg manylion yn yr arbedion ariannol sy'n cael ei gynnig. Mae diffyg prawf o'r manteision yn nhermau canlyniadau addygsol. Mae diffyg tystiolaeth i ddangos bod newidiadau tebyg wedi bod yn llwyddiannus.:

Cynnig 4- Pont Siôn Norton a Heol y Celyn: Rwy'n gwrthwynebu fod plant mor ifanc â thair oed yn cael eu bysio hyd at chwe milltir i ffwrdd o'u cymunedau er mwyn gallu cael mynediad i addysg Gymraeg. Rwy'n gwrthwynebu i 5 neu 6 o fysics ychwanegol orfod teithio drwy dref Pontypridd ar yr amser prysuraf o ran traffig. Onid ydym mewn cyfnod o Argyfwng Amgylcheddol? Rwy'n gwrthwynebu bod Heol y Celyn wedi ei ddewis fel y safle addas ar gyfer cymunedau dalgylch traddodiadol Pont Siôn Norton. Rwy'n gwrthwynebu bod rhwystrau ymarferol wedi ei rhoi mewn lle sy'n golygu bod ein cymunedau tlotaf yn cael eu hamddifadu o ddarpariaeth addysg Gymraeg.:

Cynnig 5 - y newid i ardaloedd dalgylch: Roedd yno ddiffyg gallu i gynnig sylwadau ac atebion synwryol ar y cynigion unigol. Mae'r cyd-ddibyniaeth o ran y cynigion wedi eu heffeithio gan y penderfyniad i beidio newid dalgylch ardal Gwauncelyn:

Mae ymateb Estyn i'r cynigion yn dweud yn barhaus "nad ydyw'n asesu yn briodol effaith y newidiadau ar ddisgyblion gydag AAA":

Mae methiant i ystyried y cynnydd mewn traffig o ganlyniad i'r holl gynigion gan gynnwys ystyriaeth o lwybrau y bysys. :

Mae yna ddiffyg asesiad o effaith y llygredd ar blant a phobl ifanc. :

Mae yna ddiffyg ystyriaeth o'r cysylltiad sydd rhwng ysgolion lleol a'u cymunedau lleol.:

Mae yna fethiant i ddilyn y Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion:

Mae'r methiant llwyr i barchu barn y rhai a ymatebodd i'r ymgynghoriad yn parhau:

I object to RCT's decision to move forward with the 21st Century Schools reorganisation in Pontypridd for the following reasons:

Proposal 1 - Removal of the Sixth forms of Hawthorn High, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive: There is a lack of examination of other options within the proposal. There is a lack of equality of access and expenditure on post 16 education. There is a lack of examination of the impact on equality and take up of places because of transport issues and, there is a lack of consideration of additional pollution and transport congestion:

Proposals 2 and 3 - Creation of new 3-16 schools for Hawthorn and Pontypridd: There is a lack of detail on the financial savings provided by the proposal. There is a lack of proof of benefit in terms of educational outcomes. There is a lack of evidence to show that similar changes have been successful:

Proposal 4- PontSionNorton and Heol y Celyn: I object to children as young as three being bussed up to 6 miles away from their communities to access Welsh medium education. I object to 5 or 6 extra busses going through Pontypridd town at the busiest times of day. Are we not in a Climate Emergency? I object to Heol y Celyn being chosen as an appropriate school site for the traditional Pont Siôn Norton catchment communities. I object to logistical barriers being put in place resulting in the poorest communities having their Welsh medium education effectively withdrawn:

Proposal 5 - amendment of catchment areas: There was a lack of proper ability to comment on individual proposals. The interdependence of proposals is affected by the decision not to change the Gwauncelyn catchment area:

Estyn's response to the proposals continuously state that it "does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with SEN":

There is a failure to consider the increased traffic as a result of all proposals including consideration of bus routes.:

There is a lack of assessment of impact of pollution on children and young people:

There is a lack of consideration of the links of local schools with local communities:

There is a failure to follow the School Organisational Code:

There continues to be a complete failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation:

Copies of the objections received with supporting information.

1. Letter from Hawthorn High Governing Body
2. Letter from Pontypridd High Governing Body
3. Letter from 'Our Children First – Ein Gyntaf Haf'

Hawthorn High School – formal objection to RCT 21st Century schools reorganisation

The Governing Body objects formally to proposals to reorganise educational provision in the Pontypridd area because it feels that the Council has:

- Deviated from due process (as stipulated by the Welsh Assembly ‘School organisation code’) with regard to the conduct of its consultation process about these proposals.
- Failed to treat individuals and organisations in a fair and equitable manner (as required by the Welsh Assembly ‘School organisation code’) during the consultation process.
- Actively striven to create a negative portrayal of standards and provision at Hawthorn High School in an attempt to mislead consultees that the proposed reorganisation will achieve more positive outcomes than might otherwise be the case.
- Failed to exercise its duty of care to employees at the school in its willingness to publish unwarranted allegations of poor performance, actively seek out criticism of the school and publicly undermine the teachers and leadership of the school in a variety of public forums.

In particular the Governing body objects to the following:

1) Allegations of poor performance at KS5

Statements made in initial report to Cabinet in October 2018:

Contextual information – ‘The educational performance of the sixth forms has been mixed with two of the secondary schools consistently *being amongst the worst performing schools in respect of A Level performance*’

Background information for the Council Cabinet – ‘The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in respect of the A Level results) of Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools are consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales (my emphasis). However, Bryncelynog Comprehensive School is an improving school and has consistently performed above the Welsh average for A level provision.’

Original school response to these allegations of poor performance:

Comparative A2 Level outcomes

****Please note that Hawthorn High eFSM % is 24.5% and Bryncelynnog 14.5% (green indicates above Welsh average performance and red below)**

		L3	AWPS	3 A*/A	3 A*/C	SCC	WBQ
2014/15	Hawthorn High	98.25	772.7	1.8	59.6		
	Bryncelynnog	98.6	670	5.6	34.7		
	RCT average	96.9	725	2.9	57.5		
	Wales average	96.9	787	7.9	67.5		
2015/16	Hawthorn High	97.62	772.3	0	61.9		
	Bryncelynnog	100	824	8.8	67.2		
	RCT average	97.0	765	4.0	65.2		
	Wales average	98.0	823	6.7	70.6		
2016/17	Hawthorn High	100	739.9	2.1	41.7		
	Bryncelynnog	94.3	787	18.9	52.8		
	RCT average	96.3	679	5.5	44.9		
	Wales average	97.1	733	10.4	54.7		
2017/18	Hawthorn High	93.9	732	14.3	61.2	96.2	73.1
	Bryncelynnog						
	RCT average	96.0	722	10.0	55	81	65
	Wales average	98.0	739	13.0	58	69	60

The comparisons being drawn are also inappropriate in that the Welsh Average is being used as a 'like for like' comparison to compare performance between HHS, PHS and BCS. This is unfair as the Welsh average entitlement of a school's population to free school meals stands at 16.5%. BCS's entitlement is 14.5%, PHS is 19.5% and HHS is 24.5%. Clearly it is unfair and inappropriate to suggest that the expectation for pupils to achieve Welsh average performance or better should be the same in all three schools.

Thorough, impartial and accurate analysis of this data reveals that the term 'consistent' and 'below' are totally inappropriate, very negative and not a true representation of the actual outcomes within the Pontypridd Sixth Form; as the chart reveals there are very similar outcomes at BCS and the Pontypridd Sixth Form between 2015 and 2017 even when we do not consider that the latter has a significantly less affluent catchment area as defined by the Welsh Assembly.

Director of Education response as presented to Cabinet 21/3/19:

P12-15

"For the post 16 provision the Welsh Government data does not compare performance of schools based on the free school meal categories. However, the Council's data

evidences that the majority of pupils eligible for free school meals do not return to the sixth forms in Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools. The majority opt to study at Coleg Y Cymoedd. In September 2018, only 10.7% of the Key Stage 5 cohort were eligible for free school meals in Pontypridd High School and 14.0% in Hawthorn High School - a significantly lower figure than that in Key Stage 4 in both schools. Therefore, as the free school meal comparison at Key Stage 5 between Pontypridd, Hawthorn and Bryncelynog secondary schools is not significantly different, it is not unreasonable to compare and contrast the performance of learners, particularly at Alevel.

Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools commented that the A-level results are misleading in the consultation document. They maintain that they have been above the Welsh average on the majority of the indicators. The data in the consultation document is based on Welsh Government data sets. Welsh Government updated the Key Stage 5 results on 12/11/18. The following table shows the most recent results published on the Welsh Government All Wales Core Data Sets and provides data relating to Level 3 outcomes, the Average Wider Points Score (AWPS) and the percentage of learners achieving 3A*/C. The results confirm that the Key Stage 5 results for both schools at 3A*/C are consistently below both the RCT and the Welsh average from 2015-2017. The AWPS for Pontypridd High School is higher than most schools. The AWPS is calculated by dividing the total number of points gained from all courses sat at Key Stage 5 and not just the number of A-levels or their equivalent. Pontypridd High School provide a large number of Key Skill courses that inflate this figure and makes comparison with any other institutions very difficult. Due to this very issue, the Welsh Government no longer uses the AWPS as an assessment criteria comparator. It should also be noted that the AWPS is not a criteria that is used by Universities in scoring a student's University application."

Governing Body position May 2019:

Key Skills courses have not been delivered/accredited in Wales for many years; this is another example of clear inaccuracies in the documentation. We note that no figure is included for Bryncelynog's post 16 cohort and also note very significantly how the Director now makes no attempt to justify her previous statement that performance post 16 in both Hawthorn high and Pontypridd High is 'amongst the worst in Wales'. This statement has, however, been placed into the public domain in the original published documentation and remains a serious allegation of poor performance which is unfounded and unwarranted. The original statement has given the public an incredibly negative impression of the standards in current sixth form provision in Pontypridd schools and, therefore, seriously hampered their ability through the consultation process to make balanced judgements as to the impact on standards of the council's proposals for Sixth Form reorganization. The publication of this unwarranted allegation of poor performance has also caused undue and unwarranted stress to teachers and senior managers at the school.

2) Allegations of poor performance at KS4:

Statements in initial report to Cabinet October 2018:

Page 12 – ‘The educational performance and pupil attendance of the 2 LA maintained secondary schools at Key Stage 4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales’

Response from school to report to Cabinet:

The following tables are included to portray the differing intakes of the three schools in question:

National Reading test 2018			
School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Bryncelynog	102.5	100.0	99.0
PHS	96.2	97.0	94.2
HHS	94.1	93.5	91.7
RCT Average	98.9	97.5	96.8
RCT Year 6 average : 95.45			

National Numeracy : Procedural test 2018			
School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Bryncelynog	102.6	104.0	101.8
PHS	96.2	97.0	94.2
HHS	92.7	92.3	93.2
RCT Average	98.9	97.5	96.8
RCT Year 6 average : 98.22			

National Numeracy : Reasoning test 2018			
School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Bryncelynog	104.0	102.6	101.1
PHS	96.2	97.0	94.2
HHS	89.6	85.0	86.6
RCT Average	98.9	97.5	96.8
RCT Year 6 average : 94.0			

Attendance				
School	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	% Change
Pontypridd High	93.6	94.1	92.9	-0.7
Bryncelynog	94.4	93.6	92.9	-1.5
HHS	92.3	93.3	92.7	+0.4%

The Council report states that ‘the educational performance of (HHS and PHS) at KS4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales’ yet Bryncelynog is referred to as being an ‘improving school’

Comparative GCSE outcomes

Please note that Hawthorn High eFSM% is 24.4%, Pontypridd High eFSM % is 19.6% and Bryncelynog is 14.5% (My Local School – 2018). The Welsh average for this measure is 16.5%.

**2018 results are provisional*

HHS

Performance Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	RCT Ave.	Wales Ave.
L2+ %	49.3	61.8	45.9	51.7	53%	55%
BMQ	3	1	2	2		
L2 Threshold %	93.8	97.1	65.4	60.7	64%	67%
BMQ	1	1	1	2		
L1 Threshold %	96.6	100	94	92.9	95%	94%
BMQ	3	1	3	3		
Capped 8/9	362.4	373.1	341.1	329	348	350
BMQ	1	1	2	3		
Best English A* to C %	58.2	68.4	46.6	55.4	63%	63%
BMQ	3	2	4	3		
Best Maths A* to C %	54.8	64.0	63.2	67.0	62%	64%
BMQ	3	2	1	1		
Best Science A* to C %	81.5	86.8	92.5	44.6	58%	63%
BMQ	3	3	1	4		
WBQ National				48.9	50%	51%
BMQ				1		
Skills CC National			82.0	85.7	73%	73%
BMQ			1	1		

39% of indicators in the last four years have been in the third or fourth quartile

PHS

Performance Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	RCT Ave.	Wales Ave.
L2+ %	53.3%	61.8%	50.6%	54.0%	53%	55%
BMQ	2	1	3	3		
L2 Threshold %	92.9%	98.2%	60.2%	64.1%	64%	67%
BMQ	1	1	4	2		
L1 Threshold %	98.4%	100.0%	97.2%	98.5%	95%	94%
BMQ	2	1	4	2		
Capped 8/9	364.4	375.9	354.6	356	348	350
BMQ	1	1	2	3		
Best English A* to C %	59.2%	71.2%	56.8%	61.0%	63%	63%
BMQ	3	1	4	3		
Best Maths A* to C %	62.0%	65.9%	61.9%	65.0%	62%	64%
BMQ	1	2	2	2		

Best Science A* to C %	63.6%	87.6%	65.9%	54.0%	58%	63%
BMQ	4	3	3	4		
WBQ National				54%	50%	51%
BMQ				2		
Skills CC National			59%	80%	73%	73%
BMQ			3	1		

42% of indicators in the last four years have been in the third or fourth quartile

Bryncelynog

Performance Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	RCT Ave.	Wales Ave.
L2+ %	61.7%	64.9%	62.9%	66.9%	53%	55%
BMQ	2	2	2	1		
L2 Threshold %	75.4%	81.1%	73.1%	74.4%	64%	67%
BMQ	4	4	3	2		
L1 Threshold %	96.6%	98.0%	98.2%	95.9%	95%	94%
BMQ	4	3	3	4		
Capped 8/9	333	333	375.8	368.7	348	350
BMQ	4	4	2	3		
Best English A* to C %	71.4%	74.3%	68.9%	75%	63%	63%
BMQ	2	1	3	1		
Best Maths A* to C %	69.1%	67.6%	69.5%	73.3%	62%	64%
BMQ	2	3	2	2		
Best Science A* to C %	95.4%	98.0%	98.8%	73.3%	58%	63%
BMQ	1	1	1	2		
WBQ National				tbc	50%	51%
BMQ						
Skills CC National			??	90.7%	73%	73%
BMQ			??	1		

40% of indicators in the last four years have been in the third or fourth quartile

The educational performance at KS4 of HHS is not consistently in the third and fourth quartile when compared to similar schools. Bryncelynog has a higher percentage of its KPIs in the third and fourth quartile during the period the Council has chosen to focus on.

Bryncelynog was only removed from an ESTYN Inspection category in November 2016. Two of four recommendations were:

- “Raise standards at KS4, especially for those pupils entitled to free school meals”

- “Ensure that curriculum arrangements and learning pathways at key stage 4 enable all pupils to attain relevant level 2 qualifications”

Hawthorn High School

(quartile performance using categories included in Welsh Assembly MyLocalSchool analysis)

Welsh Assembly Indicator	2015	2016	2017
At least 5 GCSEs inc. Eng and Maths	3	1	2
At least 5 GCSEs A* - C	1	1	1
At least 5 GCSEs A* - G	3	1	3
Best 8 or 9 GCSE results	1	1	2
Best English GCSE A* to C	3	2	4
Best Maths or Numeracy GCSE A* to C	3	2	1
Numeracy GCSE A*-C			2
Maths GCSE A* - C			2
Science GCSE A* to C	3	3	1
Welsh Bacc Skills qualification			1

You will note that during the three years identified less than 34% of indicators have been in the third or fourth quartile for Hawthorn High School. **To draw the conclusion that HHS is ‘consistently in the 3rd or 4th quartile’ is therefore inaccurate and very misleading.** It would be more accurate to state the positive view that more than 66% of the time Hawthorn High has been in quartiles 1 and 2. It is very regrettable that the council has chosen to portray relative performance between schools in this fashion.

Response from Director of Education in document presented to cabinet on 21/3/19:

No reference is this time made to the original statement that performance at KS4 is ‘consistently’ in the third and fourth quartile. The following points are, however, made in response to supposed points made by others in the consultation process:

P11

- **Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is an excellent school with improving results** Yes. The Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 data for 2018 evidences this statement.

- **Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is the natural choice for the sixth form centre – budget, capacity and attainment.** Yes. The school has strong and effective leadership and this is evident by many performance indicators.

Governing Body position May 2019:

The final statement by the Director above by implication suggests that she does not believe that any of the other secondary schools involved in these proposals have

‘strong and effective leadership’; to suggest that this is ‘evident’ in many performance indicators has been shown not to be the case in the analysis above (nor any presented by the Council at any stage in the consultation process).

Nothing has been done to address the glaring inaccuracies in the Council’s use and analysis of data at Key Stage 4 in its original presentation to Cabinet. No reference is made to ‘Consistently in the third and fourth quartile’ in the document presented on 21/3/19 to performance at Key Stage 4. Therefore, the public has continued to be presented with an extremely negative and unfair view of standards at the school and is not in a position to make rational judgements as to how the 21st Century proposals will affect standards of education in Pontypridd. The publication of this unwarranted allegation of poor performance has also caused undue and unwarranted stress to teachers and senior managers at the school.

3) Allegations of inefficient management of resources post 16:

Statements made in initial report to Cabinet (October 2018):

Page 34 – ‘The table below shows that there are insufficient students opting for post 16 provision in each school.’

School	Post-16 Students on roll (September)			Number of A Level Courses offered			Number of courses with 5 or fewer students		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
BCS	162	142	150	18	20	16	8	9	8
HHS	119	118	123	17	19	19	10	13	14
CNS	195	154	78	24	20	22	13	8	11
PHS	141	134	135	20	23	20	9	15	11

School	Average A Level Class sizes		
	2015	2016	2017
BCS	8	8	6
HHS	5	5	4
CNS	6	9	7
PHS	7	6	6

School response to original report to Cabinet:

Pontypridd Sixth Form – A/S Class sizes (from January PLASC returns)

The following tables were used to evidence a true and accurate analysis of use of resources in terms of class size in the Pontypridd Sixth Form:

Subject	A/S Jan 2016			A/S Jan 2017			A/S Jan 2018		
	Year 12			Year 12			Year 12		
	PHS	HHS	Total	PHS	HHS	Total	PHS	HHS	Total
Applied Business	10	2	12	13	-	13	10	1	11
Art (PHS)	9	-	24	21	1	22	-	-	-
Art (HHS)	-	15	15	1	13	14	-	-	-
Art (shared provision)	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	5	14
Biology (PHS)	10	2	12	15	1	16	9	1	10
Biology (HHS)	-	9	9	-	11	11	-	12	12
BTEC Sport – Single	2	16	18	-	21	21	5	22	27
BTEC Sport – Double	1	16	17	-	12	12	3	16	19
Chemistry (shared provision)	5	5	10	-	-	-	12	5	17
Chemistry (PHS)	-	-	-	6	1	7	-	-	-
Computer Studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	4
Drama	4	9	13	3	5	8	-	3	3
Electronics	10	3	13	-	-	-	-	-	-
Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	10	24
English Literature	16	-	16	13	4	17	8	-	8
English Lang/Lit	1	15	16	-	15	15	-	9	9
French	1	7	8	-	7	7	-	-	-
Geography (shared provision)	7	9	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
Geography (PHS)	-	-	-	9	1	10	16	1	17
Health and Social Care	4	9	13	8	6	14	9	18	27
History (PHS)	18	2	20	24	1	25	15	-	15
History (HHS)	-	11	11	-	11	11	-	10	10
Child Development	8	-	8	8	6	14	-	-	-
Hospitality and Catering	6	-	6	7	2	9	5	7	12
Information Technology (PHS)	21	1	22	5	3	8	5	3	8
Information Technology (HHS)	-	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Law	6	-	6	-	-	-	6	-	6
Mathematics (PHS)	33	2	35	30	4	34	12	2	14
Mathematics (HHS)	-	13	13	-	8	8	-	17	17
Media Studies	11	9	20	1	13	14	2	4	6
Music (shared provision)	2	2	4	3	5	8	1	2	3
Photography	2	10	12	4	6	10	2	2	4
Physical Education	11	1	12	9	-	9	6	-	6
Physics (shared provision)	6	7	13	4	6	10	5	9	14
Product Design (PHS)	-	-	-	9	-	9	-	-	-
Product Design (HHS)	-	9	9	-	14	14	-	-	-

Product Design (shared provision)	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	12
Psychology	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	8
Public Services	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Religious Studies	9	2	11	5	6	11	-	-	-
Science BTEC	9	3	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sociology (PHS)	13	7	20	23	1	24	-	-	-
Sociology (shared provision)	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
Travel and Tourism	3	14	17	5	18	23	10	14	24
Welsh	10	3	13	5	1	6	9	2	11
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 1	9	-	9	14	-	14	8	-	8
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 2	16	-	16	17	-	17	10	-	10
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 3	20	-	20	18	-	18	14	-	14
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 4	27	-	27	20	-	20	17	-	17
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-	19
Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 1	-	26	26	-	28	28	-	31	31
Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 2	-	22	22	-	26	26	-	30	30
Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 3	-	18	18	-	13	13	-	16	16
Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 4	-	9	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Courses offered with 5 students or less:									
PHS			0			0			0
HHS			1			0			3
Shared			1			0			1
TOTAL			2			0			4
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gov and politics – online course – 1 HHS pupil Further Maths – FMSP – 1 HHS pupil
Average Class Sizes:									
PHS (PHS classes plus shared classes)			15			15			12
HHS (HHS classes plus shared classes)			14			14			14

Pontypridd Sixth Form – A2 Class sizes (from January PLASC return)

Subject	A2 Jan 2016 Year 13	A2 Jan 2017 Year 13	A2 Jan 2018 Year 13
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	PHS	HHS	Total	PHS	HHS	Total	PHS	HHS	Total
Applied Business	14	1	15	10	-	10	11	-	11
Art (PHS)	5	-	5	7	-	7	16	1	17
Art (HHS)	-	1	1	-	4	4	0	9	9
Art (shared provision)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biology (PHS)	5	-	5	10	-	10	9	1	10
Biology (HHS)	-	8	8	-	6	6	-	5	5
BTEC Sport – Single	3	12	15	2	13	15	-	13	13
BTEC Sport - Double	2	12	14	2	13	15	-	9	9
Chemistry (PHS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	6
Chemistry (shared provision)	4	7	11	3	4	7	-	-	-
Drama	0	4	4	2	4	6	-	7	7
Electronics	6	1	7	-	3	3	-	-	-
English Lang/Lit	-	5	5	-	10	10	-	10	10
English Literature (PHS)	15	-	15	11	-	11	10	2	12
English Literature (HHS)	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
French	1	-	1	1	3	4	-	5	5
Geography	7	2	9	5	2	7	6	1	7
Health and Social Care	-	5	5	2	4	6	7	5	12
History (PHS)	12	-	12	10	-	10	22	1	23
History (HHS)	-	14	14	-	7	7	-	10	10
Child Development	-	-	-	3	-	3	6	3	9
Hospitality and Catering	4	-	4	5	0	5	6	-	6
Information Technology (PHS)	5	-	5	13	-	13	5	1	6
Information Technology (HHS)	-	3	3	-	8	8	-	-	-
Law	2	1	3	3	-	3	-	-	-
Mathematics (PHS)	11	-	11	12	2	14	13	3	16
Mathematics (HHS)	1	8	9	-	9	9	-	8	8
Media Studies	2	3	5	5	6	11	1	8	9
Music (shared provision)	4	-	4	2	1	3	3	3	6
Photography	-	3	3	1	7	8	4	6	10
Physical Education	2	-	2	6	1	7	8	-	8
Physics (HHS)	-	-	-	3	5	8	2	4	6
Physics (shared provision)	2	5	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Product Design (PHS)	2	1	3	5	-	5	5	-	5
Product Design (HHS)	-	-	-	-	6	6	-	12	12
Psychology	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Religious Studies	14	7	21	6	-	6	5	5	10
Science BTEC	8	2	10	5	2	7	-	-	-
Sociology (PHS)	1	5	6	11	4	15	-	-	-
Sociology (shared provision)	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	1	17
Travel and Tourism	3	3	6	2	10	12	4	11	15
Welsh	5	0	5	6	1	7	5	1	6
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 1	12	-	12	16	-	16	15	-	15
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 2	12	-	12	14	-	14	14	-	14
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 3	10	-	10	10	-	10	14	-	14
Welsh Bacc (PHS) Class 4	10	-	10	9	-	9	13	-	13

Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 1	-	16	16	-	17	17	-	23	23
Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 2	-	15	15	-	16	16	-	18	18
Welsh Bacc (HHS) Class 3	-	12	12	-	15	15	-	14	14
Courses offered with 5 students or less:									
PHS			8			5			1
HHS			9			2			2
Shared			1			1			0
TOTAL			17			8			3
Average Class Sizes:									
PHS (PHS classes plus shared classes)			8			8			11
HHS (HHS classes plus shared classes)			8			9			11

Number of A Level classes with 5 students or less

	2016	2017	2018
RCT Calculation (as presented in proposal)	28	25	n/a
Pontypridd Sixth Form actual number	17	8	3

The table above illustrates the advantages of working in partnership and how the Pontypridd Sixth Form of 245 students is more financially viable than the council's figures seem to be intended to suggest. The number of classes with less than 5 students has been reduced significantly in recent years by increasingly sharing provision between ourselves and PHS. **RCT calculations presented in the consultation document only consider each school's provision in isolation and take no account of students from both schools in each class.** As a result, the Council seem to have chosen to present figures which completely ignore the efficiencies which have been achieved for many years by working in partnership. This creates an unfairly negative picture of the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

Average A Level classes size

	2016	2017	2018
RCT Calculation (as presented in proposal)	5	5	n/a
Pontypridd Sixth Form actual number	11	14	14

The table above also shows the average A level class size which has grown over the three years, again as a result of sharing provision. RCT calculations only consider each school and take no account of students from both schools in each class.

Director of Education response as presented to Cabinet 21/3/19:

- The accuracy of the numbers in the document that relate to sixth form class sizes were questioned. These have been scrutinised and are accurate. Each school is

funded directly for the number of students enrolled on each course. Hence if there are 14 students undertaking a course in Pontypridd High School but 8 are from Hawthorn, Pontypridd High School will only receive funding for the 6 Pontypridd High School students.

Governing Body position May 2019:

The Director's comments still take no account of the joint sixth from provision and, if the Council stands by them, display a complete lack of understanding as to how a joint provision operates in terms of use of resources. Average class size is significantly larger than the Council has presented it as being and therefore, the public has continued to be presented with an extremely negative and unfair view of leadership at the school and is not in a position to make rationale judgements as to how the 21st Century proposals will affect education in Pontypridd. Again, these are unwarranted allegations of poor performance.

4) Points raised by the Director in the report to cabinet on the consultation (21/3/19)with regard to Hawthorn High School's use of SCC funds:

"Pontypridd and Hawthorn High advised that they were not happy with the use of the negative language used to describe the schools. It was not the intention to convey negativity towards any schools affected by this consultation. The language and terminology used in the consultation document are commentaries based on the interrogation of the data. It is also important to reflect when considering the performance of Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools that until recently both schools were two of forty secondary schools across Wales that were identified by Welsh Government as consistently underperforming and were included in the Schools Challenge Cymru Programme. Over the three years to 2017 both schools had significant additional investment which in total was in excess of £1.24m in addition to the funding allocation from the Council and had access to high quality leadership and teaching support provided directly by Welsh Government. This investment has provided the two schools with a significant advantage over similar schools in Wales. However, despite this considerable additional resource both schools remain in a significant deficit position.

Governing Body position May 2019:

It is important to recognise that Hawthorn High School was approached by the Council and invited to become part of the Schools Challenge Cymru project. Officers at the time approached the Headteacher and acknowledged that the Council did not believe that standards at the school warranted inclusion in the project but wanted the school to be involved as the financial injection would be useful. After consultation with the Chair of Governors, the school agreed to work with the Council in this regard. ***To suggest, as the Director does, that it is a failing of the school to have not used***

SCC funding to reduce the deficit position of the school is entirely inappropriate is in complete contradiction of the terms of SCC participation (as defined by the Welsh Assembly) where use of funding to counteract a deficit position was strictly prohibited. The school was one of the ‘best performers’ of all the SCC schools during the period of funding and it is extremely unfair and demoralising to see the Council now attempting to criticise the school’s involvement and suggesting that ineffective leadership has meant that the funds were not used to reduce deficit positions at a time of extremely challenging funding for schools in Wales. Again, this unfair criticism of leadership and management in Pontypridd schools has left the public unable to make rational decisions as to the likely impact of the 21st Century proposals.

5) Points raised by the Director/AR in the report to cabinet on the consultation – 21/3/19 with regard to standards of leadership at the school:

- P23

Hawthorn is a worse school than Bryncelynnog. I don’t want my child to go there. (parental comment)

Director - “We have acknowledged in our consultation document that Bryncelynnog has achieved consistently better results than some other secondary schools over the last few years. Also, in addition in the most recent School Categorisation System Bryncelynnog is categorised as a ‘green’ school where as Hawthorn High is ‘yellow’. These school reorganisation proposals are interlinked and at the heart of the proposals is raising standards in education. Through their implementation, we intend on tackling a number of the inconsistencies that exist between the schools. The removal of the sixth forms and the creation of 3-16 schools in Hawthorn and Pontypridd, will allow the schools to reallocate much needed resources to Key Stages 3-4, instead of utilising these resources to prop up small and unsustainable sixth forms. This. Work with the new schools will continue with support from the Council to ensure that the standards of learning in the current schools will continue to improve through the transition period of the creation of the new schools and beyond.

Governing Body position May 2019:

The Director’s response to the statement made by a parent from a Bryncelynnog feeder school is unprofessional and damaging to the reputation of Hawthorn High School. The suggestion that the 21st Century proposals are designed to ‘tackle’ ‘inconsistencies’ between Bryncelynnog and Hawthorn and that Bryncelynnog has ‘achieved consistently better results’ than Hawthorn being made in a public meeting to parents who the Council were allegedly proposing to relocate to part of the Hawthorn catchment is unacceptable. **This is clear evidence of that the Director seemed determined to portray a particular impression of relative standards at the two**

schools. The statement that the reorganisation “will allow these schools to focus on appropriately resourcing and improving educational standards throughout all key stages” clearly implies that this is not the case at present and that is insulting to leadership in those schools, unwarranted and an inappropriate remark in a public meeting.

6) Inclusion by the Director in the report to cabinet on the consultation – 21/3/19 of minutes from a consultation meeting at CYC:

Included in the documentation presented to cabinet on 21/3/19 was a set of minutes from a ‘consultation’ meeting held with a subset of students currently studying at CYC that has been presented as piece of research or quasi research, perhaps to add ‘rigour’ to underpin their recommendations. If Cabinet are to be enabled to make an informed decision on the validity of the ‘consultation’, sample size calculation, methodology, analysis and how the work was conducted within an ethical framework is the minimum requirement for inclusion. To present the results as they have been, therefore, does not allow the reader to establish the validity of the work and therefore it is potentially misleading to cabinet officials. Essentially, although the title of the report claims it to be ‘notes’, the Director of Education has undertaken a piece of research, on children, and it is not clear whether or how these children were consented to participate. As with any piece of research, care needs to be given to articulating sample size calculation to ensure that the responses are not biased and that there is no coercion or leading of participants. There are very clearly articulated procedures for undertaking research, particularly when the participants are children or vulnerable adults, and it is impossible from the notes presented, to know how a duty of care has been discharged. This consultation meeting was not listed in the original publication document which set out the consultation process even though all other meetings were. It seems to be the only meeting where officers actually attempted to actively encourage attendance by young people and the school would question, in terms of data protection, how the Council ‘tracked down’ former pupils of the three schools in Pontypridd. Governors at the school can testify that some of their own children were approached at college and asked to attend this meeting; no similar encouragement was given to pupils at the schools by officers to be in attendance and does anyone at the college or any officer have the right to access student records to establish which school a college student has come from?

An analysis of the minutes of consultation meetings shows that this meeting was the only consultation meeting at which officers attended and asked questions rather than answered them. The nature of the questions asked is extremely loaded and leading

and the number of students from each school is in no way statistically representative. As an example of how to use 'student voice' the minutes of the meeting suggest that practice was in complete contradiction of the following guidance:

Union – NAS/UWT

Principle 2 – Student voice activities must not undermine teachers' professional authority and must not compromise other fundamental rights of children and young people.

A key criterion for assessing the appropriateness and acceptability of any student voice initiative involves a consideration of the extent to which teachers' professional authority is supported or undermined. Any student voice practice that is used to make judgements about a teacher's professionalism and so has the potential to undermine teachers' professional authority is unacceptable. Unfortunately, the NASUWT has received examples of schools using student voice to question teachers' capabilities. Not only is this unacceptable employment practice, it is likely to create suspicion and resistance and undermine any benefits of student voice

Union – NUT

Whilst welcoming the Government's encouragement of pupil participation in schools' decision making processes, it is important to make a distinction between broad policy areas and decisions which would affect individuals. Any decision which would have a direct impact on particular individuals rather than on the majority or all, staff or pupils, should not be included within the topics on which consultation with children and young people might take place. As a rule of thumb, any issue which had privacy/confidentiality implications or would impact on employees' employment, salaries or conditions of service should be excluded from eligible areas for pupil involvement.

The number of pupils who have the capacity to operate maliciously and to subvert the consultative process is small. The good practice guidance should address this issue explicitly, including strategies to prevent misuse by pupils and to tackle any suspected subversion.

Estyn, for example, place great importance on student voice but they are also trained to ask open questions that do not encourage particular answers. They also ensure that very critical, often anomalous answers are not recorded in order to preserve staff confidence and prevent undermining authority.

Notes of a meeting held with students at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CYC) Monday 26th November 2018 at 10:30 am Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area
Present Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education and Inclusion Services Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools

Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
Sophie Nicholls (SN), Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools
23 students who previously attended Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High or
Cardinal Newman.

Q. GD - What is the pastoral care like here?

A. Student – Very good. They help me with my course and are always available to support me if I am struggling with a piece of coursework. They also listen and help if I have any worries and any personal problems I'm having.

A. Student – It depends on the teachers. There were some at school that were great but some that were not. I chose to come here because I could do a BTEC here but in Pontypridd High it was an exam.

Governing Body observations: No questions were asked by officers to the pupils at our school at their own consultation meeting. Only circa. 30% of the questions that they asked were answered by officers and they were told to leave the overwhelming majority as 'post it' notes to which they never received a response (the minutes of the pupil meeting at Hawthorn evidence this). Why were pupils at CYC asked particular questions and who formulated them?

Q. GD – What about A Levels ?

A. Student – I spoke to my friends at Pontypridd High and they said that the teachers are spread too thinly as they are working with years 7-11 as well as sixth form and they don't have the time to commit and support especially if they are having problems with their coursework.

A. Student – I think a big sixth form is a brilliant idea. I went to sixth form in Hawthorn High and the support and technology there was awful.

A. Student – The consortium is a shambles. Teachers are stretched and we could tell they were stressed.

The Governing Body remain staggered that words like 'shambles' and 'awful' would be included. Are these purporting to be verbatim minutes? 'I spoke to my friends' hardly constitutes 'research'.

Q. GD – What do you think the big differences are between sixth form in school and here?

A. Student – You can express yourself how you want to here and are accepted for that.

A. Student – We are treated like adults and we are trusted more here. We can go home to study and I am doing more learning independently rather than being forced to stay in school.

Where is the opportunity for a sixth form student to counter this sort of comment?

Q. LH – Do you think the learning environment is important to you?

A. Student – Yes, Hawthorn High is a prison. There are fences all around it. There is so much freedom here to go home if we need to.

As a governing Body we worked extremely closely with the Council to ensure site security was adequate after a particularly worrying incident at Mountain Ash School. We recognized with the Council that the site was too open at the time and fencing is an important part of child protection. For the director to let this comment go unchallenged and then for someone to make the decision to include it in these minutes is incredible in that context. Staff at the school remain appalled at this and the Governing Body share their sentiment.

GD – What impact does that have on your learning?

A. Student – I know that I am responsible for my own learning and I feel more like an adult. You lose your drive to do well if you are trapped in school and there is no room for you. Not everyone learns the same.

GD – So sixth form rooms are full in school?

A. Student – Yes, rooms are full and then you are told off for wandering or you have to ask for a key to a spare room if there is one. In the college there are lots of excellent places to self study.

Q. GD – Does anyone regret coming here?

A. Student – No.

A. Student – No, I met so many friends here and I am not bullied here. In school you have to sort it out yourself and fight because teachers don't do anything.

A. Student – If you are bullied here they sort it out. Everyone is different here but we all respect each other and we are tolerant of each other.

A. Student – The PE boys in school were the favourites and they could get away with bullying.

Once again it is incredible for the council to be suggesting on the one hand that there is too much surplus capacity in Pontypridd Sixth Forms and then to legitimize a statement that 'Sixth Form rooms are full in school'. The comments about bullying are completely unacceptable and pastoral staff at the school feel that their professionalism in this regard has been undermined and their ability to apply for positions in the new structure severely hampered by the Director asking leading questions and then publishing these answers.

A. Student – There is also a huge LGBT support group here (in CyC) too. In my first lesson here my teacher said that the most important thing we can do is respect each other and that she would happily have a lengthy debate with anyone who disagreed with that. I know that maybe there aren't enough funds to create the same type of support groups in Pontypridd High, but people weren't confident enough to come out in school. Some of my friends changed their names here and staff would help here and adapt what they called them to make it suitable for them.

Is it true that nobody in HHS has 'come out' or that we do not know how to cope or support LGBT issues?

This is an appalling insinuation on the work of our staff and. if the Council believed such comments to be true, they should have referred them as safeguarding issues to the school; it is our understanding that this was not done.

Q. AR – Do you think sixth form in schools is old fashioned?

A. Student – Yes in a way because you are trapped and so many teachers left Pontypridd High because they are stressed and too busy trying to teach year 7-11 too. The 3-16 is okay but I loved meeting new people when I went to high school and made that transition. There was a lot of bullying in my primary so I was glad to meet new people.

How does this question support the promotion of a Sixth Form in any school? As the Council is actively promoting the position of Bryncelynog as a Sixth Form centre of excellence as part of these 21st Century proposals, does it make any sense for an officer to now imply that 'sixth form in schools is old fashioned'?

Governing Body position May 2019:

The Welsh Assembly school organisation code states that:

“Where meetings are arranged, proposers should ensure that they are arranged in such a way that consultees in any of the categories set out a paragraph 3.2 are treated fairly and equitably.”

The meeting at CYC stands outside the stated consultation process and has been conducted in an unfair fashion.

The difference between the conduct of the meetings for school pupils and those at the College is surely an example of a failure to treat pupils (and staff at different institutions) equitably. No notice was given re the meeting at the college and it was never listed in the original consultation document. The vast majority of questions our pupils raised at their designated meeting were answered by officers and the minutes list the vast majority that never received a response; officers came to answer questions not ask them. Members of our school community who have sons/daughters at the college have made us aware that efforts were made by the council (through college staff) to seek out pupils and encourage them to attend the meeting held at the college (this never happened at school). Staff at the schools were treated exceptionally unfairly in terms of the questions that were asked by officers at the meeting at the college in that responses overtly stated or implied criticism of their work (as did certain questions). Leading questions were provided. It is the only consultation meeting where officers went to ask questions rather than answer them and its conduct is remarkable when considered in the light of teaching union guidance on the conduct of student voice activities and ESTYN practice. The record of the meeting undermines the work of professionals in both schools, lends weight to allegations of poor performance which are unwarranted and gives no opportunity for schools/individuals to respond appropriately. The criticisms made can be traced to the work of specific teachers at the two schools and are potentially libellous. One such reference was redacted at the request of a teaching union but this was done after publication.

In the light of this guidance and the employer's duty of care to staff in its schools, **the Governing Body puts on record its strongest objections to the meeting that was convened at CYC and the manner in which it was conducted.**

7) Points raised by the Director in the report to cabinet on the consultation (21/3/19) with regard to Hawthorn High's efforts to support pupil involvement in the consultation process:

"Summary of Responses to Consultation:

Questionnaires

2,168 questionnaires were received during the consultation period. Some were sent in via email, some were received at the open evenings, some by post, by hand, and the vast majority came via the schools affected by the proposals.

Pupils at Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools completed a large proportion of questionnaires received. We have been made aware by staff members and pupils of these schools that the questionnaires were completed during school time and under staff supervision. These questionnaires were either delivered by, or collected directly from the schools themselves.

Both Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High Schools wrote to parents and carers sharing their intended response to the consultation proposals. The letter encouraged parents and carers to copy the responses shared by the respective schools. These letters are included in Appendices 6 and 7 respectively.

For transparency it should be noted that the template for recording consultation responses had been altered by two of the schools and a significant proportion of responses were subsequently recorded on the modified proforma. We acknowledge that these may have been modified as it was felt that not all of the questions were personally relevant to all consultees. It is considered however that each individual proposal is an integral part of the wider strategic school management plan, and by not giving consultees the opportunity to complete the full questionnaire, they were inadvertently not given the opportunity to comment fully on all proposals as intended. It is also unclear whether or not learners were given full access to consultation information in order to make an informed decision on all proposals."

Governing Body position May 2019:

School Organisation Code Welsh Assembly (2013) states that:

“Proposers must also make suitable arrangements to consult with pupils of any affected school (or part of a school in the case of provision reserved for children with SEN) and, where possible, with children and young people who are likely to attend those schools. As a minimum, this must include consultation with the school councils of the affected schools, but should also include consultation with individual learners where this is appropriate and practicable. **Governing bodies must help facilitate this aspect of the consultation.**(our emphasis)”

The Council did not consult with pupils who are likely to attend the new school in any feeder primary schools other than Heol Y Celyn and Hawthorn.

“The information given to children and young people **must** (our emphasis) be presented in such a way that it is relevant to their age and level of likely understanding and allows them to reach an informed opinion. The agreed children and young people’s participation standards for Wales are available on the Welsh Government’s website; proposers should refer to these and act in accordance with them.”

No effort was made by the council to do this. HHS and PHS had to modify the forms themselves for use with pupils and were criticised by the Council for doing so in the consultation report.

“If consulting with individual learners, proposers should produce and distribute a version or versions of the consultation document appropriate to the age/ages of the children and young people affected. The consultation document should also clearly explain to children and young people the difference between the consultation and objection periods and how and when they can object to proposals. Where necessary, proposers should provide assistance to children and young people who wish to submit a consultation response.”

The Council has failed to meet its obligations in terms of consulting with young people and, furthermore, has taken it upon itself to criticise the two schools that attempted to do so. This is clear evidence of a lack of understanding of the Welsh Assembly’s organisation code and a failure to treat young people fairly through the consultation process.

8) Points raised by the Director in the report to cabinet on the consultation (21/3/19) with regard to changes to the proposed catchment area of the school:

The public were consulted with on the basis that the reorganisation of catchment areas would include the reallocation of Coedpenmaen Primary School (currently a Hawthorn

High School feeder school) to Pontypridd High School and of Gwauncelyn Primary School (currently a Bryncelynog feeder school) to Hawthorn High. On this basis the school and Governing Body gave its public support to this aspect of the proposals as they were originally put forward.

However, in the Director's report to Cabinet on 21/3/19 the following statement was made:

"It is recommended that the proposal set out above is maintained with the exception of the proposed change to the catchment area of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School. It is recommended that the catchment area for Gwauncelyn Primary School remains within the Bryncelynog Comprehensive School catchment area and does not transfer to the new 3-16 school for Hawthorn. Since the consultation commenced in October 2018, the large brownfield site at Llanillid, Llanharan has been purchased by two major developers and the Council has entered into site master planning with the developers, to provide pre-planning advice and guidance. For the site to be developed, a new secondary school will be required, which, will have an impact on a number of other schools as the new housing development grows. Furthermore, the Council's Local Development Plan will need to be reviewed in 2021, or an equivalent plan developed. It is therefore proposed that the secondary school catchment areas are monitored over the next 5-10 years taking into account the planned developments and the future new Local Development Plan (or equivalent) to ensure sufficient school places are available across the County Borough."

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The Welsh Assembly school organisation code states:

"Where, in the course of consultation, a new option emerges which the proposers decide to pursue, they **must** (our emphasis) consult afresh on this option before proceeding to publication."

The proposal to continue with the removal of Maes Y Coed and Coedpenaen Primary pupils from the Hawthorn catchment area but to keep Gwauncelyn pupils as part of the Bryncelynog catchment is in effect a 'new option' and the community should have been consulted 'afresh' on this new proposal. By not doing so the Council have proceeded on the basis of a consultation for Hawthorn that became outdated at the point that the Gwauncelyn amendment was decided upon. **The Governing Body formally objects to this failure to apply the Welsh Assembly organisation code to the consultation process.**

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The Pontypridd High School



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Pontypridd Schools Reorganisation

Consultation response from the Governing Body

The documents being referred to are;

Document 1	Meeting on October 3rd, 2018	'21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME – Proposals to improve education provision in the greater Pontypridd area' (Report of the Chief Executive in discussion with the Cabinet member for education, Mrs J. Rosser)
	Author(s)	Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools and Julie Hadley, School Organisation Manager.
Document 2	Consultation up to January 31st, 2019	21st CENTURY SCHOOLS - 'Consultation on the reorganisation of primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area'
	Author(s)	Local Authority
Document 3	Meeting on March 21st, 2019	'21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA' (Report of the Chief Executive in discussion with the Cabinet member for education, Mrs J. Rosser)
	Author(s)	Mrs Gaynor Davies Director of Education and Inclusion Services and Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools

Objections of The PHS Governing Body

1. That the consultation process has presented information about PHS (and the PSF) which is inaccurate, unfair and misleading

2. That on the basis of the information presented the rationale for proposing BCS and CyC as post-16 centres of excellence from September 2022 remains unclear
3. Aspects of the consultation process have not followed the 'School Organisation Code' (2013)
4. The rationale for selecting CyC as a centre of post-16 excellence remain unclear
5. The inclusion of the student comments from CyC was not in line with the formal consultation process and made public comments about staff and students which were misleading, unfair, unsubstantiated, deeply upsetting and in opposition to the duty of care role that the LA assumes on behalf of our school

The following information is included to support our current objections to the Sixth Form proposal. It is based around the 3 public documents produced by the LA as part of this consultation process.

Objection 1

The analysis of data and resulting commentary about PHS and the PSF often negative, inaccurate and misleading ?

It is our belief that the documents referred to are inherently biased towards BCS and CyC. We fully accept that the author(s) would want to promote the proposals but this objective has too often been pursued through direct, inaccurate commentary and / or ‘unproven negative inference’ rather than through reference to fact.

In response to this the Director comments (Document 3) that ‘It was not the intention to convey negativity towards any schools affected by this consultation. The language and terminology used in the consultation document are commentaries based on the interrogation of the data.’

It may well have been the case that there was no intention to convey negativity. However, given the same strength of feeling amongst peers and colleagues we are not sure how this situation has arisen given the degree of proof reading that would have surely identified this before documents were made public.

The response refers to ‘commentaries based on the interrogation of data’. To that extent there is no positive commentary at all in reference to either PHS or the PSF whilst every effort is made to speak highly of BCS and CyC. Given the nature of the post-16 proposal this may have been understandable but it clearly leads the reader to conclude negative thoughts about PHS and the PSF in comparison to those institutions.

The term ‘better’ in relation to BCS has arisen more than once in these documents. It seems that with all of the information produced, the word ‘better’ is the differentiating factor in determining the desired location of post-16 provision. However, reference to this term is entirely linked to comments about A* to C grades (in relation to BCS) which is only one aspect of a post-16 provision and there is nothing else presented to justify the decision making behind the post-16 proposal.

Supplementary Question

Why is the analysis of data and resulting commentary about PHS and the PSF often negative, inaccurate and misleading ?

In discussion with parent governors in the formal consultation meeting, the Director stated that BCS was a better school than PHS.

Can you clarify what the LA means by BCS being a ‘better’ school ?

If LA Officers suggest that the language and terminology used in the consultation document are commentaries based on the interrogation of the data then perhaps it is useful to look at the accuracy of that analysis. We believe there are a number of examples whereby the commentary included in the named documents are certainly not based on accurate analysis.

Example 1	Inaccurate and misleading reference to A Level standards at PHS and the PSF
Example 2	Negative inferences about standards at PHS and the PSF in relation to BCS
Example 3	Unfair comparisons are being made with BCS based on the idea of ‘similar schools’

Example 4	Reference to A Level outcomes for 2018 are misleading and not in line with the consultation process
Example 5	Analysis and comments about AWPS and Key Skills are unfounded
Example 6	Misleading conclusions are drawn from analysis of student numbers and class sizes at PHS and the PSF
Example 7	Inaccurate and misleading reference is made in relation to GCSE standards at PHS

Example 1

Inaccurate and misleading reference to A Level standards at PHS and the PSF

From Document 1, paragraph 4.2

*'The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 5 (in respect of the A Level results) of Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools are **consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales.***

From Document 1, paragraph 4.7

*'The educational performance of the sixth forms has been mixed with two of the secondary schools (Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High ?) **consistently being amongst the worst performing schools in respect of A Level performance***

Comparative A Level outcomes in Year 13

		L3	AWPS	3 A*/A	3 A*/C
2015	Pontypridd High	95.2	856	3.2	68.3
	Bryncelynog CS	98.6	670	5.6	34.7
	RCT lowest			0	27.0
	RCT average	96.9	730	3.1	57.9
	Wales average	96.9	799	7.9	68.1
2016	Pontypridd High	100	928	5.9	64.7
	Bryncelynog CS	100	824	8.8	67.2
	RCT lowest			0	40.2
	RCT average	97.0	765	4.0	65.2
	Wales average	98.0	823	6.7	70.6
2017	Pontypridd High	100	820	5.6	42.6
	Bryncelynog CS	94.3	788	18.9	52.8
	RCT lowest			0	16.3
	RCT average	96.3	678	5.5	45.1
	Wales average	97.1	731	10.5	54.7

Thorough and accurate analysis of this data which is shown in the table below reveals that:

- In each of the 3 years reported in this consultation (2015-2017) PHS has exceeded the Wales averages in 50% of the performance indicators selected by the LA (6/12 in years 2015 to 2017)
- Accurate analysis would not conclude from this that PHS is ***consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales.***
- Analysis of the data shows that if PHS is in this position then so it is for BCS.

From Document 3, page 12 – the Director has written :

'The data in the consultation document is based on Welsh Government data sets. Welsh Government updated the Key Stage 5 results on 12/11/18. The following table shows the most recent results published on the Welsh Government All Wales Core Data Sets and provides data relating to Level 3 outcomes, the Average Wider Points Score (AWPS) and the percentage of learners achieving 3A/C. The results confirm that the Key Stage 5 results for both schools at 3A*/C are consistently below both the RCT and the Welsh average from 2015-2017.'*

Supplementary Question:

Do you accept that LA analysis and commentary in relation to standards at PHS and the PSF being 'consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales' was inaccurate and misleading given the justification for that statement is to refer to 2018 data and to the A* to C performance measure only ?

Example 2

Negative inferences through comparisons about standards at PHS and the PSF in relation to BCS

From Document 1, paragraph 4.2

'However, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is an improving school and has consistently performed above the Welsh average for A level provision.'

From Document 3 - Minutes of meeting with PHS Student Council

ET - The LA is not saying that Pontypridd High School is a poor school. Bryncelynnog is improving and has consistently better results.

Reference to A* - A	It is true that BCS has achieved outcomes above the Welsh averages in 2016 and 2017. PHS has not achieved this.
Reference to A* - C	PHS outcomes were above the Welsh averages in 2015 but not in 2016 or 2017. BCS outcomes have not been above the Welsh averages in any of these 3 years.
Reference to '<u>Consistently better</u>'	How can 50% of A Level performance indicators from 2015-2017 shown to be above Welsh averages be referred to with statements like 'worst' and 'below' in describing standards at PHS ? Over the same period BCS exceeded the Wales averages in 50% of the PI's, exactly the same as PHS.
Reference to '<u>better</u>'	If LA officers can justify the use of the term 'better' to describe and compare outcomes based on a higher % (of grades A* to C), then this is educationally flawed and a very worrying development
Reference to BCS being an '<u>improved school</u>'	The term 'improved' with reference to BCS suggests standards have been below that expected. This is reflected by the 2016 BCS Estyn report as follows; <u>'However, performance in the average wider points score and the proportion of pupils achieving three passes at grades A*-C has been below the average for similar schools and below national averages in each of the last four years.'</u> We believe this reference by the LA to 'improved' is only linked to 2018 results at BCS and it is true that BCS have improved in 2018. However, negativity towards PHS is clear because at A Level, outcomes in 3 of the 4 indicators in 2018 also improved and in two instances were above the Welsh averages. There is no reference to that achievement.

Supplementary Question

How does the LA justify its statement that BCS has 'consistently performed above the Welsh average for A level provision.' ?

Example 3

Unfair comparisons are being made with BCS based on the idea of 'similar schools'

From Document 3, page 12 – the Director has written :

For the post 16 provision the Welsh Government data does not compare performance of schools based on the free school meal categories. However, the Council's data evidences that the majority of pupils eligible for free school meals do not return to the sixth forms in Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools.

- This explanation is incorrect as the concept of similar schools is still referred to by Estyn in their inspection reports when commenting on A level outcomes, thus recognising that comparisons should only be made directly with similar cohorts.
- In their reports, Estyn refer to outcomes at L3 and the AWPS.
- Surely any analysis would conclude that a school which is in a lower eFSM / BMQ group would have a greater number of more able A level students and should therefore achieve a higher % of A* to C grades. This is not better but expected and can be shown to be the case in all schools across Wales with a low eFSM %.

Supplementary Question

Is it the LA view that all schools should be achieving the same outcomes at A level irrelevant of the nature of their school catchment area ?

Example 4

Reference to A Level outcomes for 2018 are misleading and not a part of with the consultation process

From Document 3 - Minutes of the meeting with PHS staff

ET - Results are going up. KS4 and KS5 data for 2018 evidence this statement.

- This consultation process was based on student outcomes up to and including 2017. There should be no reference to 2018 data and certainly no attempt to justify the selection of BCS and CyC by using 2018 data. It would seem the reason it is being referred to is because outcomes for BCS and CyC ‘improved’ in 2018 and as such they add more conviction to the LA proposal for post-16. This is not fair in relation to the consultation process.
- Given that the LA have made continued reference to 2018 outcomes in order to justify the post-16 proposals, we can also present outcome data for PHS students. The tables below show A Level outcomes from 2016 - 2018 at PHS in relation to the new WG performance measures which were confirmed in March this year.

Table 1 : Learners starting AS and A2 courses

Start of Year 12 to completion of Year 13	AS and A2 retention						
	Learners starting 3+ AS levels	Learners at 8 week point	Learners completing AS year	Learner completion from 8 week point	Learner retention from Year 12 to Year 13		
					No.	%	Wales Ave.
2015 / 2017	81	76	62	82%	55/76	72%	79%
2016 / 2018	79	77	76	94%	64/77	83%	79%
2017 / 2019	67	63	62	98%	51/63	81%	79%
2018 / 2019	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc

The key point with these new measures is that final A Level outcomes are measured against the number of students who started the A Level courses in Year 12 and who were there after an 8 week period.

The table shows that the % student completion from Year 12 is very high, 94% for those students completing A Levels in 2018. Also important is the fact that 83% of Year 12 students in 2018 were retained from Year 12 into Year 13, a figure 4% above the Welsh average. The LA have frequently quoted the higher retention figure of students at BCS going into the sixth form from Year 11 in to Year 12. A more important figure is how many of those Year 11 students actually complete their final A Levels. Students at PHS are obviously very well recruited and provided with the best education and support, hence high numbers complete A levels above the Welsh average

Table 2 : Two Year A Level measure based on the initial Year 12 cohort

Year of A Level completion in Year 13	2 Year measure A level 2				
	Learners completing Year 13	Two year completion rate	% of learners achieving 3	% of learners achieving 3	% of learners achieving 3

	(Two year measure)			or more A2 at A*/ A		or more A2 at A*/ C		or more A2 at A*/ E	
		Outcomes measured from 8 week point at start of Year 12							
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2017	55	55	72%	3	4%	24	32%	47	62%
Wales average			79%		9%		40%		62%
2018	64	64	94%	5	6%	34	44%	56	73%
Wales average			79%		9%		40%		62%
2019	51	51	83%	3	5%	27	43%	50	79%
Wales average			79%		9%		40%		62%

This table shows clearly that for those students completing A Levels from Year 12 (94%), those achieving 3 of more A* to C grades is above the Welsh average. This is important because the LA has stated that outcomes at PHS are 'amongst the worst in Wales'. Clearly this is not the case either by using data up to 2017 and by reference to 2018 and the new WG performance measures.

Table 2 : Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced L3

WBQ	Learners starting In Year 12	Learners at 8 week point	Learners completing	Completion rate	% pass WBQ (from Yr 12 8 week)
2015 / 2017	81	76	55	72%	63%
Wales average				64%	47%
2016 / 2018	79	77	64	83%	70%
Wales average				64%	47%
2017 / 2019	67	63	51	79%	79%
Wales average				64%	47%

Outcomes in the WBQ are excellent. This is a challenging A Level course which is very well taught, hence the results which are significantly above Welsh averages.

Table 3 : Skills Challenge Certificate Advanced L3

SCC	% A*		% A		% B		% C		% D		% E		% SCC pass
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	

													(from Yr 12 wk 8)
2017	1	1%	8	11%	28	37%	17	22%	1	1%	0	0%	72%
Wales ave		2%		10%		14%		14%		10%		4%	55%
2018	0	0%	11	17%	31	49%	14	22%	0	0%	0	0%	88%
Wales ave		2%		10%		14%		14%		10%		4%	55%
2019	7	11%	13	21%	30	48%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	79%
Wales ave		2%		10%		14%		14%		10%		4%	55%

Outcomes in the Skills Challenge Certificate are excellent. This is a challenging A Level course which is very well taught, hence the results which are significantly above Welsh averages. Importantly these are not Key Skills which the LA highlighted as an 'unfair' means of comparison with other schools.

Table 4 : Year 13 destinations

Year	Learners completing Year 13	University			College	Apprentice Scheme	Employment	Gap Year	Return to School	Other
		Ox.	RG	Other						
2017	55	0	3	44	4	-	3	-	-	1
2018	64	0	7	47	3	-	4	1	-	2
2019	51	0	?	40+	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc

Supplementary Question

Does the analysis of data for 2017 and 2018 under new performance measures show A level standards at PHS to be 'consistently below the Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in RCT and Wales.' ?

Example 5

Reference to AWPS is wrong and unfounded

Supplementary Question

How is BCS referred to as ‘better’ school yet in terms of AWPS ‘comparison between PHS with any other institutions is very difficult.

From Document 3, page 14 – the Director has written :

*The AWPS is calculated by dividing the total number of points gained from all courses sat at Key Stage 5 and not just the number of A-levels or their equivalent. **Pontypridd High School provide a large number of Key Skill courses that inflate this figure and makes comparison with any other institutions very difficult.** Due to this very issue, the Welsh Government no longer uses the AWPS as an assessment criteria comparator. It should also be noted that the AWPS is not a criteria that is used by Universities in scoring a student’s University application.*

From Document 3 - Minutes of the meeting with PHS Student Council

The student council queried the Average Point Score. CE confirmed that Pontypridd High was the highest. However, this is not a good comparator. AWPS is not a criteria used by Universities for University applications.

Comparative A Level outcomes in Year 13

		AWPS
2015	Pontypridd High	856
	Bryncelynnog CS	670
	Wales average	799
2016	Pontypridd High	928
	Bryncelynnog CS	824
	Wales average	823
2017	Pontypridd High	820
	Bryncelynnog CS	788
	Wales average	731

AWPS ‘points’		UCAS ‘points’	
A*	300	A*	56
A	270	A	48
B	240	B	40
C	210	C	32
D	180	D	24
E	150	E	16

High levels of completion in Year 13 lead to high points score

This reference to Key Skills is a clear example of the LA making a point about negativity for no apparent reason other than to ‘down grade’ achievement at PHS. Of equal concern is the analysis by the LA about Key Skills, qualifications that ceased to exist as part of the WBQ in 2015. In addition:

- BCS has and still does enter students for the WBQ / SCC just like PHS. Perhaps PHS are just better at teaching this A Level course and achieving the higher grades and this should have been acknowledged.
- The WBQ is recognised by the Welsh Government and Universities. It is not an easy qualification yet the LA seem to think it is an 'easier option' which inflates results.
- In every other way the LA are keen to compare results where it shows BCS to be a 'better school'. Interesting that when it comes to the WBQ the LA feel it is unfair to compare and 'it is very difficult to make comparisons'.
- The AWPS is linked to UCAS but UCAS use a lower score – the principle is the same
- The WBQ is an accepted A level course and contributes on equal terms to the new WG performance measures

Supplementary Questions

Can the LA confirm that PHS has inflated its AWPS through a 'mass' entry for Key Skills since 2015 ?

What does the LA believe is the common link between the AWPS and the UCAS university application points score ?

Example 6

Misleading conclusions are drawn from analysis of student numbers and class sizes at PHS and the PSF

From Document 3 - Minutes of meeting with PHS Student Council

With reference to post 16 class sizes and the subject offer -

'These have been scrutinised and are accurate. Each school is funded directly for the number of students enrolled on each course. Hence if there are 14 students undertaking a course in Pontypridd High School but 8 are from Hawthorn, Pontypridd High School will only receive funding for the 6 Pontypridd High School students.'

- Governors are not questioning the funding mechanism but the LA must accept that combining students from 2 schools and then only using one teacher from either school must be more cost effective. This is the fundamental basis of the PSF provision.

From Document 3 - Minutes of the meeting with PHS Student Council

The school does not have the pupil numbers to have a viable 6th form.

- The school operates a joint sixth form which cumulatively has 246 students. This is the 3rd highest school based sixth form provision in RCT
- It seems that the cumulative benefits of sharing a provision are not understood. The point is that PHS and HHS share staffing to ensure class sizes are viable and costs more efficient. This is shown in the table below.

Number of A Level classes with 5 students or less

	2016	2017	2018
PHS	8	5	1
HHS	9	2	2
PSF (Shared)	1	1	0
TOTAL (Actual)	17	8	3
RCT (consultation document)	28	25	n/a

Average A Level classes size

	2016	2017	2018
PSF	11	14	14
HHS (HHS classes plus PSF shared classes)	5	5	n/a

- The tables above illustrate the advantages of working in partnership and how the number of classes with less than 5 students has been reduced significantly in recent years by increasingly sharing provision between ourselves and PHS.
- RCT calculations presented in the consultation document only consider each school's provision in isolation and take no account of students from both schools in each class.
- As a result, they seem to have chosen to present figures which completely ignore the efficiencies which have been achieved for many years by working in partnership. This creates an unfairly negative picture of the viability of the Pontypridd Sixth Form.

Supplementary Question

Does the LA understand that PHS only has responsibility for delivering 9 A Level courses yet our students are able to access over 20 because of the partnership with HHS within the PSF ?

From Document 3, page 12 – the Director has written :

For example, for Pontypridd High School in September 2018 out of a potential 155 pupils in year 11 (as at July 2018), only 50 returned to Year 12, indicating that 67.74% choose alternative provision. This clearly suggests that Pontypridd High School does not currently provide the choice of curriculum options or educational experiences that some learners are seeking.

- PHS and the PSF is providing more courses and options than BCS as shown by the LA own analysis in the consultation document
- Outcomes at PHS have been shown to be above Welsh averages (except for A*/A) in 2018

Supplementary Question

Given PHS is achieving outcomes above the Welsh averages in nearly all new performance measures, in what ways does the LA believe PHS is not currently providing the choice of curriculum options or educational experiences that some learners are seeking

From Document 3, page 12 – the Director has written :

Furthermore, if the curriculum offer is likely to be further restricted in future due to the deficit position, a further decline in numbers is inevitable and the provision will become even more unviable.

- Whilst both schools are in a deficit position, collaborative working has ensured that a broad curriculum offer has remained in place over the last 5 years. This is the result of strong leadership, making the PSF a viable option at the present time.
- The Director is suggesting that the offer will decline due to the deficit position. It is the proposals that have been put forward that may lead to any decline in student numbers and inevitable the curriculum offer

From Document 3, page 12 – the Director has written :

By enhancing the curriculum offer in Bryncelynnog School it is likely that an increase in pupil numbers will be experienced as evidenced in Tonyrefail Comprehensive School following the implementation

Supplementary Question

Can the LA be precise about the number of additional students have attended the new Tonyrefail and Treorchy Sixth Forms from the old Tonypandy, Ferndale and Porth Schools ?

From Document 3 - Minutes of the meeting with CNS Student Council

Officers outlined that Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is a good, improving school with strong outcomes and is led by a strong Senior Management Team. The percentage of learners that return from year 11 to year 12 is nearly 45%.

- The positive slant towards BCS extends here to the 'strong senior management team'. This suggests to Governors that this is an advantage they hold on our own leadership team. This may not be the intention but this is the tone that comes across through each document.
- Senior LA Officers have been very praiseworthy of the leadership at PHS. Indeed, we have been asked to present our CPD programme and leadership structure to all schools and CSC challenge advisers.

Supplementary question

What is your opinion on the quality of leadership and management at PHS ?

Example 7

Inaccurate and misleading reference to GCSE standards at PHS and the PSF

From Document 2, page 10

'The educational performance and pupil attendance of the 2 LA maintained secondary schools at Key Stage 4 is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales'

This statement is factually inaccurate and Governors would point out that the Welsh Assembly has categorized PHS as being a 'Yellow' school for each of the last three academic years. The Welsh Assembly defines Yellow schools as being those that **"Have secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators."** (Page 19 of the WAG National School Categorisation Guide)

- For the years 2015 and 2016 the average for Pontypridd High School (PHS) was 20.8%. For 2016 and 2018 this average fell to 19.8%. Since September 2018 the figure for PHS is 20.2%
- Between 2015 and 2016 PHS was in a group of Schools with a FSM entitlement of 20-30%. Between 2017 and 2018 PHS has been in a group of 'similar' schools between 15-20%. As such, between 2015 and 2016 you would expect PHS to be in quartile 1 or 2 for all performance indicators given the average FSM entitlement of 20.8%. As this figure decreased to 19.8% for 2017 and 2018 you would expect any comparison with similar schools to be more in quartiles 3 and 4.
- BCS (10-15%) is not a 'similar' school to Pontypridd High and the LA is making comparisons and referring to similar schools when convenient to do so.

Welsh Government Performance Indicator	2015 Compared to schools who were 20-30% eFSM	2016 Compared to schools who were 20-30% eFSM	2017 Compared to schools who were 15-20% eFSM	2017 Compared to schools who were 20-30% eFSM
5 A* to C at GCSE (with Eng/Maths)	2	1	3	2
L2 Threshold	1	1	4	2
L1 Threshold	2	1	2	2
Capped 8/9 points	1	1	3	1
Best English A* to C %	3	1	4	2
Best Maths A* to C %	1	1	2	1
Best Science A* to C %	4	3	3	2

Pontypridd HS

Performance Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	RCT Ave.	Wales Ave.

L2+ %	53.3%	61.8%	50.6%	54.0%	53%	55%
BMQ	2	1	3	3		
L2 Threshold %	92.9%	98.2%	60.2%	64.1%	64%	67%
BMQ	1	1	4	2		
L1 Threshold %	98.4%	100.0%	97.2%	98.5%	95%	94%
BMQ	2	1	4	2		
Capped 8/9	364.4	375.9	354.6	356	348	350
BMQ	1	1	2	3		
Best English A* to C %	59.2%	71.2%	56.8%	61.0%	63%	63%
BMQ	3	1	4	3		
Best Maths A* to C %	62.0%	65.9%	61.9%	65.0%	62%	64%
BMQ	1	2	2	2		
Best Science A* to C %	63.6%	87.6%	65.9%	54.0%	58%	63%
BMQ	4	3	3	4		
WBQ National				54%	50%	51%
BMQ				2		
Skills CC National				80%	73%	73%
BMQ				1		

Bryncelynnog CS

Performance Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	RCT Ave.	Wales Ave.
L2+ %	61.7%	64.9%	62.9%	66.9%	53%	55%
BMQ	2	2	2	1		
L2 Threshold %	75.4%	81.1%	73.1%	74.4%	64%	67%
BMQ	4	4	3	2		
L1 Threshold %	96.6%	98.0%	98.2%	95.9%	95%	94%
BMQ	4	3	3	4		
Capped 8/9	333	333	375.8	368.7	348	350
BMQ	4	4	2	3		
Best English A* to C %	71.4%	74.3%	68.9%	75%	63%	63%
BMQ	2	1	3	1		
Best Maths A* to C %	69.1%	67.6%	69.5%	73.3%	62%	64%
BMQ	2	3	2	2		
Best Science A* to C %	95.4%	98.0%	98.8%	73.3%	58%	63%
BMQ	1	1	1	2		
WBQ National				tbc	50%	51%
BMQ						
Skills CC National				90.7%	73%	73%
BMQ				1		

- Detailed and accurate analysis shows that PHS is not consistently in the third and fourth quartile when compared to similar schools or in comparison to BCS

Supplementary questions

Do you think that the L1 and Capped 9 outcomes for BCS show that their curriculum for less able learners could be improved ?

If that is the case, are you reassured that they can provide students who are less capable of A* to C grades at A Level with the right options and support ?

Does the LA accept that GCSE outcomes for both PHS and BCS are in line with that expected when compared to similar schools ?

Objection 2

In relation to this consultation process, reference to PHS participation in the SCC programme is unfair, misleading and irrelevant.

From Document 3, page 14

It is also important to reflect when considering the performance of Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools that until recently both schools were two of forty secondary schools across Wales that were identified by Welsh Government as consistently underperforming and were included in the Schools Challenge Cymru Programme. Over the three years to 2017 both schools had significant additional investment which in total was in excess of £1.24m in addition to the funding allocation from the Council and had access to high quality leadership and teaching support provided directly by Welsh Government. This investment has provided the two schools with a significant advantage over similar schools in Wales. However, despite this considerable additional resource both schools remain in a significant deficit position.

- What relevance has this comment to this consultation and the post-16 proposals ? It is another example of taking every opportunity to make a negative comment about PHS (and HHS).
- PHS were asked to be one of the SCC schools by a senior LA Officer. That person was very clear that participation from PHS was because RCT Officers thought we had real potential to make best uses of the resources on offer. Governors were not part of any discussion about ‘consistently underperforming’ as a rationale for our inclusion.
- Leadership at PHS has been developed through its own very successful ‘Emerging Leader’ programme. On that basis, can the LA please inform Governors what ‘high quality leadership and teaching support’ was accessed at PHS as a result of being one of the SCC schools ? If this refers to a Challenge Adviser then it should be noted all schools had access to a CA. Again the insinuation here is that we had access to something no other schools did and therefore it was ‘unfair’. Surely any improvement PHS made should be celebrated by the LA and not down played.
- In respect of outcome PHS has consistently performed well when compared to the other 39 schools who were part of the SCC initiative. Please see the L2+ comparisons below with a red box highlighting when other schools achieved a higher L2+ outcome. (SCC results are attributable to 2015, 2016 and 2017).
- Staff and staff structures employed through funding have been reviewed and retained where appropriate after SCC funding ended to ensure continued school improvement.

Outcomes for L2+ Threshold in SCC schools – 2015 to 2018

SCC School	2015	+/-	2016	+/-	2017	+/-	2018	+/-
Abersychan Comprehensive	48.7		41.2		43.3		37.7	
Abertillery Comprehensive	34.4		41.2		25.5		35.3	
Afon Taf High School	48.2		58.1		41.7		38.0	
Barry Comprehensive School	50.0		62.7		49.4		58.0	
Bedwas High School	35.0		51.0		54.7		55.6	

Bishop Hedley High School	64.0		60.7		48.4		67.4	
Blackwood CS	59.8		57.9		51.1		43.9	
Cantonian High School	45.0		50.7		46.1		46.4	
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	44.0		55.8		41.7		45.5	
Glynderw High School Eastern High School Michaelston Community College	24.6		26.5		22.2		27.6	
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community	54.3		42.8		44.5		50.0	
Fairwater High School (now Cwmbran HS)	46.8		39.6		43.2		35.4	
Hawthorn High School	49.3		61.8		45.9		51.8	
Heolddu Comprehensive School	48.9		44.3		40.4		43.3	
Holywell High School	37.6		50.0		39.3		34.4	
Llantarnam School	46.8		39.0		43.1		35.4	
Llanwern High School	45.7		44.5		26.1		37.5	
Lliswerry High School	41.3		53.7		44.6		45.7	
Milford Haven School	43.3		51.7		48.9		43.2	
Morrison Comprehensive	46.3		62.6		46.9		54.4	
Pentrefafod School	52.7		53.3		43.7		39.9	
Pen-Y-Dre High School	39.1		52.6		32.6		44.3	
Porth County Community	47.5		51.9		36.0		45.2	
Rhosnesni High School	49.0		49.7		35.3		40.2	
St Cenydd School	50.0		41.9		45.5		36.3	
St Julian's School	46.6		51.0		48.6		53.7	
St Martin's School	52.3		64.2		65.2		60.9	
St. Illtyd's Catholic High School	46.1		55.2		46.9		36.2	
The Pontypridd High School	53.3		61.8		51.1		54.2	
Tonypandy Community College	49.2		51.9		49.9		48.0	
Tonyrefail School	47.2		60.6		46.8		49.0	

Tredegar Comprehensive School	52.4		53.7		55.1		55.8	
West Monmouth School	56.9		52.4		48.8		55.3	
Willows High School	46.9		52.8		39.2		42.7	
Ysgol Bro Dinefwr	63.3		72.7		64.1		67.3	
Ysgol Bryn Alyn	48.1		50.0		40.0		42.1	
Ysgol Clywedog	52.8		46.5		39.3		31.9	
Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi	48.6		48.2		45.1		47.4	

There is also reference to £1.24 million of funding and *'despite this considerable additional resource both schools (PHS and HHS) remain in a significant deficit position'*

This suggests that the funding was used poorly and/or the decision making by which funds were spent lacked strategy and impact. It is important to clarify this;

- SCC criteria for spending were very specific and not intended to solve any 'deficit' budget. All funding was matched to detailed plans and any money allocated was very closely monitored, linked to the improvement plans. Indeed, this was a very comprehensive and time consuming part of the involvement with SCC.
- Indeed, the school benefitted from very well considered planning and expenditure, much of which targeted resources which would not be made available again

School Challenge Expenditure 2014/15		
Capital	Area of spending	Total allocated
	Classroom refurbishment, C-touch screens, Late bus, Science IT room	£75,000
Revenue	English and maths teacher (primary model), core subject support, Emerging Leader programme	£168,000
Total SCC allocation		£243,000

School Challenge Expenditure 2015/16		
Capital	Area of spending	Total allocated
	Staff training room, Reception area, Late bus Cluster C-touch screens	£50,000
Revenue	English teacher, Maths teacher (primary model), core subject / WBQ support, Emerging Leader programme, Inclusion room and staff Cluster leaders of learning	£185,000
Total SCC allocation		£235,000

School Challenge Expenditure 2016/17		
	Area of spending	Total allocated
Revenue	English teacher, Maths teacher, core subject / WBQ support, Emerging Leader programme Aspiring Leader of Science programme Inclusion room and staff Cluster leaders of learning	£235,000
Total SCC allocation		£235,000

Supplementary Questions

Do the LA think PHS used the resources made available through SCC effectively ?

Can the LA confirm what high quality advice and support was provided to PHS through the SCC programme which 'provided PHS with a significant advantage over similar schools in Wales' ?

Objection 3

Aspects of the consultation process have not followed the 'School Organisation Code' (2013)

Governors understanding of a consultation process according to this ‘Code’ is that it should:

- include sufficient reasons and information for particular proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response (refer to analysis and commentary of data)
- ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken (refer to acknowledgement of consultation results)
- ensure meetings are arranged in such a way that consultees in any of the categories set out a paragraph 3.2 are treated fairly and equitably (refer to CyC meeting)

From Document 3, page 8

‘A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations/’

The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School, Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School, Pontypridd High School, Cilfynydd Primary School, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and YGG Pont Sion Norton’

- As shown, analysis of data with regard to BCS is often misleading in relation to PHS and the PSF and a fair response on that basis is made more difficult
- Responses to the consultation process clearly show that most people, young and old are against the present post-16 proposals. We do not believe that the views of these people, in particular the students has been listened to and acted upon.

For Post-16 proposals	150 responses
Against post-16 proposals	1,735 responses
Unsure	130 responses
N/A or not answered	153 responses

From Document 3, page 12 – the Diector has written :

Only a small number of pupils in both schools have expressed an interest in attending Bryncelynnog for sixth form.

Supplementary Questions

How has the LA acknowledged the view of the students expressed through the consultation process ?

Does the LA remain adamant that its strategic plan that 100 PHS students will attend BCS in 2022 remains valid ?

Where in the consultation document does it say that there would be a

separate and very specific consultation with a group of 23 CyC students ?

Why was there no similar meeting with students from PHS (and HHS, BCS, CNS) ?

From Document 3, page 12 - The Director of Education has written:

Both Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High Schools wrote to parents and carers sharing their intended response to the consultation proposals. The letter encouraged parents and carers to copy the responses shared by the respective schools. These letters are included in Appendices 6 and 7 respectively.

The consultation code is important in response to this:

“The information given to children and young people must be presented in such a way that it is relevant to their age and level of likely understanding and allows them to reach an informed opinion. The agreed children and young people’s participation standards for Wales are available on the Welsh Government’s website; proposers should refer to these and act in accordance with them.”

- We are not aware of any attempt by the LA to produce information related to the consultation process that made details relevant to their age and ability, allowing them to reach an informed opinion.
- Governors and staff at PHS acted more than appropriately in making information produced by the LA more ‘user friendly’ and this enabled a large number of them to engage in the consultation process, something the LA was very keen to encourage.

From Document 3, pages 12 and 13 – the Director has written:

Summary of Responses to Consultation Questionnaires

2,168 questionnaires were received during the consultation period. Some were sent in via email, some were received at the open evenings, some by post, by hand, and the vast majority came via the schools affected by the proposals.

We have been made aware by staff members and pupils of these schools that the questionnaires were completed during school time and under staff supervision.

Both Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High Schools wrote to parents and carers sharing their intended response to the consultation proposals. The letter encouraged parents and carers to copy the responses shared by the respective schools.

For transparency it should be noted that the template for recording consultation responses had been altered by two of the schools and a significant proportion of responses were subsequently recorded on the modified proforma. We acknowledge that these may have been modified as it was felt that not all of the questions were personally relevant to all consultees.

We cannot comment on the survey undertaken by the two schools with their pupils. However, the actual data on the number of pupils that choose to stay in Hawthorn and

Pontypridd High School for their sixth form provision is very low

- Why is there any reference to a 'comment on the survey undertaken by the two schools'. What does this mean ? As it stands it suggests staff and Governors have undertaken a survey that was controlled and unfair.
- It seems again that a negative tone is taken in response to a large number of people engaging in a public process. The last sentence on pupils choosing to stay at either PHS or HHS exemplifies this – how is a statement like this necessary or appropriate at this point in the Director's report ?

Supplementary Question

What does the LA mean by 'we cannot comment on the survey undertaken by the two schools with their pupils. However, the actual data on the number of pupils that choose to stay in Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School for their sixth form provision is very low' ?

Objection 4

The rationale for selecting CyC as a centre of post-16 excellence remain unclear

From Document 3, page 16 – the Director has written :

The Council has an effective working relationship with Coleg Y Cymoedd and has supported the campus developments in Aberdare, Llwynypia and Nantgarw.

The relationship between the College and the Council is stronger than ever with opportunities for collaboration between both parties being developed in many new areas. The Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Education are governors on the College Board.

Supplementary Questions

If the LA has effective working relationships how do Officers explain the poor Estyn Inspection of 2017 in relation A Level outcomes ?

If the LA has effective working relationships how has it proved so difficult to gain any information about provision and outcomes at CyC ?

Can the LA make clear how the ‘relationship’ between the LA and CyC will ensure that students from PHS will have an ‘excellent’ post-16 provision at CyC ?

Objection 5

The inclusion of the student comments from CyC was not in line with the formal consultation process and made public comments about staff and students which were misleading, unfair, unsubstantiated, deeply upsetting and in opposition to the duty of care role that the LA assumes on behalf of our school

Governors firmly believe in students having the opportunity to express them selves, give opinions and support the decision making process. At PHS staff undertake this activity all of the time and it is an integral part of our recruitment process.

To that extent our school completely agrees with **Article 12 of the UNCRC**, which sets out the right of children and young people to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects them. This Article is seen as particularly important, in that it is an enabling right, empowering and supporting children and young people to access the broader rights under the UNCRC. Pontypridd High unequivocally supports this.

At PHS we have taken this commitment into our Student Voice policy

Student participation and student voice activities should;

- make a positive and demonstrable contribution to the life of our school
 - not undermine teachers' professional authority and must not compromise other fundamental rights of children and young people
 - value and respects the views of all members of the school community
 - reflect the capacity of students to participate in particular activities and the extent to which they can reasonably be held to account for the results of their action
 - be consistent with, and support work to promote equality and diversity and tackle discrimination and prejudice.
 - be inclusive and give all students an opportunity to participate
-
- It is our belief that the published student voice activity that was undertaken with 23 students at CyC certainly undermines teacher's professional authority. This is certainly the thoughts of all professionals we have spoken to and the fact that the LA has redacted some content would seem to reflect that also.

We have looked at the advice and guidance from teaching unions in relation to the decision to undertake and then publish comments from CyC students.

Union – NAS/UWT

Principle 2 – Student voice activities must not undermine teachers' professional authority and must not compromise other fundamental rights of children and young people.

A key criterion for assessing the appropriateness and acceptability of any student voice initiative involves a consideration of the extent to which teachers' professional authority is supported or undermined. Any student voice practice that is used to make judgements about a teacher's professionalism and so has the potential to undermine teachers' professional authority is unacceptable. Unfortunately, the NASUWT has received examples of

schools using student voice to question teachers' capabilities. Not only is this unacceptable employment practice, it is likely to create suspicion and resistance and undermine any benefits of student voice

Union – NEU (Cannot confirm this document under the new union)

Whilst welcoming the Government's encouragement of pupil participation in schools' decision making processes, it is important to make a distinction between broad policy areas and decisions which would affect individuals. Any decision which would have a direct impact on particular individuals rather than on the majority or all, staff or pupils, should not be included within the topics on which consultation with children and young people might take place. As a rule of thumb, any issue which had privacy/confidentiality implications or would impact on employees' employment, salaries or conditions of service should be excluded from eligible areas for pupil involvement.

The number of pupils who have the capacity to operate maliciously and to subvert the consultative process is small. The good practice guidance should address this issue explicitly, including strategies to prevent misuse by pupils and to tackle any suspected subversion.

This guidance is relevant to the meeting that took place at CyC with 23 students and RCT Officers on November 26th, 2018.

As Governors we find this document to be a very poor example of how to undertake a meaningful student voice activity. It illustrates all that is negative as outlined in the union guidance about how an activity which seeks judgements can seriously undermine school staff and the schools them selves.

Estyn place great importance on student voice but they are also trained to ask open questions that do not encourage particular answers. They also ensure that very critical, often anomalous answers are not recorded in order to preserve staff confidence and prevent undermining authority.

Supplementary Questions

Was the student voice activity with CyC students always planned as part of the formal consultation process ?

If Yes, why was this not included in the list of formal meetings and why did PHS not have a post-16 focus group meeting of this nature ?

Why was this meeting arranged. For what purpose did it take place ?

Why was this meeting arranged when no similar meeting with students at PHS, HHS, CNS or BCS took place ?

How were the 23 students identified, what were their ages, subjects chosen and their reasons for attending CyC ?

What advice was sought from HR Officers given the obvious reference to schools, their staff and the LA duty of care role ?

Was the content of the document made public in your report that includes CyC student responses cleared by HR Officers before publication ?

Considering students at CyC made references to named subjects, instances of 'bullying' and inferences that staff at PHS were showing little concern for their professional duties, did the LA not think these issues should have been reported to the Headteacher at Pontypridd High immediately as a safeguarding concern and / or as part of your duty of care to staff and students ?

Notes of a meeting held with students at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CYC) Monday 26th November 2018 Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Pontypridd area
Present Gaynor Davies (GD), Director of Education and Inclusion Services Andrea Richards (AR), Head of 21st Century Schools Lisa Howell (LH), Senior 21st Century Schools Officer Sophie Nicholls (SN), Graduate Officer 21st Century Schools 23 students who previously attended Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High or Cardinal Newman.

Q. GD - What is the pastoral care like here?
<u>A. Student</u> – Very good. They help me with my course and are always available to support me if I am struggling with a piece of coursework. They also listen and help if I have any worries and any personal problems I'm having.
<u>A. Student</u> – It depends on the teachers. There were some at school that were great but some that were not. I chose to come here because I could do a BTEC here but in Pontypridd High it was an exam.
What does the student mean by 'some that were and some that were not ? is this reference to pastoral care ? The LA has always been very complimentary of the wellbeing provision at PHS yet LA Officers are prepared to publish the statement of one student which creates the impression that our provision is variable at best. This is unfair and misleading.
Estyn would not publish a report like this based on the response from one student.
What has the BTEC reference got to do with pastoral care ? Even then its inclusion is vague but it is another negative statement about PHS so perhaps this is the reason for its inclusion. Surely the person recording answers should not have minuted this response in answer to the question being asked. For the record PHS offers both conventional A Levels

and BTECs which is clearly not understood by the students and as such a professional recording such an answer should have recognised it as anomalous and not worthy of inclusion.

Q. GD – What about A Levels ?

A. Student – I spoke to my friends at Pontypridd High and they said that the teachers are spread too thinly as they are working with years 7-11 as well as sixth form and they don't have the time to commit and support especially if they are having problems with their coursework.

A. Student – I think a big sixth form is a brilliant idea. I went to sixth form in Hawthorn High and the support and technology there was awful.

A. Student – The consortium is a shambles. Teachers are stretched and we could tell they were stressed.

'I spoke to my friends' confirms this is purely anecdotal information but it is another negative statement about PHS so perhaps this is the reason for its inclusion ?
What is the basis for a student referring to teachers being spread too thinly. In truth it is difficult to believe that these were the exact words of a students when answering this question ?

Is it not the case that in all schools in RCT teachers of A level also teach other year groups. What is the point of including such a comment when it will undoubtedly be the case that BCS have the same staffing structure for their potential 'centre of post-16 excellence'.

In what ways is the consortium a shambles ? The whole comment is incredibly insulting and without merit. Very negative at best and without regard for PHS staff and the professional role they all perform at PHS and within the PSF. This is a clear example of publishing vague, unsubstantiated answers in order to cast doubt over the provision at Pontypridd High and the PSF.

Q. GD – What do you think the big differences are between sixth form in school and here?

A. Student – You can express yourself how you want to here and are accepted for that.

A. Student – We are treated like adults and we are trusted more here. We can go home to study and I am doing more learning independently rather than being forced to stay in school.

This answer without any comparable responses from PHS students is unfair and misleading.

What is meant by 'express yourself'? As governors we believe the two students who spoke at the Council meetings at Clydach Vale put this comment in the perspective it deserves. In relation to being treated 'like adults', is that not a criticism of all post-16 provision in every RCT school if it is to be taken seriously at all ?

Q. GD – Is there a clear pathway shown to you here?

A. Student – Yes if you have a target they will tell you all the different options to reach it.

A. Student – The tutors are really supportive and they sort any problems. They help you learn from your mistakes here instead of just disciplining you.

All students at PHS are given advice, support and targets to work towards. Please refer to the new performance measures which confirm PHS has a retention rate from Year 12 enrolment to Year 13 completion of 83% in comparison to the Welsh average of 69%. This is significant and a true measure of quality recruitment into post-16, the right courses being offered and the best support to maintain engagement over 2 years. IAs Governors we are not able to cannot comment on those figures for CyC and BCS.

Q. AR – Do you get advice on work experience here?

A. Student – I can go abroad for two weeks on my business course, and we also have university lecturers who come in to teach us from time to time.

This is another example of publishing vague, unsubstantiated answers in order to cast doubt over the provision at Pontypridd High. Progressively all of these questions and their published responses seem like an attempt to present some positive details about the provision at CyC because none was made available in the initial consultation document.

Q. LH – Do you think the learning environment is important to you?

A. Student – Yes, Hawthorn High is a prison. There are fences all around it. There is so much freedom here to go home if we need to.

It is difficult to understand the purpose of this question other than to extract a very negative response about PHS (or HHS) in comparison to the £45 million building at CyC.

Publishing the reference to ‘a prison’ is incredibly insulting and should never have been printed in respect of all staff and students at HHS. Instead, perhaps the whole concept of child protection and safeguarding could have been outlined to the student who said this.

Q. GD – What do you think about the learning environment at the college?

A. Student – They trust us to leave and come back and we trust them to support us.

As governors we are not sure what point is being made here. This is where the nature of this student voice activity really does come across as biased without any consultation and similar opportunity to respond from PHS students.

GD – What impact does that have on your learning?

A. Student – I know that I am responsible for my own learning and I feel more like an adult. You lose your drive to do well if you are trapped in school and there is no room for you. Not everyone learns the same.

GD – So sixth form rooms are full in school?

A. Student – Yes, rooms are full and then you are told off for wandering or you have to ask for a key to a spare room if there is one. In the college there are lots of excellent places to self study.

Q. GD – Does anyone regret coming here?

A. Student – No.

A. Student – No, I met so many friends here and I am not bullied here. In school you have

to sort it out yourself and fight because teachers don't do anything.

A. Student – If you are bullied here they sort it out. Everyone is different here but we all respect each other and we are tolerant of each other.

A. Student – The PE boys in school were the favourites and they could get away with bullying.

A. Student – There is also a huge LGBT support group here (in CyC) too. In my first lesson here my teacher said that the most important thing we can do is respect each other and that she would happily have a lengthy debate with anyone who disagreed with that. I know that maybe there aren't enough funds to create the same type of support groups in Pontypridd High, but people weren't confident enough to come out in school. Some of my friends changed their names here and staff would help here and adapt what they called them to make it suitable for them.

Is it the case that there is no room for young people to work at PHS and what evidence is there that staff spend all of their time telling students off for wandering around ? We would have thought that students taking responsibility for managing their time carefully and purposefully was a good thing for staff to encourage. In addition we thought the point from the LA was that we had plenty of surplus space ?

The reference to teachers not doing anything about bullying, which leads to fighting is extremely unfair, misleading and should have immediately been reported to the Headteacher as a safeguarding concern. The fact that such a statement has been 'held' until made public is wrong and an issue of safeguarding that should have been addressed by LA Officers.

In addition, the reference to PE becomes a safeguarding issue which should have been passed on to School (which ever one ?) once that thought was expressed. Indeed, we would have thought that the College staff should have been made aware of it given LA officers thought such a comment was worthy of publishing.

The negative reference to PHS in relation to LGBT issues is insulting without knowledge or understanding of the number of issues which have and are being dealt with in our school. As such you can only conclude again that this is another opportunity being taken to make negative and misleading comments about PHS in comparison to CyC. This places students at PHS in a very difficult position, suggesting to them that they will not get the support they need should they want to discuss matters with staff. In reality the situation portrayed by this student response could not be further from the truth.

Q. AR – Do you think sixth form in schools is old fashioned?

A. Student – Yes in a way because you are trapped and so many teachers left Pontypridd High because they are stressed and too busy trying to teach year 7-11 too. The 3-16 is okay but I loved meeting new people when I went to high school and made that transition. There was a lot of bullying in my primary so I was glad to meet new people.

How does this question support the promotion of a Sixth Form in any school ?

Again the specific reference to PHS undermines staff professional authority. It suggests that staff are poorly managed and their welfare is unimportant. This is not the case and Governors believe it is insulting to staff who are managing their workload, those that have retired on their own terms and many others who have been promoted to other posts. In relation to the latter, over the last 3 years this has included the promotion of 6 staff to Heads of Faculty, 7 to Assistant Head, 2 to Deputy Head and one to Headteacher. Such information could have helped to balance up the negative and misleading tone of the single and quite possibly uninformed comment from one student.

The Governing Body would welcome the Director’s written response to the questions we raise. Governors would also be prepared to meet with the Director to further discuss these issues of concern.

**Governing Body
Pontypridd High School
May 2019**

The Our Children First ~ Ein Plant Gyntaf Group Objections to the RCTCBC 21st Century Schools Proposal for the Pontypridd Valley

The following pages set out the objections of the Our Children First ~ Ein Plant Gyntaf Group to the RCTCBC 21st Century Schools Proposal for the Pontypridd Valley.

The document follows the outline of the consultation document and organises the objections based on each section and proposal. It finishes with objections against the consultation process, consultation report and decision making process that are not already mentioned earlier in this response.

Where required it makes reference to the Welsh Assembly School Organisational Code 2013 and 2018.

Proposal 1:

Removal of the sixth forms of Hawthorn High, Pontypridd High and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, with post 16 students attending an alternative school or college that offers the choice of courses they require.

1) Lack of examination of other options within the proposal:

Consideration of Alternative Options - Page 21: The number and range of alternative options considered is limited to an exploration of the greater use of video conferencing. Here follows a list of alternative proposals not considered;

Basing the sixth form on one site instead of the current two, would remove the present need for pupils to be bussed between sites and would also be open to pupils from Cardinal Newman who do not want to travel to Cardiff or Bryncelynog where that school does not currently provide teaching in a subject. It would require a minimum of re-organisation.

A Pontypridd 6th form could be run jointly by the three Pontypridd Schools enabling teachers to continue to provide 6th form lessons. This would help retain teachers at the 11-16 schools and provide continuity for pupils.

A joint sixth form between all three High Schools based on the Cardinal Newman would minimise transport issues for Pontypridd pupils (saving money) and are far easier to access by public transport than Bryncelynog.

Base the Pontypridd 6th form in Pontypridd itself with its excellent transport links.

The proposal completely fails to inform readers that Bryncelynog already works together with the nearby Y Pant School and shares its current 6th form provision with this school. This fact has not been taken into consideration at any point. A Joint

Pontypridd 6th form could provide post 16 education for children from Bryncelynog School (if they do not move across to Y Pant).

Coleg y Cymoedd could provide a satellite 6th form Provision in Pontypridd Town which would cover the subjects currently offered by the four existing 6th forms in a supportive environment more similar to a school 6th form provision. Such Tertiary colleges work successfully elsewhere.

Potential links to the University of South Wales has not been considered as an option even though the existing joint Pontypridd 6th form already has links. These could benefit both the 6th form and the University.

2) Lack of equality of access and expenditure on post 16 education:

The proposal talks about 'equality' at many points, However, there does not seem to be equality in terms of investment in the schools across the county, access to sixth form provision, with some young people being at significantly greater distance to the sixth forms that will remain, with sometimes congested and polluted transport routes.

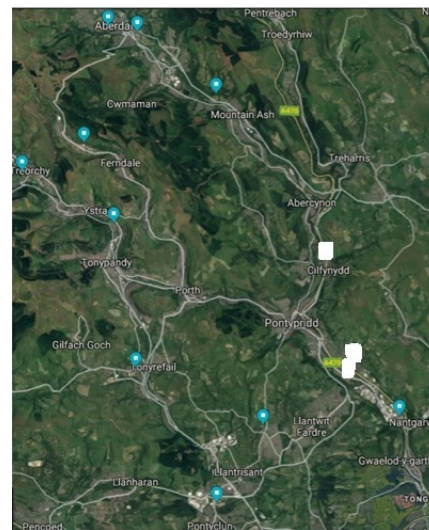
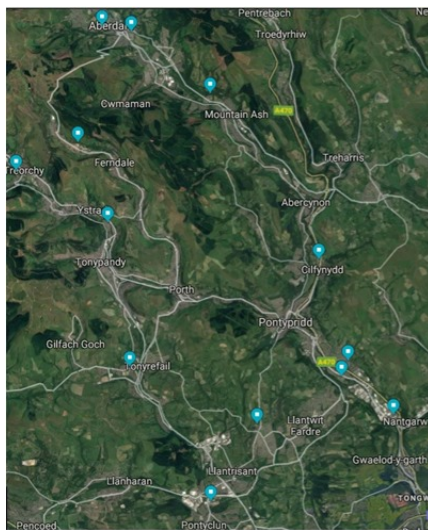
The proposed total investment is set at £37.4 million. However, this funding is spread across four school sites with no investment being directed at Cardinal Newman school at all. However, the Rhondda & Tonyrefail received an £85m investment and Y Pant received £27m alone. Hawthorn High recently finally got a new sports hall and the new lower school building some years ago and Bryncelynog has had a new science block, but much of the 21st Century plan for the Pontypridd area revolves around the re-purposing of existing buildings. Thus, there does not appear to be an equality of spending between the valley areas. Details and costings of previous developments at the schools concerned could have been included in the proposal to demonstrate that there was equality.

The closure of individual primary and secondary schools to create all through schools does have one notable financial benefit for the schools involved; any existing deficit is wiped out and the schools begin with a clean slate. Hawthorn High's current deficit is quoted as £415K, Pontypridd High's at £518K, and Cardinal Newman's at £707K. Two deficits will be removed but Cardinal Newman will fail to benefit in the same way, and given its status as a Catholic faith school. The plan to open or transfer a primary school onto the site as mentioned on page 30 of the proposal document may assist the archdiocese to tackle this deficit.

The report to Cabinet (Appendix A) states that "Priority for this funding will be to improve the sixth form facilities at the school, however it is envisaged that other improvements and refurbishment works to the school will also be incorporated" (Page 10) The reason for this funding is to create a Sixth Form Centre of Excellence, thus the money should be used specifically for this, as advertised.

Page 13 of the proposal document states; "Choice is often dependent on learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement for the County Borough." Indeed, access to a range of sixth form provision across the county does not appear to be equitable. For example, there is just 3.7 miles between sixth form options in the Mountain Ash area whereas the distance from Hawthorn High to Pontypridd High is 4.5 miles, and the distance to Bryncelynog will be longer at 5 and 6 miles respectively. At the time of proposed changes to education in the Rhondda and Cynon valleys,

changes to the provision in Mountain Ash were not suggested and not consulted on (e-mail from RCTCBC Education Dept). Please refer to the following maps which show the distribution of sixth form provision, pre and post proposed changes;



3) Lack of examination of impact on equality and take up of places because of transport issues.

“With respect to proposals to reorganise secondary schools or to add or remove sixth forms relevant bodies should take into account the following specific factors: whether proposals are likely to lead to increased participation in learning by pupils beyond compulsory school age, taking into account transport issues and costs to the learner and others, the affordability of such costs, and the likelihood of learners being willing to travel.”

The consultation document ignores the issues of access to 6th form education for pupils who would have neither private transport or much money and the impact that this would have on access to education. Bryncelynog School is based in Beddau is described in the proposal as being part of Pontypridd Town but given that it is many miles from central Pontypridd along narrow country lanes this would appear to be nonsensical. A map of the area pre and post removal of the three sixth forms shows a ‘hollowed out’ town area with no access to sixth form education.

Providing school buses is expensive and would mean that if a pupil misses the bus or has a medical or other appointment in school time they would almost certainly end up missing a whole day in school.

Sixth form pupils have part time jobs. How can they travel to and from Bryncelynog if they have a part time job which requires them to work locally to their home, when it will take them so long to return after school?

According to the School Organisational Code (2013) When considering whether a closure is appropriate, special attention should be given to the following: how parents’ and pupils’ engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils; particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities). The proposal document does not discuss what

provision will be offered to assist with after school extra-curricular activities. For example, how will pupils be able to return home as a school show which could finish at 9.30pm with no direct bus route to most areas. This will therefore impact upon the pupils who will be unable to travel and therefore removes the equality of opportunities, and impact most upon the poorer students without transport.

The distance travelled is likely to also mean a lot of time to get to the school. Buses would be continually starting and stopping and taking convoluted routes through built up areas to pick up pupils which would make the journey far longer. The morning journey would take place in the rush hour when sections of the route are currently packed with rush hour traffic further lengthening the journey (with the Upper Boat area likely to worsen when DWP office opens on Treforest Industrial Estate). This will create a lot of extra road traffic on the A470 at the Tesco and Nantgarw junctions, and this will be at the same time that large numbers of sixth formers will be bussed along the same road to the same junctions. The A470 is approaching capacity now and it may be that many young people will, as part of their educational experience, be waiting in long queues. The journey time and distance is likely to put off many pupils from taking up a 6th form education.

This is particularly likely to be true of young people from the less well off areas to the North of Pontypridd from families who have not previously had higher education. On the other side the better off pupils from the area around Bryncelynog (13% Free School Meals (FSM)) would be hugely advantaged as they can easily walk to school. The poorer pupils from the Pontypridd area (20 - 24% FSM) are the pupils who will be most disadvantaged by the proposal. Bryncelynog may be too far away for some young people to travel to.

An objection made by a respondent to 'The Reorganisation of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail - Objection Report' was that a 'significant minority of pupils will not continue into post 16 provision as it will involve travelling' (page 18). The response was that there was no documented evidence to support this statement and was not raised as a concern by school pupils in the meetings held with the School Councils.

In the 'Notes of a meeting held with the school council at Hawthorn High School', travelling was raised as a concern as included in the list of comments that did not receive answers from RCTCBC staff at the meeting because of a lack of time. These were included in the consultation response report, but none were responded to at that time either;

"I think that we should have a sixth form and Ponty should have a sixth form because they are easy to access from each other and they are not too far away."

In the 'Notes of a meeting held with students at Coleg Y Cymoedd (CYC)' where RCTCBC staff asked the questions, the students also noted this as a concern;

"Q. GD – Are there any negatives to taking the sixth form out of the schools?"

A. Student – It will be hard for the people who live far away from the school.

GD – We will offer transport to those living more than two miles away.

Student – Yes we get transport here too but it can be difficult on occasions. We get public buses can be unreliable. Some of the buses are school buses but they are often late because they have already been to drop off at one school.

GD – We need to get the transport right for these pupils then.

Student – Yes.”

It is clear, therefore, that this is a cause of concern that does need to be addressed.

3) Lack of consideration of additional pollution and transport congestion.

The proposal minimises the major impact that transport will have. There will be a large increase in the need for school buses as well as private transport. This will lead to increased costs for the council as well as increases in pollution along the routes to school. This is particularly true where buses get stuck in heavy traffic during rush hours. The proposal is in opposition to moves to try to reduce pollution and will lead to an increase of this.

The proposal to base 6th form education in a village some distance from Pontypridd will make the use of public transport to get to school almost impossible unless this is increased or subsidised routes are introduced by RCTCBC. The Welsh Government is encouraging the use of public transport and Pontypridd is a very well served transport hub. Basing 6th form provision in Pontypridd town centre or on major transport centres such as the railway station at Treforest would reduce or potentially even remove the need for school buses and the ongoing cost of these. This would also make the 6th form far more accessible to pupils from all parts of the Pontypridd area and would have the advantage of more people (teachers and pupils) using the facilities in Pontypridd Town. This could have a very positive impact on the town and increase the links between businesses in the town and 6th form pupils.

The document fails to consider both the current need for people in Wales to reduce their carbon footprint by reducing private transport. This should have been covered in the consultation document. Increased fuel costs in the future mean that the reliance on buses or other private means of transport for Pontypridd pupils should have been considered as this is likely to become more difficult in the future. There has been no consideration of the current and future environmental impacts of the proposal.

Travelling to Coleg Y Cymoedd at Nantgarw or Bryn Celynog will only add to traffic pressures and those Sixth Formers whose parents want them to receive a Catholic education will be bussed off to Cardiff, again increasing carbon emissions and traffic pressures.

The proposal fails to consider the negative impact that implementation of the proposal will have on Pontypridd Town. People with young families are unlikely to move to a town where there is no 6th form provision and their children would be forced to travel to a neighbouring village or attend a distant College of further Education.

4) Lack of accurate of data on which to make the decision.

Coleg y Cymoedd run fewer A levels than the existing Pontypridd Sixth Form, the report suggests that they run more.

The range of A levels offered is also different, thus 'like' will not be being replaced with 'like' which the report suggests.

No information is given as to the number of A level students studying at Coleg Y Cymoed who are mature students, or from out of RCT (from Caerphilly for eg) leading to a potential inaccurate inflation of A level student numbers.

The proposal chooses not to explain the recent issues at Coleg Y Cymoedd when they ran a joint 6th form teaching programme for children from Cardinal Newman High School. Within a couple of years Cardinal Newman High School withdrew from this arrangement and restarted their own 6th form provision. The full reasons for this are not widely known but it is unacceptable that RCT should be forcing this option on the young people of Pontypridd before this set of circumstances has been explained and it is clear that it will not be repeated. This therefore raises doubts as to whether Coleg Y Cymoedd is a 'centre of excellence' as described in the proposal. (At the consultation events, senior staff from the Education Department also confirmed that the term 'Centre of Excellence' as simply a term meaning that the school has a 6th form).

The suggestion that all of the deficit is as a result of sixth forms is inaccurate, much of the deficits carried by the High Schools are of a very long standing nature.

Council leader Andrew Morgan in his recent address to the Council also stated that the recent dip in results generally was as a result of curriculum changes. Thus, there is always a context to absolute results figures.

Mention is made of performance only being 'adequate' in certain schools, but no further detail is given. The figures suggest that 3 schools are very similar and only Cardinal Newman High School has better results. The recent school gradings from the Welsh Assembly confirm this.

Larger sixth forms will naturally give students a greater choice of courses and more stimulating discussions with larger cohorts of students whilst studying. However, it should be pointed out that according to the figures as presented in the proposal, Bryncelynnog Sixth form is rather small (and much smaller than the joint Pontypridd 6th form), but still has excellent results (depending on which you refer to). Again the results are little better than those from the Pontypridd 6th form a result that would be expected given the wealthier intake for Bryncelynnog School.

No mention is made of the differences between the sixth forms in terms of their intake of students who would have qualified for Free School Meals. Bryncelynnog, has a lower percentage of FSM eligible children when compared to Hawthorn High School.

The proposal fails to identify that there is a Joint Pontypridd 6th form in operation provided by Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School. A 6th form class may (for example) have 14 pupils but the document has counted this as 6 from Hawthorn High School and 8 from Pontypridd High School even though there is a single teacher and a single classroom. This means that the 6th form figures as discussed in the proposal are misleading.

There are basic errors in the presentation of the data. For example, the table on page 33 of the consultation document should include the number 'three' in each column, in that each column is for the percentage of students with three A levels at the various grades mentioned.

A level results figures for Coleg Y Cymoedd were not ratified at the time that the consultation document was written. Are these now available?

Predictions as to the number who would attend Bryncelynnog Sixth form are based on every young person choosing that option, and yet the proposal also suggests Coleg Y Cymoedd as an open option to these children. Thus the predicted capacity figures are flawed. Consultations conducted by the high schools with their pupils suggest it is unlikely that more than a handful of pupils would move to Bryncelynnog from the Pontypridd Schools.

4) Lack of consideration of the effect on attainment of increased travel distances:

The international research literature discusses the detrimental impact on attainment when children have to travel to get educated. RCT already buses more children to school than any other County Council within Wales,

5) Failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation:

Under case law, a consultation process should ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken. With regards to proposal one concerning the removal of the Pontypridd 6th Forms, only 7% of responses to the consultation were in favour.

Proposal 2: Create a new, 3 – 16 'all through' school for Hawthorn.

1) Lack of detail on financial savings:

Cost savings in terms of maintenance of old buildings are alluded to (but not specified), and also staff reductions in terms of excess Head posts and other posts at the all through schools. It can also be assumed that higher qualified, expensive staff, and therefore also more experienced members of staff who are required by the High Schools in order to teach 'A' levels will also no longer be required and these staff might therefore seek to choose employment elsewhere. (Further, the proposal suggests that all through schools will enable teaching staff to broaden their expertise by teaching a wider range of students. By closing the sixth forms, this breadth is immediately halved.) However, all through schools require a greater number of heads of department, be it Foundation Phase, Middle School, Upper School or subject or additional learning needs area (this can easily be seen by looking at the existing staffing lists of the few all through schools that already exist in the county). Thus, staffing costs may actually increase rather than decrease, therefore there is no accuracy in the predictions here.

It difficult to establish from the proposal what any likely cost benefits may be. Redundant buildings will be sold, but for how much it can obviously not be known. Previous sales of old Victorian buildings have not shown a great return, although any schools with larger amounts of open space can do better (eg Glantaf Infants).

2) Lack of proof of benefit in terms of educational outcomes:

Section One of the proposal outlines the plan, its basis on the Donaldson Report, criteria used for review of school provision & the educational case for the proposals; “School organisation change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer.” (Page 11).

Under case law, a consultation process should include sufficient reasons and information for particular proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response.

At the start of the proposal from pages 11 - 17, the educational case for the proposals is described. In some instances, whilst lists of worthwhile bullet points are given, the later detail of the proposal provides little information as to how the proposals would seek to bring these things about. Taking just one example (and many could have been chosen);

“Provide a more appropriate skills-based curriculum and wider extra-curricular opportunities which should improve attendance and educational outcomes.” (Page 11).

How does a skills-based curriculum and more extra-curricular activities than the schools are currently providing influence attendance and educational outcome?

The table on the following page lists a number of these comments from this section of the proposal and queries whether evidence is provided. In the case of additional learning needs for example, which is one of the major proposals of the document as listed on page 7, this is almost the only reference made to ALN within the whole document,

Additionally, throw away statements are made with no supporting evidence, for eg; “There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes.” or “The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of the pupils.” (Both Page 17). No evidence to support these statements is provided in the proposal.

An objection made by a respondent to ‘The Reorganisation of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail - Objection Report’ was the removal of sixth forms could ‘result in major recruitment difficulties’ (page 17). In the response that followed, this point was not addressed. Statements in the table below point to the benefits of the new model in terms of staff being able to teach between levels, however the statements are vague and not backed up by evidence at any point in the consultation document from the experience of this county, or any other.

Introduction Section	Page	Overview/Criteria and Educational Case	Comment / Questions / Where is this evidenced in the proposal?
Overview	7	improve the learning environment for pupils with ALN	proposal as to how this is to be achieved Whilst all the other proposals one page seven are discussed in detail in the document, little further mention is made of this area.
	7	high quality, viable and sustainable learning environment	In what ways will the learning environments be high quality, viable and sustainable? Where is the demonstrated in the proposal? Where is the information on how this is to be achieved and measured?
Successful Futures	9	The more flexible workforce with greater capacity and flexibility'	Use of flexibility twice here - a tautology?
	9	flexible workforce	What is the evidence from the other all through schools in the county? How has this worked in practice
	9	professional learning community	Proposal states that this is 'likely to be enhanced by the all through model'. Where is the evidence for this?
	9	learning spaces	Proposal suggests that savings in terms of technology costs will be made. Where is the evidence for this from the other all through schools in the county?
	9	learning spaces	What is the evidence from the other all through schools in the county about how learning spaces are used by all children across the continuum of learning?
	9	better relationship between the school and parents and carers	What is the evidence from the other all through schools in the county for this?
Educational Case - Outcomes	11	Larger depts/skills & expertise sharing	Where is the evidence for how this improves educational outcomes?
	11	Professional development & move between key stages	Will be effectively reduced following loss of sixth form? Can primary teachers teach secondary students and vice
	11	Professional development & move between key stages	Where is the evidence for how this improves educational outcomes?
	11	Skills based curriculum	How? Where is the evidence for this from other all through schools?
	11	Skills based curriculum and extra curricular activities 'should improve attendance and educational outcomes'	Where is the evidence for the link between improved attendance and educational outcomes and these matters?
	11	Transition anxiety	Do all through schools actually do this - where is the evidence that it is reduced via all through schools
Educational Case - Provision	11	Broader and more diverse curriculum	Such as what?
	11	Broader and more diverse curriculum which is viable and sustainable	What does this mean? How will this curriculum be more viable and sustainable?
	11	Improve range and quality of facilities	What exactly is being proposed? How will the quality and range be improved? How does this improve educational provision?
	11	Continuity of support for vulnerable groups	Where is the evidence for this from the other all through schools? How has this taken place?
	11	Financial savings from staffing structure changes	In what ways does the staffing structure change and what does this mean can be saved? How does this improve provision?
	11	More extra curricular and out of school activities	Is there the funding for this? There was funding previously for after school which appears to have fizzled away - is this the case? Staff used to volunteer, do they still do so, will they continue to do so?
	11	Build better relationships with parents and carers	How does this impact on educational provision?
Improve leadership and management	12	leadership opportunities for other staff will enhance educational provision and outcomes	Where is the evidence for this from the other all through schools? How does the provision of leadership opportunities enhance educational provision?

3) Lack of evidence upon which to make the decision:

The move to an all through school takes considerable and careful management by a skilled team, and the Pontypridd area would need to learn from the experiences of the other schools who have gone before in RCT. Ysgol Llanhari is the only school cited in the proposal as a good example of a successful all through school (though four others exist). It should be noted that this is also a 3-19 school, something which is not actually being proposed for the Pontypridd area, the primary element at this school is clearly split from the secondary which is not what is envisaged so much for either Hawthorn or Pontypridd High and the school was not originally planned to become an all-through school.

Additionally, the proposal documents for 'The Reorganisation of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail' make reference to evidence of how this model is working in Lampeter and in England and Scotland and the headteacher from Ysgol Llanhari also attended some of the consultation events to give; 'her personal views, with evidence of how this model is working very successfully at her school' (RCTCBC Objection Report re Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail re-organisation - page 13). In the proposal document for the Pontypridd Valley and at the consultation events, no such supporting evidence was provided.

The initial letter that was sent when the proposal was launched suggested that the all through schools in the other areas of the county had been a 'success'. Given that some only opened in September of 2018, and due to building delays caused by the alteration of a CADW listed building one is not yet fully functioning all on the same site, there is only a short time period for this success to have been achieved. Thus, it might be better to say that their launch was 'successful'. Additionally, one newly amalgamated 11-16 school which increased in size three-fold has recently received a poor inspection report, especially in relation to leadership.

4) Conflicting information on Transition:

The proposal suggests that this will be better for children in all through schools, and yet elsewhere also time states that no child in a non all-through school will be disadvantaged. It is difficult to see how both these statements can be true?

5) Lack of information on Additional Learning Needs:

As discussed above, ALN is hardly mentioned in the proposal, excepting that some facilities would move to new sites. No evidence is given in the proposal as to the effect of larger schools on pupils with ALN.

Estyn's response to the proposals continuously state that it "does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with SEN" and also "does not provide sufficient details on the impact of the change in catchment areas on the travelling time and wellbeing of pupils". The comments on the proposal made by Estyn were not referred to at any time during the cabinet meeting where the proposal was voted on.

6) Lack of evidence supporting the all-through school model:

The rationale for all-through schools is weak. It appears to stem from a report commissioned by the Welsh Government and published in 2015.¹ However, no published research exists in the peer-reviewed academic literature demonstrating how well or how badly these schools operate in practice. Scottish schools have had all-through schools for some time and as far back as 2013 Scottish head teachers expressed their concerns over these new schools, citing the bullying of young children by much older ones, and the introduction of “teenage issues” to a much younger cohort of children who would otherwise be shielded from such matters by attending an entirely different school.² Given that in the last academic year (2017/18) just 13 of 1,521 state funded schools in Wales³ were of the all-through type, it seems that children in the Pontypridd area are to be the subject of a vast social experiment.

7) Lack of benefit to Heol y Celyn English stream children:

Rhydyfelin hill is particularly steep in places and tricky to negotiate in icy weather. RCTCBC would be able to establish how attendance patterns at Heol Y Celyn are currently impacted by poor weather in order to judge the likely effect that the removal of the English language stream to Hawthorn would have on overall attendance at the new larger school. Such a move may have an adverse effect on the RCTCBC Education Attendance & Welfare Service ‘Miss School, Miss Out’ campaign. Thus, the Rhydyfelin community at the top of the hill would be disadvantaged by moving to Hawthorn School.

Parents with young children would be particularly hard hit. Without a car, they may need to walk up and down the hill three times a day to bring children to school, return at midday for a child in part-time nursery, and then return at the end of the day, with the nursery child in tow to pick up other children. These parents may therefore choose not to send their children to school until aged 5, or try to get them into the nursery class in the children’s centre, if it is still there. It is unlikely that they would be able to afford wrap around care based at the school. Thus, this group of parents would be disadvantaged, and may be forced into applying for their child to attend the closer Welsh school, thus removing all element of choice.

8) Lack of impact on travellers assessed:

Travellers are not considered in the impact assessment, indeed it is stated that there were no travellers at any of the schools in the area. Heol Y Celyn, Ffynon Taf and Parc Lewis Primary all regularly have children who are travellers. Perhaps at the point when the data was searched for, these children were not there, but perhaps a broader time period of search should have been made?

¹ Professor Graham Donaldson, *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales*, 2015, Cardiff, Welsh Government.

² Henry Hepburn, “Secondary staff urge caution over all-through schools,” *Tes*, (formerly Times Educational Supplement), 17th May 2013.

³ “Pontypridd school shake-up plans put out to consultation,” BBC website, 5th October 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-45761276>

9) Lack of accuracy:

The proposal suggests that children are not currently taught in classes by age group. This is not true for all of the primary schools concerned, but, as no detail is given, the scale of this cannot be judged.

6) Failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation:

Under case law, a consultation process should ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken. With regards to proposal two concerning the creation of a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Hawthorn only 12% of responses were in favour.

Proposal 3: Create a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school for Pontypridd.

1) Lack of detail on financial savings:

As for proposal 2

Additionally, it is suggested that financial savings of around £40,000 per year.⁴ from the local authority’s revenue budget would be made from the Cilfynydd Primary proposals. However, this does not tell the whole story as there will be considerable capital expenditure on the new school, as well as on road safety improvements and likely other changes. These come within the purview of the council but others – such as the cost of extra health care, the cost of extra environmental damage, what economists refer to as externalities – most certainly do not.

2) Lack of proof of benefit in terms of educational outcomes:

As for proposal 2

3) Lack of evidence upon which to make the decision:

As for proposal 2

4) Transition:

As for proposal 2

5) Lack of information on Additional Learning Needs:

As for proposal 2

6) Lack of evidence supporting the all-through school model:

As for proposal 2

7) Failure to consider increase in traffic:

Cllr Steve Belzak states that the northern end of Cilfynydd Road is busy at times when children are travelling to and from school, and the traffic will increase if the schools proposal goes through. This is because many parents who currently see that their children walk to Cilfynydd primary will see to it that they no longer travel on foot. Parents will be mindful of the traffic on Cilfynydd Road and they will be concerned that younger children will be more prone to some form of accident than older ones. No doubt, some of this extra traffic will be generated because the walking distance to a school at the north west corner of the village (as opposed to the centrally-positioned Cilfynydd Primary) will increase. This traffic increase will be of concern to all residents of the village and especially those who live in Wood Street and all the roads that feed into Wood Street. An already-bad situation can and will be made worse. Consider what happened on the Friday (12th October 2018) two weeks before half term when very

⁴ *21st Century Schools: Consultation on the reorganisation of primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Pontypridd area*, RCT County Borough Council, 2015, p54

bad weather hit the locality. More parents than usual drove to Pontypridd High and the whole area in front of the school became thoroughly congested.

8) Failure to tackle issues of excess capacity:

Part of the purpose of the changes is to deal with high level of surplus places across the valley (p.10). Cilfynydd Primary is planned to close and move onto the Pontypridd High School site. It is predicted in the proposal that the surplus capacity would rise to 34% by 2023 if this change was not enacted, and yet, post change, the report suggests that excess capacity at the primary element of the new school will be running at 55 places, 31% of capacity.

On pages 48-49 of the Consultation Document, Cilfynydd Primary School is described as a relatively small school housed in Victorian buildings on a steeply sloping site, 0.9 miles from the Pontypridd High school site but with surplus places.

The Consultation Document also refers to its instruction to reduce surplus places: *“Following the last formal inspection of Rhondda Cynon Taf’s Education Service in 2012, Estyn also highlighted that the Council had the highest number of surplus places in Wales and that action had to be taken to address this issue. This was followed up by a letter from the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills in November 2012 that instructed the Council to take action in respect of surplus places or the Welsh Government would take responsibility for removing the surplus places.”*

Section 35 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 states: *“A school authority must follow the course set out in school improvement guidance issued to it in accordance with this Chapter when exercising a power or duty (including a power or duty that is contingent upon the opinion of the school authority)”*

To put the figures from the Consultation Document into perspective: The current capacity of Cilfynydd Primary School is **188** pupils. The capacity of the Primary section of the proposed 3-16 school is **180**. The proposal predicts that there would be **136** pupils in Cilfynydd Primary School in January 2022. The proposal predicts that there would be **125** pupils in the Primary section of the proposed 3-16 school in January 2022. This is a reduction of only **8 surplus places**, but with **11 fewer pupils**.

Using the above figures from the Consultation Document, the percentage surpluses would be as follows:

Cilfynydd Primary School: 28% surplus
Pontypridd 3-16 School (Primary Section): 31% surplus.

The Welsh Government defines a school with more than 25% surplus as a school with “Significant Surplus”.

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3rd April 2019, in response to a query about the surplus places in the proposed changes to Cilfynydd Primary School, Gaynor Davies (RCT Director of Education) said “We like to have extra surplus places in all our schools, to avoid over-subscription”.

Given this evidence, the one and only reason given for the closure of Cilfynydd Primary School is invalid, as the resulting surplus will be *higher* than the existing surplus.

The Welsh Assembly School Organisation Code (2013) for the purpose of this consultation states that: “Where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area, local authorities should review their provision and should make proposals for school reorganisation if this will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of provision. This is especially important where individual schools, have “significant” levels of surplus places. A significant level of surplus provision is defined as 25% or more of a school’s capacity (as defined in Circular 21/2011) and at least 30 unfilled places.”

During previous consultations, Mountain Ash comprehensive was not consulted upon for change, and as of 2019/20, was only 62% full, leaving a 38% surplus. Why is capacity such an issue in one area of the county but not in another?

9) Lack of assessment of impact of pollution on children and young people:

Congestion creates pollution, and much of this pollution is in the form of greenhouse gases. The scientific consensus is that greenhouse gasses warm the atmosphere and disrupt the climate, hindering food production and raising sea levels. Britain not only signed an international agreement in 2015 to limit greenhouse gas emissions, but on 8th October the U.N. body charged with reporting this issue – the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – came out in a major report with a dire warning. We have, they said, twelve years to turn things around and this will involve unprecedented changes to the way we live. But, based on these school plans, we are going ahead with business-as usual. Cllr Steve Belzak asked the leader of the Council a formal question at the last full meeting of Rhondda Cynon Taf council on 24th October 2018;

From Councillor S Belzak to the Leader of the Council - Cllr A Morgan:

“In what way is the generation of extra road traffic, which is a likely consequence of the “Proposals to improve education in the Greater Pontypridd area,” approved by Cabinet for public consultation on 3rd October, compatible with the COP 21 Paris Climate Accord of 2015 or the report of the widely-publicised Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change (IPCC) published on 8th October 2018?”

Cllr Morgan claimed that there would be no significant increase in road traffic, and that in any event the design of the new buildings would make this plan a carbon neutral one. Council policy was in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines on carbon and climate change. Two points need to be made in response. The Authority will have “no evidence” if it does not look for evidence, and the evidence for increasing traffic in Cilfynydd is based on local knowledge and speaking to residents. As for conformity with guidance from the Welsh Government, there actually needs to be conformity with what the IPCC are stating if climate (and human) disaster is to be averted, and neither guidance from Cardiff Bay or from Westminster has yet caught up with what IPCC are stating.

Cllr Belzak raised the matter of the environmental effects of extra road traffic at the RCT Cabinet meeting of 3rd October. He also brought up the question of the long-term, adverse effects on human health of pollution from road traffic. There is an extensive scientific literature on the harmful effects of pollution from cars, trucks, buses and other vehicles on the health of humans who either live alongside freeways, motorways, dual carriageways and the like, or spend a great deal of their day in close proximity to such

highways. Many of these studies are transnational and they identify pollutants such as carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, soot and other particulate matter in adverse health outcomes such as reduced pulmonary function, respiratory problems such as asthma and even – ironically – reduced cognitive function. Carbon dioxide, chiefly a greenhouse gas is also a culprit in the assault on human health.

The A470 is one of the most “traffic-intensive” and polluted highways in Wales. It was in order to reduce the already high levels of pollution along stretches of the road that the Welsh Government slashed the speed limit to just 50MPH along extensive stretches of the dual carriageway in mid-2018. Further cuts along other stretches of road are contemplated.

For these reasons, Cllr Belzak asked the RCT Leadership at Cabinet if an independent study could be commissioned by the local authority to assess the likely impact on human health of moving a whole primary school from where it is now, east of Ann Street, to a location so close to the A470. The response was that some schools under the plan – such as Pont Sion Norton – would be moved further away from the A470 – while others would be moved closer, but in any event, the schools would not be open at peak traffic times.

Thus, some children might be worse off in terms of health risks, but this would be somehow compensated for by others who might be better off. The claim regarding non-peak times is suspect also since traffic pollution exists all day. It may be at its very worst at rush hour but that does not mean that it's at an acceptable level at other times. In response to this line of inquiry the claim was made by the council leadership that Cilfynydd Primary School is as near to the A470 as Pontypridd High. Well, actual measurements say otherwise. In addition, the topography of the valley means that Cilfynydd Primary is separated by a high wall and a steep hillside from the road and its often heavier-than air pollutants, whereas Pontypridd High is immediately next to the dual carriageway, at the same elevation. Cllr Belzak asked for an independent expert in public health to be commissioned by the council to look into and report back on such matters, but this request was refused.

Cllr Belzak asked a further question at the October 24th meeting:

“Given the very considerable body of evidence in the peer-reviewed scientific literature (arising out of transnational studies) as to the adverse health outcomes for people spending a considerable portion of their day (regardless of rush hours) adjacent to freeways, motorways and dual carriageways, will the Leader now commit to my suggestion at Cabinet on 3rd October of an independent investigation by a public health expert into the long term health implications for students and staff of moving Cilfynydd Primary School from its present location to a site immediately adjacent to the traffic-intensive A470?”

In his reply, the Leader made reference to schools not being open at peak times for traffic, but this misses the point. Air quality may be at its worst during peak traffic times, but this does not mean that air quality is satisfactory at non-peak times. The same points were put to the Director of Education at a meeting with staff and Governors of Cilfynydd Primary School in November 2018. Her response was to the effect that a school already existed at the site which is subject to the air pollution. The body of public health knowledge in 2019 is far more extensive than it was when the school

was first built three decades ago. There may have been good reason not to consider air pollution then, but there is no justification for ignoring it now.

10) Lack of consideration to the community links of local schools:

The proposal to close Cilfynydd Primary School will tear the heart out of the community of Cilfynydd. The school has deep links with the community at many levels and is active in many events of great value to the village, such as Remembrance Sunday, and the Harvest Festival and Christmas celebrations at St Luke's Church. If Cilfynydd had been classified as a rural school the council would have had to keep it open according to the Welsh Government's new School Organisation Code (01Nov2018). According to the BBC:

Closing a rural school in Wales should only happen after councils have done "everything they can" to keep it open, according to new guidelines.

Changes to the School Organisation Code from Thursday include the presumption against the closure of rural schools.⁵

The existence of a school for as long as Cilfynydd Primary School has existed and has played such a prominent part in the lives of so many is a good reason to keep it open but, unfortunately the requirement to keep it open unless every other possible alternative has been tried and has failed does not apply to Cilfynydd because it is not classified as a rural school.

Similar arguments also apply to YGG Pont Sion Norton, which has been part of the community for decades (see below). Traditions play a major role in knitting communities together. You cannot keep tearing up by the roots every institution and every landmark that defines a community without in the end arriving at a state where you have no community, just a bunch of isolated individuals living near each other but with nothing in common.

11) Failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation:

Under case law, a consultation process should ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken. With regards to proposal three concerning the creation of a new, 3 – 16 'all through' school for Pontypridd only 9% of responses were in favour.

Proposal 4: Close YGG Pont Sion Norton and relocate its pupils to a new Welsh Medium Primary School, to be constructed on the current site of Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School (which will close as part of Proposal 2). Welsh Medium pupils attending Heol y Celyn will also transfer to the new school.

1) Failure to tackle issues of excess capacity:

Total pupil projections for 2023 for the two Welsh language schools are given as 299 primary age children, however the proposed capacity at that time for the new school is for 480 places, suggesting that the new school would be at 38% under capacity in 2023. It would appear that in both instances, there is 'building for growth' instead of addressing excess capacity issues.

⁵ "Rules against rural school closures in force in Wales," BBC website, 1st November 2018; https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-46044965?fbclid=IwAR0K-NSMG9WwGqQJvwAo1m-lxp_BpADHWShiZkHC31zvLneyRBBOsEmwr1Q

Addressing excess capacity is frequently mentioned as a goal of the proposal, especially in pages 21-23, but as noted at point 6 above in relation to Cilfynydd Primary - the opposite is often the intention of the proposals.

2) Lack of assessment of impact on community of increased bus and car traffic to schools:

Pont Sion Norton currently has 256 primary age children and 39 nursery children, all of whom would need to be bussed into Rhydyfelin. Even based on the predicted numbers from 2023, this would mean a potential for 250 children to be bussed daily, those from Ynysybwl passing through Pontypridd on the way (where another Welsh school, Evan James is situated). For those in nursery, they would need to be picked up by their parents/guardians at midday as no bus transport is provided at that time.

The numbers of additional buses would be at least five, likely to come in to Holly Street from the Dyffryn Road end. Cardinal Newman already receives nine buses a day, and other buses pass through out of the area as they pick up children from the area to attend the Welsh language secondary school (also an all-through school) Garth Olwg.

There is also potential for even more buses on Dynea Road/Holly Street should a Catholic Primary school be moved to the Cardinal Newman site. This is suggested on page 30 of the proposal and in the 'Notice' document written by Gaynor Davies - Director of Education and Inclusion Services - dated April 30th 2019 as follows; "Some of the school buildings could be removed to reduce the surplus or the Archdiocese of Cardiff could use the space to develop or transfer primary school provision on the site." This potential development was not one that readers were asked to give a response to.

Traffic congestion is already acknowledged by residents of Holly Street, Beechwood Street and Oak Street and local residents have not been made aware of the increased numbers of buses that may be using the street as a whole, coming from both ends. Also, there is the potential for increased car traffic from parents accessing breakfast clubs and pick up from wrap around care on their way to and from their jobs. This could mean that the road needs to be looked at in terms of passing places etc and a potential restriction of on-street parking.

3) Lack of equality of access to Welsh education - defeating an objective of the proposal:

RCT's proposed closure and relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton will inadvertently cause Welsh Medium education in North Pontypridd to become a privilege for the few rather than a provision for all.

These proposed changes will place impossible logistical barriers for families who rely on public transport, leaving parents no option other than choose the local school – which will be English medium. Parents are already telling us this is what they will have to do. RCT is in effect withdrawing accessible Welsh medium education from some of the poorest communities in Pontypridd.

Given that the new Welsh school will be so far away from its population, will parents want their young children to travel that far? Might they decide to 'vote with their feet',

and send their children elsewhere, hence defeating the objectives of the proposal to increase the amount of Welsh language education on offer?

At the Cabinet meeting Cllr Geraint Hopkins stated that children from these communities (Ynysybwl, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch) already travel by bus to PSN so it will be no different. We respectfully submit it is a backward view to say 'they travel anyway – let them travel further' In the current socio-environmental climate local authorities have a duty to make school transport cleaner and more sustainable. Children should be protected by The Future Generations Act to accessible education whether English or Welsh. It is discriminatory that RCT is placing logistical barriers for children from some of the poorest communities to access Welsh medium education. It is disheartening that in 2019 we are having to campaign for equality for the Welsh Language.

At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting where the call-ins were discussed, Councillors raised many concerns regarding the additional travel necessary to reach the Heol y Celyn site which RCT Education staff repeatedly denied on a specific technicality; namely that the morning buses have to travel up the A470 to then travel south towards PSN to be on the left-hand side of the road for the children to safely dismount. Children would travel 1.1 miles less per day. No information on the length of time on the bus was given. The fact that parents will not be able to access to the proposed school site unless they have a car has been utterly ignored. Parents, carers and grandparents relying on public transport could face up to a two-hour round trip in the event of a sick child or a special event; 'One car families' where the parent in work needs the car will be in the same predicament. Parental engagement in children's education is essential for the wellbeing of the child yet this aspect of the relocation was deliberately overlooked at the Cabinet and Scrutiny meeting.

An objection made by a respondent to 'The Reorganisation of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail - Objection Report" was that the 'closure of Primary schools within a community is not a positive move; communities will be damaged' (page 15). The response given was that primary education would still be delivered within the communities with relatively short distances between the current and former primary schools. This is certainly not the case in respect of Pont Sion Norton, the communities that it served and the proposed new site at Heol Y Celyn.

As parents who have sought to give our children Welsh Medium Education we feel we are being discriminated against by our County Borough Council. There are nine English medium primary schools in Pontypridd. Rather than increase the current three Welsh medium sites to offer more access to Welsh education RCT CBC are removing YGG PSN from the North of Pontypridd and expecting 300 children – as young as three years old - to travel up to six miles to access Welsh medium education. How is this a fair provision?

We are calling for **local Welsh education** within the communities of Cilfynydd, Trallwn, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch and Ynysybwl. We are urging RCT to be aspirational and forward thinking with regards to the Welsh Language and be bold to make provision which will really support the Welsh Government aim to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. This will not be achieved by removing Welsh schools from

communities and placing logistical barriers for families who would have considered Welsh medium education but will feel practically unable to make that choice.

4) Lack of consultation of affected groups:

The Consultation process which RCT boast went above and beyond their obligation was a sham. There was no meeting for parents held at YGG PSN, instead the meeting was held at the proposed site which was impossible for most parents to attend. The meeting was held between 4pm-6pm, therefore many working parents could not attend. Being two bus journeys away from our communities, parents who rely on public transport could not attend.

5) Lack of acknowledgement of concerns and issues in the consultation report and cabinet debate:

In the consultation meeting, parents were repeatedly told that if they had concerns, they should make these known in the consultation questionnaire. These concerns are not noted as part of the consultation report.

125 questionnaire responses agreed with the proposal to relocate YGG Pont Sion Norton, compared to 427 official responses against. 500 signatures on a petition submitted against the proposals were not recorded in the Consultation document. 13 out of 14 members of the public allowed to speak at the Cabinet meeting spoke against the proposals, two of whom spoke specifically against the relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton to Heol y Celyn. Yet despite this response from the public against the proposals they were passed by the Cabinet.

6) Lack of consideration of additional pollution and transport congestion.

The RCT Education representatives at the meeting could not answer parents questions at the consultation events regarding the added distance children would be expected to travel and had no knowledge of the extreme traffic build up that occurs around Pontypridd town centre during school run times.

7) Lack of consideration of alternative locations:

Parents have asked RCT to consider alternative sites for the relocation of YGG PSN. Parents welcomed the investment into Welsh education and agreed that the current facilities at PSN were not adequate for 21st Century education. However, they asked RCT to revisit the proposals and consider a site within the current catchment area of the school. An alternative site in Glyncoch was suggested and several Freedom of Information Requests regarding its availability, the response being that there were no current plans for this site.

Parents also suggested keeping the current site at PSN for a smaller number of pupils and renovating the existing site to meet 21st Century facility expectations. By splitting the pupils between the current site and the alternative site in Glyncoch this would provide all pupils with accessible Welsh medium education within their communities. When asked at the Consultation event at Heol y Celyn, RCT education staff admitted no alternative sites had been considered, as it was deemed 'unnecessary'. How can transporting 300 pupils out of their communities and across town to access Welsh Medium education possibly be the only option considered by RCT? Furthermore when the Glyncoch site was suggested as an alternative at the Cabinet meeting the Chairman stated that there were already plans for this site, which wholly contradict the

FOI responses received. There is an alarming lack of transparency and accountability to the whole.

8) Concern with regard to the position of some Councillors within the process:

A voting Cabinet member, Cllr Maureen Webber, is a governor at Heol y Celyn, the school earmarked to have millions of pounds of investment - How is this democratic? We submit that she had a vested interest in the passing of the proposal and should not have been allowed to vote.

9) Lack of logical justification for Council's decision:

During the Cabinet meeting it was debated whether YGG Evan James and YGG Abercynon could be alternative options for parents in the PSN catchment communities. It was agreed that these schools could serve the PSN catchment and the director for transport agreed that free school transport would be available. Parents were confused as to what to expect for younger children 0-3 years of age. Heol y Celyn is very likely to hit capacity over the next few years with Rhydyfelin families now choosing this new state of the art school on their doorstep rather than walking their children down the hill to the nearest English medium provision (Hawthorn). Referring to the minutes of the Staff and Governors meeting with Heol y Celyn at Appendix 3 of the Consultation Report:

"A staff member at HYC stated that they have already had requests from parents to move children from the English stream to the Welsh Stream, as a result of the new proposals. They went on to state "More pupils will join the Welsh department in January 2019, what if this increases beyond the capacity of the new school?" Gaynor Davies for RCT replied 'Admission criteria would be applied' she went on to say that 'Catchment areas may be reviewed regularly.'"

PSN parents are in no doubt that their children in the furthest communities away from Heol y Celyn will be the last priority to be given a space at the new school should the school hit capacity. Will siblings then have to be sent to different schools? If one sibling is in Heol y Celyn but another is in Abercynon these schools feed different secondary schools. There are so many unanswered questions and we feel as parents that there will be repercussions to these proposals that have not been planned for; it is the well-being of our children at stake.

It would also appear illogical to suggest building a school to cater for children from the Pont Sion Norton catchment area whilst at the same time being happy for those children to take up places at other schools. Either the school at Heol Y Celyn is the catchment area school for these children, or it isn't.

Furthermore, these suggested changes to catchment area were not put forward as part of the proposal document.

Six Councillors called Cabinet's decision in for Scrutiny and on April 3rd. Many Councillors drew attention to the lack of clarity of any proposed catchment changes for Welsh medium education in Pontypridd and despite all the previous references to YGG Abercynon in the Cabinet meeting as a suitable alternative Gaynor Davies repeatedly denied any planned changes to catchment areas – this does not add up.

12) Failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation:
Under case law, a consultation process should ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken. With regards to proposal four concerning the creation of a new Welsh medium school at Heol Y Celyn only 6% of responses were in favour.

Proposal 5: Amendment of the catchment areas of Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High Schools and the 6th form catchment area of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School, as outlined in this document.

Note: Changes to Gwauncelyn catchment are not set to go ahead, others will go ahead.

1) Lack of proper ability to comment on individual proposals:

There are a number of different catchment area changes within this proposal. Given that answers could only be given as Yes/No/Not Sure, it was difficult, if not impossible to comment Yes to one, and No to another for example.

2) Lack of consideration of transport impact:

The proposal contains no Community Impact Assessment of any of these matters.

3) Interdependence of proposals is affected by decision not to change Gwauncelyn catchment:

The proposal often makes reference to the interdependence of the different proposals. By not moving the children from Gwauncelyn to Hawthorn High, their capacity will remain even higher, and the reason for changing the catchments was to deal with issues of excess capacity.

4) Failure to follow the School Organisational Code:

“Where, in the course of consultation, a new option emerges which the proposers decide to pursue, they must consult afresh on this option before proceeding to publication.”

The proposal to continue with the removal of Maes Y Coed and Coedpenaen Primary pupils from the Hawthorn catchment area but to keep Gwauncelyn pupils as part of the Bryncelynog catchment is in effect a ‘new option’ and the community should have been consulted ‘afresh’ on this new proposal. By not doing so the Council have proceeded on the basis of a consultation for Hawthorn that became outdated at the point that the Gwauncelyn amendment was decided upon.

5) Failure to consider future developments:

If the brownfield site in Llanillid has been purchased with a possibility of a new school being required, plus the additional housing developments in the Tonteg areas, perhaps it would be financially prudent to wait a few years, which will allow the specific data from the new schools to come through, assess which is working, and build the new schools / expand the current schools then. As noted above, Gaynor Davies appears to have no difficulty in ‘building for growth’ in terms of allowing excess capacity at both the new Heol Y Celyn school and the Primary end of the new Pontypridd High School, and the Council as a whole, having not amended the catchment area for Gwauncelyn appear to be happy to accept excess capacity at Hawthorn High School.

The proposal document also mentions that other options, such as closing a site (HHS or PHS) has been considered over the next 5 – 10 years. Again, financial prudence would encourage the monitoring of the situation over the next 2 – 3 years, so that a more conservative view could be taken, as the picture may be entirely different.

6) Failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation: Under case law, a consultation process should ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken. With regards to proposal five concerning the amendments to catchment areas 43% of responses were in favour. However the decision was taken to remove the Gwauncelyn element from this proposal, but, proceed with the other 4 proposals where the percentage of people in favour were much, much lower.

Objections to the Consultation Process:

The Welsh Assembly School Organisational Code (2013), in force at the time that the consultation process was begun states the following;

“Case law has established that the consultation process should: • be undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage; • include sufficient reasons and information for particular proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response; • provide adequate time for consideration and response; and; • ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.

The process and guidance which follow have been developed with due regard to the principles listed above. Those considering bringing forward proposals will need to be fully aware of this process and guidance. However, proposers must be mindful of the four underlying principles and take any necessary additional steps to ensure that those principles are fully upheld.”

Formative Stage: This consultation process did not ask for other options prior to the document being created, thus there was only a consultation based upon proposals that the education dept had previously agreed upon.

Include sufficient reasons and information for particular proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response: We would contend that there were flaws in the evidence presented in the consultation and interpretation given to it by the authors of the report. Please refer to the additional documents from both Hawthorn High and Pontypridd High School (essentially the same document); “CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE PONTYPRIDD AREA. A GUIDE FOR PARENTS and CARERS.” This document details the inaccuracies.

For example; The consultation report provides no evidence to substantiate the claim that the sixth form performance in Pontypridd is ‘amongst the worst in Wales’ or that performance at Key Stage 4 in both PHS and HHS is ‘consistently in the third and fourth quartile’. The report also ignores the fact that the two schools operate a shared class provision. If an accurate summary is not provided for the consultation, how could the Cabinet effectively analyse the likely impact of the proposals?

Ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken: Given that the overwhelming response to the proposals was negative and was also criticised by Estyn, we can not see how RCT Cabinet followed this principle.

The consultation meetings were also flawed. RCT state that they went over and above the actual requirements for consultation, however they did not treat every school and pupil equally. For example in the Hawthorn High school council meeting, they limited the time for the meeting, and because they did not answer all of the questions, they asked the pupils to put their questions on post-it notes and they would respond to them. These responses have yet to be received.

None of the minutes of the meetings were ever agreed, and even though they were requested, these were not made available to the schools / school councils to read prior to their publication for the cabinet members. Therefore there was no opportunity to ratify them.

“3.4 Procedures There is no requirement for proposers to hold consultation meetings although there will be circumstances where proposers will consider that meeting with certain groups of consultees will assist greatly in the dissemination of information and provide a suitable platform for the consultees to make their views known. Where meetings are arranged, proposers should ensure that they are arranged in such a way that consultees in any of the categories set out a paragraph 3.2 are treated fairly and equitably. A full written record should be made of the issues raised and the answers provided at any meetings which are held.”

Page four of the consultation report given to cabinet members details lists the meetings that took place. No mention is made of the meeting held in Coleg Y Cymoedd. Gaynor Davies and colleagues met with 23 students who had previously attended Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High or Cardinal Newman. It is not known how old these students were, or what course of study they were undertaking, for example, A level, or other courses provided by the college. Of this unrepresentative group of all the young people at the college, Gaynor Davies and colleagues asked questions, questions that appear to be leading questions. Similar visits, with similar groups who had transferred back from Coleg Y Cymoedd to the relevant sixth forms, whether asking leading questions, or not, were NOT held. Thus, the report of this consultation process reveals yet another biased set of evidence.

Additionally, a section of the meeting of this report had to be redacted in later versions as a staff member could be identified from the published summary of the meeting.

Why were pupils from schools who feed into the high schools affected not included in the meetings? Ffynnon Taf, Parc Lewis, Coedpenmaen?

The council did not follow the Welsh Assembly School Organisation Code (2013) in relation to how materials were made available to young people;

“3.3 Consultation with children and young people Proposers must also make suitable arrangements to consult with pupils of any affected school (or part of a school in the case of provision reserved for children with SEN) and, where possible, with children

and young people who are likely to attend those schools. As a minimum, this must include consultation with the school councils of the affected schools, but should also include consultation with individual learners where this is appropriate and practicable. Governing bodies must help facilitate this aspect of the consultation. The information given to children and young people must be presented in such a way that it is relevant to their age and level of likely understanding and allows them to reach an informed opinion. The agreed children and young people's participation standards for Wales are available on the Welsh Government's website; proposers should refer to these and act in accordance with them. If consulting with individual learners, proposers should produce and distribute a version or versions of the consultation document appropriate to the age/ages of the children and young people affected. The consultation document should also clearly explain to children and young people the difference between the consultation and objection periods and how and when they can object to proposals. Where necessary, proposers should provide assistance to children and young people who wish to submit a consultation response."

No consideration was taken as to whether parents in a disadvantaged area such as Rhydyfelin would be able to understand the consultation and the large, detailed report that the council expected people to digest.

In the cabinet report, HHS and PHS were criticised for amending the form to aid their students. Information given to children and young people should have been presented in such a way that it was relevant to their age and easy to understand. It is therefore a criticism of the council rather than a criticism of the schools who tried to ensure that the pupils and their families could actively participate in such a monumental decision affecting their child/children's education.

Objections to the Consultation report:

Lack of summary of all comments made to the consultation in the consultation report:

The report states that it collates 'comments around common themes'. The report is structured in a 'question and answer' format, thus, if a 'comment' that was not a question was made, it does not appear to have been included in the written report of the consultation. There are therefore concerns as to the accuracy of the summary that this report has made of the consultation responses received.

Objections to the Proposal Decision making process:

Lack of consideration to the views of Estyn:

The report includes a response from Estyn who are critical of the following aspects; the lack of evidence of the impact of the changes on children with additional learning needs, special educational needs, standards, curriculum, leadership, management, impact on other local schools and wellbeing. These criticisms are made across many of the individual proposals.

For example, Estyn are critical of the sixth form proposals, citing the lack of "sufficient information as how many pupils will have to travel further to their new school or college of their choice" And, "the proposal does not provide sufficient details on the impact of the change to student travelling time on their wellbeing."

And; "The proposer notes that this ALN proposal includes the closure of two ALN classes at Heol y Celyn Primary School due to the reduction in numbers attending. Should both proposals be successful, there will no dedicated ALN provision at the new 3-16 school for neither foundation phase pupils nor those in key stage 2. The proposer does not provide sufficient evidence as to how the needs of these pupils will be met in the new school."

Estyn also suggests that the Red, Amber, Green ratings have been misapplied in relation to sixth forms. Finally, they are concerned that the proposal has not provided a clear enough case for moving the sixth form from Pontypridd to Bryncelynnog; " ... the rationale for locating the sixth form centre in Bryncelynnog as opposed to Cardinal Newman is not clear", Bryncelynnog being located near Y Pant which retains its sixth form."

Please refer to additional document, a reduced and annotated version of the Estyn response to the report.

Concluding Remarks:

The 21st Century Schools funding is a significant opportunity for Pontypridd, an opportunity to improve the educational facilities and attainment across the valley for all children and at all schools. This proposal, very sadly, does not do that. The Our Children First ~ Ein Plant Gyntaf Group would like RCTCBC to take this proposal back to the drawing board, involve the existing schools in the development of logical, rational proposals for the betterment of education and educational facilities in the Pontypridd valley, instead of this house of cards, which is all ready to come tumbling down.

The 21st Century Schools proposal for the Pontypridd Valley is based on 'Band B' funding being released by the Welsh Assembly. Band A was for the super schools etc that already occurred in the other valleys etc, as well as other changes. If, the Welsh Assembly had waited, collected evidence of the effectiveness of the Band A funding on educational attainment and outcomes etc, then, we wouldn't be where we are now. It is great to apply for the money for investment, but not in such a rushed and ill considered way that bad, poorly formulated plans are put into place to meet the

Proposal to create a Sixth Form ‘Centre of Excellence’ at Bryncelynnog, utilise post 16 provision at Coleg y Cymoedd and St David’s College, Cardiff, and to remove sixth form provision at Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive, Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which was implemented with effect from 1st November 2018. For this purpose, circular 011/2018 incorporates all statutory obligations contained within statutory guidance circular 006/2013.

This proposal was consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document was circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies were forwarded to Welsh Government in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advised of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informed all consultees as to how they could obtain copies if they required them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that has been widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

It must be noted that we are not closing any secondary school provision as a consequence of this particular proposal. The three schools that may lose 6th form provision will remain in situ, albeit with changes made to the age range of pupils they wish to admit (amended from 11 – 19 years to 3 – 16 years or 11 – 16 in the case of Cardinal Newman). Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School will have additional accommodation and facilities provided. Separate Community Impact Assessments have been prepared in respect of all other proposals being consulted upon at the current time.

Taking into account the information provided above, it is considered that the 6th form element of our Hawthorn and Pontypridd School Reorganisation Proposals will have a neutral effect on the communities they serve. All facilities and services provided by these schools to their communities will remain in place. It is for this reason that a more detailed Community Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this proposal, as it is not deemed to be applicable or appropriate in the circumstances.

The only potential impact will be on the pupils who may require 6th form education in the future, in that they may have to travel longer distances to access this provision. There are far too many different ‘permutations’ to outline the distances involved for individual pupils in this report.

Transportation for pupils will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of the post-16 provision to their new locations. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

Proposal to close Hawthorn Primary, Heol y Celyn Primary and Hawthorn High Schools and to create a new 3 – 16 school on the adjacent sites of the current Hawthorn Primary and Hawthorn High Schools

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which was implemented with effect from 1st November 2018. For this purpose, circular 011/2018 incorporates all statutory obligations contained within statutory guidance circular 006/2013.

This proposal is being consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the time of the consultation, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who resided within the catchment areas of those schools was as follows:

- Hawthorn Primary – 46%
- Heol y Celyn Primary – 75%
- Hawthorn High – 85%

A significant percentage (40%) of the children attending Hawthorn Primary School, or 97 children in total actually resided in the adjacent catchment area of Heol y Celyn Primary; some actually live in the same street that Heol y Celyn is situated in. We do not consider therefore that transferring the English Medium stream of Heol y Celyn to the new 3 -16 provision at Hawthorn will have an adverse effect on either the children or the local community, as many parents are already exercising their right to choose this school for their children.

Appendix B – Community Impact Assessments

The two Primary schools offer breakfast clubs to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new 3 - 16 school if these proposals are agreed.

Neither of the two Primary schools are used outside of school hours by community organisations; any usage made is by school based groups such as the PTA. Both offer after school clubs to their pupils, Heol y Celyn has football, netball and gymnastics clubs on three evenings a week and Hawthorn has various clubs running on three evenings a week.

The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

There is a swimming pool on the High school site that is also open to the public; the organisation and running of this facility will not change as a result of these proposals.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Hawthorn area , to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed 3 – 16 School). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The catchment area for Primary aged pupils who may attend the new 3 – 16 school will be that of the current Hawthorn Primary and the English medium stream of Heol y Celyn, combined. The distance between the Heol y Celyn site and the site of the new school is just 1 mile; this is the driving distance, the walking distance is shorter. Hawthorn Primary School is located immediately adjacent to the Hawthorn High School site and the distance between them is just a few metres.

No address within the extended Primary age catchment area will qualify for free home to school transport on the grounds of distance, as the furthest addresses from the new school site are all within the qualifying distance, which is 1.5 miles for Primary aged pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The furthest address on the eastern side of the catchment area is 0.9 miles; on the upper western side of the catchment area it is 1.2 miles. It is not considered that these distances will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new 3 - 16 School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Hawthorn area in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in

future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being a mile apart as it is at present

The catchment area of the Secondary section of the new school will remain as it is for the existing Hawthorn High School, with the exception of the omission of the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School, Pontypridd plus the Graig area of Pontypridd that is in the catchment area of Maesycod will also be omitted. Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new 3 - 16 School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

Proposal to close Cilfynydd Primary and Pontypridd High Schools and to create a new 3 – 16 school on site of the current Pontypridd High School

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which was implemented with effect from 1st November 2018. For this purpose, circular 011/2018 incorporates all statutory obligations contained within statutory guidance circular 006/2013.

This proposal was consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document was circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies were forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advised of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informed all consultees as to how they could obtain copies if they required them.

At the time of the consultation, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who resided within the catchment areas of those schools was as follows:

- Cilfynydd Primary – 90%
- Pontypridd High – 68%

A relatively large number of children (30) who reside in the Cilfynydd catchment area choose to attend Coedpenmaen Primary School, which is approx. 1 mile from Cilfynydd Primary. This number of children represents 27% of the total number of statutory age children who currently attend Cilfynydd Primary.

Appendix B – Community Impact Assessments

Cilfynydd Primary School offers breakfast club to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new 3 - 16 school if these proposals are agreed.

Cilfynydd Primary is not used outside of school hours by community organisations; any usage made is by school based groups such as the PTA. The school offers after school clubs to its pupils on two evenings each week.

The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

There is a sports hall on the High school site that is widely used by community groups outside of school hours; the organisation and running of this facility will not change as a result of these proposals.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Pontypridd area , to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed 3 – 16 School). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The distance between the existing school and new school sites for Primary aged pupils who may attend the new 3 – 16 school is just 0.9 of a mile; this is the driving distance, the walking distance is much shorter, via a footbridge over the A470 trunk road.

No address within the Primary age catchment area will qualify for free home to school transport on the grounds of distance, as the furthest addresses from the new school site are all within the qualifying distance, which is 1.5 miles for Primary aged pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The furthest address on the eastern side of the Cilfynydd catchment area to the site of Pontypridd High (Albion Court) is 1.4 miles by car and 1.1 miles on foot. It is not considered this distance will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new 3 - 16 School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Cilfynydd area of Pontypridd in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being almost a mile apart as it is at present

The catchment area of the Secondary section of the new school will remain as it is for the existing Pontypridd High School, with the addition of the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School. The Graig area of Pontypridd that is in

the catchment area of Maesycoed Primary School, will also be included. Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new 3 - 16 School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

Proposal to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn Primary School (dual language) and to open a new, enlarged Welsh Medium Community Primary School on the former Heol y Celyn site.

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the new statutory guidance circular 011/2018, the School Organisation Code, which was implemented with effect from 1st November 2018. For this purpose, circular 011/2018 incorporates all statutory obligations contained within statutory guidance circular 006/2013.

This proposal was consulted on between 15th October 2018 and 31st January 2019, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document was circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies were forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advised of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informed all consultees as to how they could obtain copies if they required them.

At the time of the consultation, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools was as follows:

- YGG Pont Sion Norton – 91%
- Heol y Celyn (Welsh Unit only) – 88%

A relatively large number of children (30) who reside in the Heol y Celyn catchment area choose to attend other Welsh Medium schools in the area, including YGG Pont Sion Norton and YGG Evan James. These pupils may possibly choose to return to their catchment school if a new, full Welsh Medium school is constructed on the Heol y Celyn site.

Both schools offer breakfast club to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new Welsh Medium Primary school if these proposals are agreed.

Appendix B – Community Impact Assessments

Heol y Celyn Primary is not used outside of school hours by community organisations; any usage made is by school based groups such as the PTA. The school offers after school clubs to its pupils on three evenings each week.

YGG Pont Sion Norton hosts Welsh for Adults classes on one evening a week, organised by the University of South Wales. Menter Iaith also host their 'Clwb Carco' after school provision for pupils on two evenings each week, in addition the school itself offers their own after school clubs on two evenings each week.

The new school will be strongly encouraged to continue with the after school and adult education provision currently offered, with opportunity to expand and extend this if there is recognised demand.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to pupils who require a Welsh Medium education in the Pontypridd area. In addition to improving provision, it is hoped that a new school with 21st Century Schools facilities will encourage parents to choose a Welsh Medium education for their children, thus assisting the Council in achieving one of the key aims outlined in its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The catchment area of the new school will encompass that of the existing two schools. The relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton to the Heol y Celyn site will mean that all pupils resident within this school's current catchment area will qualify for, and receive free home to school transport, as they will reside more than 1.5 miles from the new school. No child resident in the Heol y Celyn part of the catchment will qualify as none will reside more than 1 mile from the school. It is not considered that distance to school will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre and after school provision that will be offered in the new school; it is estimated the maximum length of time any child will have to take to travel to the school will be 20 minutes.

Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new site. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and available route criteria, if applicable.

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Appendix C

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directorate: Education
Service Area: 21st Century Schools
Responsible officer: Lisa Howell
Date: Updated 1st of July 2019

This Equality Impact Assessment is written in association with the Community Impact Assessment, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and also in conjunction with the information as detailed within the associated Consultation Document published in October 2018, the Consultation Report published in March 2019, and the Objection Report which will be published within 7 days of a decision on the proposals being taken.

1. Name of project: Reorganisation of School Provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn areas

The Project is to:

- Develop post 16 centres of excellence based at Bryncelynog Comprehensive School, Beddau and Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw.
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Pontypridd and Hawthorn, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Improve and increase Welsh medium primary provision by closing Heol y Celyn Primary School, which is a dual language school, and YGG Pont Sion Norton; Welsh Medium learners attending both schools will transfer to a new, Welsh medium school, that will be constructed on the former site of Heol y Celyn;
- Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High to better meet and match the demand for school places;
- Improve the learning environments for learners with additional learning needs (ALN).

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £37.4m in building new or refurbishing/remodelling existing buildings to ensure the learners have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21st Century learning environment.

To achieve this, the proposal is to:

- Close the sixth forms of Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School and transfer the post-16 provision to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School or Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw. For those students who opt for a Roman Catholic education, sixth form provision will be available at St David's College, Cardiff;
- Close Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Pontypridd High School;
- Close Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School and create a new 3-16 'all through' school on the site of the current Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary Schools. The local authority designated ALN specialist class located Hawthorn High School will also transfer to the new school.
- Close Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and open a new Welsh medium primary school to be constructed on the site of the current Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School. The learners educated through the Welsh medium at Heol-Y-Celyn will transfer to the new school and the Heol-Y-Celyn learners educated through the English Medium will transfer to the new 3 – 16 school at Hawthorn (see above);
- Amend the catchment areas for learners aged 11-16 of two of the LA maintained secondary schools by:
 - Transferring the Graig area of Pontypridd (that is part of the catchment area of Maesycod Primary School) to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)
 - Transferring the catchment area of Coedpenmaen Primary School to the new 3-16 school for Pontypridd (currently part of the Hawthorn High School catchment)

2. Proposal Aims. Consider why the proposal is needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?
How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

Detailed information of the aims of the proposal is included within the Consultation Document to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the greater Pontypridd area, which was published in October 2018. This has been widely circulated to all consultees and is still available to view online on the Council's website.

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, financial management, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

Following the last formal inspection of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Education Service in 2012, Estyn also highlighted that the Council had the highest number of surplus places in Wales and that action had to be taken to address this issue. This was followed up by a letter from the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills in November 2012 that instructed the Council to take action in respect of surplus places or the Welsh Government would take responsibility for removing the surplus places.

The Elected Members accepted Estyn's recommendations and have been continually reviewing school provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf ever since. The criteria that has been used for selecting schools for review is one or more of the following:

- Surplus places in excess of 25% of published capacity;
- Buildings that are beyond economic repair/not fit for purpose;
- Financially unviable (usually due to a sharp fall in pupil numbers);
- Schools considered to be 'small' schools, i.e. schools with 90 or fewer learners;
- Separate infant and junior schools in close proximity;
- 'Paired' schools, i.e. where children progress from one of the schools to the other;
- Mixed aged classes where there are more than two age groups in one class;
- Schools considered to be at risk, based on their academic Key Stage data and the quality of the leadership, or meeting Estyn's criteria as a school in need of significant improvement or special measures.

Consideration for these proposals has been aligned with the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme's long term strategic investment in the education estate throughout Wales. The priorities for this investment are:

- Addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
- Reducing surplus capacity and inefficiency in the system;
- Expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;

- Addressing condition of educational assets;
- Making assets available for community use where demand exists, to optimise the infrastructure and resources for public services;
- Addressing specific demand for places in faith based provision.

The primary schools and secondary schools included within these proposals have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- 3 of the 5 schools have surplus places in excess of 25%;
- The combined maintenance backlog of the schools is over £4M;
- Key Stage 4 outcomes:
 - The educational performance of Pontypridd High for L2+ from 2016-18 has been below the all Wales average for 2 out of the last 3 years and above the RCT average for all 3 years.
 - The educational performance of Hawthorn High Level 2+ from 2016-18 has been below the all Wales and RCT average for 2 out of the last 3 years.
 - The educational performance at both Bryncelynnog and Cardinal Newman for L2+ outcomes have been above both the local and national averages for the last 3 years 2016-18.
- Key Stage 5 outcomes:
 - The percentage of learners achieving 3A* - C grades in Hawthorn High School was below both local and national averages for 3 out of the 4 years from 2015-18, with significant improvement made in 2018.
 - In Pontypridd High School the percentage of learners achieving 3A* - C grades was below both local and national averages from 2015-18.
 - Outcomes for the same measures were more variable in Cardinal Newman RC School over the same 4 year period.
 - In Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School the outcomes for 3A*-C were above the local and national averages for 3 out of 4 years from 2015-18.

The sixth form pupil retention rates at the 4 secondary schools that are included within the proposals are low, as are the post-16 pupil projections. However, cumulatively they will provide the numbers needed to deliver a sustainable and viable sixth form. Deteriorating pupil numbers and the consequent reduction in post 16 funding from the Welsh Government has resulted in Cardinal Newman School, Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School having cumulative deficit budgets of circa £1.5M.

The opportunity exists to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools, including post 16 provision, to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities. These proposals seek to achieve this.

Educational Considerations

School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children and young people, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.

It is the Council's view that creating larger sixth forms and 3-16 schools will:

- **Improve educational outcomes;**
 - Create larger school departments or faculties that will promote the sharing of skills and expertise across more viable teams;
 - Provide teaching and support staff with more opportunity to develop professionally;
 - Enable greater opportunities for staff to move between key phases/stages and further develop expertise;
 - Provide a more appropriate skills-based curriculum and wider extra-curricular opportunities which should improve attendance and educational outcomes;
 - Improve transition.

- **Improve educational provision;**
 - Provide the conditions that will enable a broader and more diverse curriculum to be developed to better meet the needs of the school's young people and in ways that will be viable and sustainable over the longer term;
 - Improve the range and quality of facilities, technology and learning resources available to the benefit of all learners;
 - Enable greater continuity in teaching and learning, and in the levels of support provided for vulnerable groups of learners;
 - Allow for the potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and the purchase of services, which accrue in a larger school;

- Broaden the range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and develop them in ways that are sustainable over the longer term;
 - Deliver the future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of a small number of institutions rather than many;
 - Create schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity, providing greater educational and financial stability;
 - Release resources that will be reinvested in improving the buildings and in improving standards of teaching and learning, which otherwise would not have been available;
 - Enable schools to build better relationships with parents and carers over time.
- **Improve leadership and management;**
 - Provides the opportunity for the headteacher to distribute key leadership tasks such as child protection, literacy, numeracy, additional learning needs, wellbeing and attendance etc to a greater number of staff. Often in a small primary school, the headteacher takes responsibility for the vast majority of these tasks;
 - Creates leadership opportunities for other staff, and for others to specialise in key areas, which will enhance educational provision and outcomes, and improve succession planning;
 - Allow teaching and support staff access to a wider range of responsibilities:
 - Improved career prospects;
 - Improved curriculum co-ordination;
 - The opportunity to teach across a wider age range;
 - An increased range of expertise;
 - Improved opportunities for staff interaction and collaboration.

These benefits apply equally to mainstream learners and learners with additional learning needs (ALN). This argument is supported by Estyn in its report “School Size and Educational Effectiveness” (Dec 2013), which stated:

- *“Pupils’ standards are good or better in a higher proportion of large primary schools than small and medium-sized primary schools. This may be because large schools tend to have more expertise and capacity to address the needs of more vulnerable pupils and the more able and talented pupils.”*

- *“Examination results for large secondary schools are better than those for small and medium-sized secondary schools for nearly all measures”;*
- *“In general, curriculum provision is broader and better balanced in large secondary schools. Nearly all large secondary schools provide good or better learning experiences for their pupils. Large secondary schools are able to offer a wider range of options due to economies of scale”.*

What is the educational case for creating larger sixth forms?

Over the past few years secondary schools have sought to collaborate to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009 and to offer a good quality post 16 learning experience to their learners. Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of learners by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. The percentage of learners opting to stay on in their respective school for a sixth form education in September 2018, was very low. This ranged from 32-36% in Cardinal Newman, Pontypridd and Hawthorn High Schools and 44% in Bryncelynog. A viable sixth form, both educationally and financially should, ideally, have at least 250 students. In January 2019 (source: PLASC return), Hawthorn High School had 83 sixth form learners attending, Pontypridd High 101, and Cardinal Newman 71, totalling 255 between the three schools. Bryncelynog Comprehensive had 144 sixth form learners at the same point in time.
- The delivery of post-16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better and outcomes improved. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the County Borough are projected to be almost 3,500 by 2022, and over 785 in the greater Pontypridd area alone. In order to sustain post 16 education in schools with low retention rates, valuable education funds are being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf, funds amounting to over £600 per pupil that were originally provided to educate 11-16 pupils are redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of £700 per pupil across both Hawthorn and Pontypridd High Schools; at Cardinal Newman this figure is almost £800.

- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited learner interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Poor collaborative learning experiences for learners and the restricted choice of subjects available in schools with low retention rates is adversely impacting on the quality of post 16 education. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating across schools to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and interactions have increased. However, travel between providers is seen by some learners as a barrier to accessing a wider choice of courses and continuity in teaching in learning.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code and budget deficits suggest that consortia arrangements are not having the desired impact. There are no equitable post 16 options entitlement for learners in the County Borough and the proposals offer an opportunity to improve choice and the quality of learner experience and engagement.

Creating a larger sixth form at Bryncelynnog, together with the existing comprehensive post 16 provision at Coleg y Cymoedd creates the capacity and economies of scale to be able to improve:

- **Standards and Achievement** – raising standards of success and achievement and increasing rates of progression to Higher Education and employment.
- **Choice** – improving the breadth and depth of curriculum on offer creating greater choice for all young people so that they can choose learning pathways that best enable them to mix and match vocational, academic and occupational qualifications and experience.
- **Participation** – increasing participation and engagement due to the right curriculum offer
- **Equality** – to ensure every sixth form student in the Pontypridd area is able to access the curriculum of choice and a range of educational pathways suitable to their individual needs.
- **Ability to respond to future learners, community and business needs** – improving qualifications and employability, and re-skilling and up-skilling the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf as the commercial environment changes, thus allowing people to compete effectively in the job market.
- **Financial viability and effectiveness** – providing a cost effective and efficient model for delivery, removing unnecessary duplication, aligning capacity with demand (in light of demographic change), generating economies of scale and expanding economies of scope. This will result in the removal of surplus places, the reduction in the number of small sixth form classes, budget deficits and the duplication of provision between providers.

What is the educational case for creating 3-16 schools?

The great strength of all-through education is the continuity of educational experience which negates the transition “dips” in pupil performance. A 3-16 school provides the opportunity to provide a “bridge” between key stages in order to create a seamless transition for learners in terms of curriculum planning and the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, it can allow for a significant sharing of subject expertise and primary pedagogy, in particular across key stages 2 and 3.

In 2012, the Council established a new 3-19 school at Ysgol Llanhari and to date the school is making good progress. The cross phase learning and communication with staff is having a positive effect on learners. The all through school eases the transition process between the key stages and staff and teachers know the children and families and carers well as they progress through the year groups. This enables them to assist learners where additional support is required. The School has strong leadership, which creates a shared vision that resonates with all phases, all staff are fully engaged and the school benefits from ‘coherence and continuity’ which assists learners learning progression.

In September 2018, a further 3 all-through schools were established in the Rhondda, two 3-16 schools and a 3-19 school, and in September 2019 a further 3-19 school will be established.

Another important benefit of all-through schooling is being able to achieve greater effectiveness through the sharing of resources, and being able to target these resources, whether financial, physical or human, at key areas of school improvement. Some reported benefits include:

- Enhanced opportunities for specialist teaching and roles across school phases/stages;
- Access for primary phase learners to the specialist facilities of secondary phase;
- Providing scope for acceleration programmes for more able and talented learners;
- Enhanced opportunities for providing a robust and graduated response for learners with additional learning needs;
- Joint professional development opportunities and learning;
- Directing resources at early intervention and prevention;
- Planning a seamless curriculum and opportunities for ensuring continuity in teaching and learning;
- Sharing equipment, hardware and accommodation;
- Increasing the range and capacity for extra-curricular/after school learning;

- Creating common administrative appointments.

What will be the impact on the other “partner” primary schools in the community?

Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. Pupil transition is important and the Council through its 21st Century Band A programme, has instigated some innovative programmes to ensure the quality of transition and integration into Year 7 is seamless regardless of where learners have received their primary education. No pupil will be disadvantaged when they join the new school at Year 7 and opportunities for strengthening cluster arrangements have been adopted in the clusters of the new all-through schools through the development of leadership programmes and the development of transition programmes.

What is the likely impact of the proposals on school pupils?

In making the proposed changes, many things will be different for the learners from the Pontypridd area, depending on parents exercising their right of choice, but some things will remain the same. Possible differences could include

- Some may have a longer or a different route to school, and some may be transported to school by bus. Some children may lose their entitlement to free transport, but others could gain entitlement;
- Some learners who travel to school by home to school transport might have difficulties in accessing activities before and after school hours, although this would clearly be a potential issue for all learners accessing home to school transport;
- Some vulnerable learners (e.g. learners with ALN, mental health needs, young carers, children looked after etc) might experience difficulties in adapting to home to school transport and/or to a new school or college environment;
- Some learners from RCT and neighbouring authorities will have to travel to Cardiff for faith based education;
- For sixth form students, there will be less travelling during the school day to access the curriculum and therefore there will be greater opportunities for more unstructured/informal interaction between learners and teachers during the school day. The time saved from not travelling to other schools during the school day to access post 16 consortia arrangements can also be used to focus on independent study or completing course work;
- Being in classes with predominantly their own age group, the teacher will be better able to offer primary learners with a wider and more varied curriculum to support the needs of a range of learners, including the most vulnerable;

- There will be more collaborative learning opportunities and access to good peer models to enhance learning and mentoring;
- There will be increased opportunities for establishing extracurricular activities and teams within larger schools due to enhanced staffing and improved facilities;
- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, the majority of teachers and teaching assistants should be able to transfer between the schools, if they wish to do so; and
- Strengthened community links and access to improve sporting and recreational areas.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life;
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits the children in the communities of the Pontypridd and Hawthorn High School in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

In addition, we consider that these proposals, contribute positively to Rhondda Cynon Taf's well-being agenda as well as each of the 7 goals of the Well-being of Future Generation Act Wales 2015:

1. A prosperous Wales
2. A resilient Wales
3. A healthier Wales
4. A more equal Wales
5. A Wales of cohesive communities
6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

7. A globally responsible Wales

In addition, an assessment of the proposals on The Well-being of Future Generations Act's five ways of working is detailed as follows:

<p><u>Long Term</u> (The importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?</p> <p>Maintaining the existing educational premises within Rhondda Cynon Taf places enormous strain on Council resources. It is recognised that there is an opportunity through the 21st Century Schools funding to manage these pressures more efficiently and effectively in future years.</p> <p>The long term vision for RCT is to provide all learners with the best opportunity possible to achieve their full potential through the means of education by providing access to the very best learning opportunities with modern, flexible facilities appropriate for delivering the new curriculum.</p> <p>Improved learning environments will act as a stimulus to creating a better future through delivering brand new 21st Century Schools facilities for our young learners through all phases of their educational journeys from foundation phase through to delivering a more efficient and effective post-16 provision.</p>
<p><u>Prevention</u> (How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?</p> <p>The Council recognises the challenges of providing everyone with the facilities and opportunities to receive an excellent education in accessible 21st Century facilities. These proposals aim to enhance and improve the educational environment for all 3-19 year olds affected, and create enhanced opportunities for the development of more specialist roles and strengthen the graduated responses for learners with additional learning needs. The post 16 proposals will ensure that resources intended for key stage 3 and 4 learners will be redirected to enhance the quality of provision.</p>

<p><u>Integration</u> (Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the wellbeing goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes together?</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh language as a vital element to achieve and reinforce social and cultural benefits. These proposals will deliver more Welsh medium places in the Pontypridd area, opportunities for wider community collaboration and participation, more sustainable educational buildings meeting BREEAM targets all providing a more integrated and improved learning experience.</p>
<p><u>Collaboration</u> (Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p> <p>As a part of this school organisation programme the Council has already consulted with thousands of learners, staff, parents and carers, throughout the Pontypridd area. If these proposals are to go ahead then this collaboration will continue when further consultation will be undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders and partners have an opportunity to shape the 21st Century Schools provision to ensure benefits and well-being opportunities are maximised.</p>
<p><u>Involvement</u> (The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves)</p>	<p>How does your project / facility involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do those stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?</p> <p>Consultation meetings were held with the student councils of all of the schools directly affected by the proposals, as well as with staff and governors, and open evenings were held in various locations throughout the area which were open to the public. All comments that were submitted during the consultation process were considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>Moving forward, engagement with learners, staff and RCT residents will continue and input and information gleaned from these sessions will shape the new school facilities. In addition, information gathered will influence and inform our future projects so all consultation undertaken shapes the legacy of the 21st Century Schools Programme.</p>

Benefits of a new school building for YGG, Pont Sion Norton

To comply with Welsh Government guidance and its initiative to create a million Welsh speakers by 2050, which includes an expectation on local authorities to promote Welsh Medium education, the Council is reviewing its Welsh Medium school provision. This will ensure that evidenced demand for places is met and that wherever possible, provision is expanded and improved to encourage parents to select a Welsh Medium education for their children. The proposal to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and construct a brand new, purpose built school, with additional pupil capacity is one of the schemes being planned to assist in achieving this aim.

All local authorities in Wales now have to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This document indicates how the local authority intends to promote the teaching of the Welsh Language, how it intends working towards increasing the number of children taught through the medium of Welsh and how it can assist achieving the Welsh Government's target of having one million people in Wales speaking Welsh by 2050. The WESP for RCT can be viewed and downloaded from the Council website via this link

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WelshServices/Relateddocs/WelshinEducationStrategicPlan201720.pdf>.

Included among the list of actions and outcomes the Council will undertake to help achieve the targets set out in the WESP, by increasing the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh are the following:

- New and improved school buildings with appropriate capacity levels to fully meet forecasted demand for WM provision in their catchment areas
- Consideration of making dual language Primary schools in to full WM schools

This part of the overall proposal, which is to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and build a brand new school, constructed to 21st Century Schools standards and with an increased capacity of 480 pupils plus Nursery provision, will work towards achieving these targets in this area of the County Borough.

Following the recent consultation on the Welsh Government's draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019 guidance which advocates an increase in Welsh medium education provision for all learners, including those with ALN, and in accordance with the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, RCT will seek future approval to consult on establishing a Welsh medium Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 ALN provision in the new school.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?

As previously stated, all schools involved in the proposal in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn area will close and new schools will be opened with a new governing body. These include the new Welsh medium primary school, and both 3-16 schools. Should the proposal proceed, all the proposed new schools will need to appoint temporary governing bodies for the interim period until the new schools open. These temporary governing bodies will be responsible for establishing the school, agreeing new staff structures and undertaking the appointment process for all of the staffing posts.

The temporary governing bodies will firstly need to appoint new headteachers, who will then formulate and propose the leadership, management and staffing structures for the new schools. The staffing structures for the Hawthorn and Pontypridd 3-16 schools will need to be developed for the schools taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum without sixth form provision.

The Council recommends that if the proposal is accepted that the temporary governing bodies of new schools “ring fence” the appointment process for all teaching and associated staff posts to staff within the existing schools in the first instance.

No changes will be required to the governing body of Cardinal Newman, but a revision to their staffing structure will be required due to the loss of the sixth form provision.

The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change, as illustrated by the recent school organisation changes in the Rhondda and Aberdare areas.

3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate

Members of the public

School Staff

Children and young people aged 3-19 years in the Greater Pontypridd area

Parents and carers of the children living in the Greater Pontypridd area.

4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation: All 3

5. **Identifying Impacts** – Please choose whether the proposals will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below:

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)				<p>Improved learning facilities and environments for all, including:</p> <p>P - Creation of viable, sustainable and efficient schools well equipped to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for all</p> <p>P - A state of the art new build fit for the 21st Century and designed with a focus on the diverse needs of learners, the new curriculum and the successful inclusion of all learners.</p> <p>P - Excellent school facilities that offer a positive pupil learning experience that benefits from access to the latest technology, and modern specialist facilities.</p> <p>P – Access to 21st Century facilities that promote life-long learning opportunities that aim to enable all learners to reach their potential.</p> <p>P- Provision of safe and secure learning environments for all learners.</p> <p>P – Modern and stimulating learning environments that are accessible to all.</p> <p>P - Primary learners will have access to specialist facilities on their own school site.</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>P - Secondary learners have potential access to on-site work experience and volunteering opportunities and involvement in buddying and mentoring schemes.</p> <p>P – Due to economies of scale, enhanced access to specialist roles/ support to improve the lives of children, young and their families/carers.</p> <p>P - Improved facilities that will enable learners to access enhanced extra-curricular opportunities and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities.</p> <p>P - Improved transition between the primary and secondary school sectors.</p> <p>P – strengthened cluster arrangements to ensure consistency of approaches across settings and robust transition approaches</p> <p>Ne – Some vulnerable learners might become unsettled about a change in educational environment/transport arrangements.</p> <p>P – Access to more independent learning opportunities and facilities for post-16 learners thus improving outcomes, enhancing preparation for higher education and employment, and reducing the risks of learners becoming NEET.</p> <p>P - Larger sixth forms will reduce the need for consortia</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>arrangements and travelling between sites during the school day thereby maximising opportunities for independent learning</p> <p>P – Enhanced learning pathways and subject choice at post 16 which will improve engagement and the higher education and employment prospects of all learners.</p> <p>P - Improved life chances for young people by providing an appropriate range of relevant courses and qualifications, including more vocational learning routes where appropriate</p> <p>P – Increased participation in learning for learners beyond statutory school age</p> <p>P – More opportunities for community learning, participation and engagement supporting the health and well-being agenda. Further information can be found on page 37, 63 and 64 of the Objection Report.</p> <p>P – Attractive career opportunities for high quality leaders and teachers</p> <p>Ne – Despite robust management of change processes, change may impact on staff morale in the short-term</p> <p>P – a new 21st Century School will impact positively on staff and</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>learner wellbeing</p> <p>Ne – Some staff that enjoy teaching to A level may not wish to remain in a 3-16 school</p> <p>Ne - Increased travel distances for some primary school learners and some sixth form learners</p> <p>Ne - Increased travel distances for some parents and carers, including pedestrian and vehicular travel.</p> <p>P – generous home to school transport policy</p> <p>Neu - Environmental issues in relation to pollution levels around the A470. Further information can be found on pages 18-19 of the Consultation Report.</p>
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			<p>New build and refurbished school facilities will be fully compliant with the Equality Act (2010) and will be fully accessible to all users; including learners, families and carers with ALN. This will promote positive inclusion opportunities for learners with a range of disabilities. Refurbished and remodelled premises will have reasonable adjustments undertaken to make the buildings as accessible as possible.</p> <p>The design stage will involve input from a range of partners to</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>ensure that new or refurbished buildings will meet the needs of learners with wide ranging needs including, learning disabilities, sensory needs, autistic spectrum disorders, physical/medical and mental health needs. A robust evaluation of Band A developments will inform the planning of Band B developments to ensure that these are future proof and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Larger school premises and staffing structures have inevitable economies of scale and scope for enhancing the number of specialist and supportive posts to meet the needs of vulnerable learners and families.</p> <p>Hawthorn High School will have an established key stage 3 and 4 learning support class provision. Consideration will also be given to developing some post 16 independent study or quiet space for learners with ALN in the new post 16 centre of excellence in Bryncelynnog School.</p> <p>There is also an intention to seek future approval to consult on proposals to establish Welsh medium ALN provision in the new Welsh medium school, if approved.</p>
Gender			Yes	<p>New schools for 11-16 and 11-19 year olds will have access to some gender neutral toilet/changing facilities and the same consideration will be given in schools where the toilets/changing are in need of remodelling/refurbishment.</p>
Gender Reassignment			Yes	<p>If the proposals proceed, the privacy of changing and toilet facilities will be considered at the design stage in full consultation</p>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				with pupils and staff.
Race			Yes	The proposals will not have a differential impact upon one particular ethnic group as all school settings would be available to all.
Religion or Belief		Yes		<p>Ne - Learners attending the sixth form provision at Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive school will have to travel to St David's College, Cardiff, if they wish to receive post 16 education through the Catholic faith. To mitigate this potentially negative impact, free transportation will be provided for learners resident in RCT; learners who reside in other County Boroughs will need to check their entitlement with their home local authority.</p> <p>Further information on this can be found in the Consultation Document pages 8-11 and in the Objection Report pages 14-25.</p> <p>The senior management in all schools will be required to manage needs and any significant change in diversity in terms of religion or beliefs as a result of the implementation of the proposals.</p>
Sexual Orientation			Yes	Neu - The schools will admit all pupils, irrespective of sexual orientation. The Council's procedure for managing staffing changes arising from reorganisation, will be robustly informed by management of change and equal opportunity policies and practices.
Welsh Language	Yes			P - A new Welsh Medium school, built to 21 st Century Schools standards, with additional capacity provided to allow more choice for parents as to which language medium they can choose for their children.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why? P – Positive Ne – Negative Neu- Neutral
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<p>The proposals provide enhanced capacity for accessing Welsh medium education and are likely to result in an increase in the number of learners accessing Welsh medium provision. If proposals are approved, consideration will also be given to consulting on proposals to establish Welsh medium foundation phase and KS2 learning support class provision in the new school. The proposals are also likely to increase the opportunities for childcare facilities to support working families – including early years, breakfast and after school clubs.</p> <p>Further information on this can be found in the Consultation Document pages 20-22 and in the Objection Report pages 37-64.</p> <p>All signage will be bi-lingual and consideration will also be given to the needs of learners with specific types of ALN e.g. sensory, medical or physical needs.</p>
Carers		Yes		Ne - Increased travel distances for some parents and carers.

EVIDENCE

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet - October 2018.
 Public Consultation Document on the Proposal – October 2018
 Public Consultation Report on the Proposal – March 2019

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of all learners, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or disability. To reiterate, these proposals are not seen as being detrimental to any particular group of learners, they are intended to improve educational provision for all as learners as if agreed, they will access stimulating, modern and fully accessible 21st Century learning environments. The requirements of the ALN and Educational Tribunal (2018) Act and existing SEN legislation will be met to ensure that appropriate provision will be put in place to meet a wide range of learner needs. This will be achieved through effective early intervention and preventative approaches and robust person centred plans and bespoke provision where appropriate. For those learners who may not cope well with the change in their educational environment, strengthened transitional approaches will be adopted in line with person centred planning principles and current SEN legislation. For learners with significant ALN, this would include access to Individual Education Plans, Pastoral Support Plans or increasingly, as the ALNET Act is implemented, Individual Development Plans. Provision, support and intervention strategies will be put in place for vulnerable learners who require support to meet their identified needs. This should be funded from Individual School Budgets or delegated Additional Needs Funding as appropriate. Further information on issues relating to this can be found in the Objection Report on pages 14, 26, 29 and 33.

For learners with other needs or vulnerabilities e.g. children or young people who are carers or looked after, then a robust multi-agency approach will need to be adopted to meet their needs. Data suggests that there a significant proportions of learners who are currently high on vulnerability indicators accessing post 16 college placements through choice, rather than their mainstream local school. In terms of support for vulnerable learners, all secondary schools have access to school based counsellors, Youth Engagement and Participation Officers, Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, Thrive practitioners, pastoral support and wellbeing staff. In addition, every secondary schools has a nominated Young Carers Champion or a Designated Children Looked After Lead to whom young carers or children who are looked after are able to go to for support and guidance. Specialist advice and guidance can also be provided by the Council's Young Carers Officer or the dedicated Children Looked After Team in the Access and Inclusion Service. These professionals can also act as advocates for learners when considering post 16 options and securing appropriate support and transport.

The new provisions under consideration, will have greater scope to develop specialist teams to meet the needs of vulnerable learners as the size of the organisations will have obvious economies of scale.

In order to ensure effective transition arrangements, a Middle Leaders Programme has been established to develop excellent transitional plans and cluster based approaches. Transition plans will be developed and additional funding will be provided to developed leadership skill and capacity and to ensure that robust cluster based transitional approaches are developed and adopted to mitigate the risks.

There is a statutory duty placed upon the LA to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe “walking distance” to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh or dual language mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe “walking distance” is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the Measure;
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to children who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday) as required by the Measure.
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles as required by the Measure.
- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner’s home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.

- The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.

Some Primary Schools learners will have to travel longer distances to schools, likewise sixth form learners may have longer journeys to the new post-16 provisions. In the case of the primary school learners, it is highly unlikely that any child will have further than 1.5 miles to travel to their new school and not qualify for home to school transport; this is the distance at which RCTCBC currently provides home to school transport, which is more generous than that provided for by legislation, i.e. 2 miles. It is the full responsibility of parents to transport their children to school where they do not qualify for free provision, they also have to determine and provide appropriate supervision for children and decide the mode of transport to be used. Free provision will be made available where learners meet the qualifying criteria.

With regard to the proposed alternative sixth form centres for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd, learners will receive free transport, providing they meet the qualifying criteria (2 miles walking distance from home to school/college), to the nearest post-16 establishment that offers the choice of courses that they require. If they choose a centre that is not the closest to their home address, they may of course attend but will not receive any assistance towards the cost of transportation from the Council.

Learners resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf attending Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, will be able to select the most appropriate sixth form provision that offers the choice of courses that they require or if they choose a Roman Catholic post 16 provision this will be made available at St David's College, Cardiff. In doing so they will receive free transportation, providing they meet the distance criteria to the nearest provision that meets their subject choices. For learners' resident outside of RCT will need to check their entitlement with their home local authority (LA). However, there is currently a bus that transports Caerphilly learners (if eligible) to and from St David's College. Learners eligible to free school meals will still access their entitlement at post 16.

The effective transportation of learners with complex ALN and travel training will be an integral part of preparing learners for transition at post 16 and arrangements will be informed by person centred plan.

Full assessments of all available walking routes will be undertaken to ensure that they meet all safety criteria and standards laid down in the Learner Travel Measure 2014. Traffic Impact Assessments will be undertaken and improvements will be made

where identified. Further information on the impact on travel and transport can be found in the Consultation Report on pages 9 and 20-21 and in the Objection Report on pages 14, 16 and 41-50, and further information on the environmental impact can be found on pages 18-19 in the Consultation Report.

The Principal of St David's College is committed to partnership working with Rhondda Cynon Taf and has provided the necessary reassurances that there is capacity to meet increased pupil numbers. Moving forward Carinal Newman will be considered as a feeder school and such applications will be given appropriate consideration.

All of the primary schools under consideration as part of these proposals have breakfast club provisions, which are not only considered to be of benefit to the learners but can greatly assist working parents and carers as well. These clubs will continue if the new 'all through' 3 - 16 schools are created. Many schools also offer some after school provision which has the same benefits as the breakfast clubs; it is hoped that transferring primary aged learners to school sites that have improved facilities will allow for the expansion of this provision. Governing bodies will be encouraged to establish provisions as these are not a statutory requirement.

Every attempt will be made to frequently engage with staff during the management of change process and to ensure that communication is frequent and HR support is readily accessible. If staff are displaced every attempt will be made to provide interim arrangements or redeployment opportunities.

INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

In accordance with the School Organisation Code there is no requirement to hold consultation meetings, however in order to fully engage with consultees and to enable Elected Members to make a decision based on the concerns of the wider community to understand the issues raised.

In addition, the prescribed consultation period within the Code is 42 days but Council gave the public 108 days in which to respond, which is more than double the statutory timescales allotted within the Code.

This extended statutory period was undertaken to provide additional opportunities for all consultees to make their views known and the following consultation meetings/ open events were held.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Hawthorn High School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 12 th November 2018, 3.30 pm	Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday 12 th November 2018, 3.30 pm	Pontypridd High School
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 4 pm	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 4 pm	Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Monday, 19 th November 2018, 4pm	Cilfynydd Primary School
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	Governors and Staff Meeting	Tuesday, 20 th November 2018, 4pm	YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 3.30pm	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Governors and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 3.30pm	Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Hawthorn High School	School Council	Monday, 12 th November 2018, 2 pm	Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High School	School Council	Monday, 12 th November 2018, 2 pm	Pontypridd High School
Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 2.30pm	Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Hawthorn Primary School	School Council	Wednesday 14 th November 2018, 2.30pm	Hawthorn Primary School
Cilfynydd Primary School	School Council	Monday, 19 th November 2018, 2.30 pm	Cilfynydd Primary School

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
YGG, Pont Sion Norton	School Council	Tuesday, 20 th November 2018, 2.30 pm	YGG, Pont Sion Norton
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 2 pm	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	School Council	Thursday, 22 nd November 2018, 2 pm	Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School	Parents and public drop in session	Tuesday, 15 th January 2019, 3 – 6 pm	Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Parents and public drop in session	Wednesday, 16 th January 2019, 3 – 6pm	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary Welsh Department – both schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 17 th January 2019, 4 – 6pm	Rhydyfelin Children’s Centre
Hawthorn High, Hawthorn Primary and Heol-Y-Celyn Primary– all three schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Tuesday, 22 nd January 2019, 3 – 6 pm	Hawthorn High School
Pontypridd High and Cilfynydd Primary – both schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 24 th January 2019, 3 – 6 pm	Pontypridd High School

Interested parties were welcomed to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon CF45 4UQ

e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

A Consultation Report was published in March 2019 following the Consultation period. This report contained a summary of the issues raised by consultees, a response to the issues raised, and Estyn's view on the merits of the proposal. This document is available to view online on the Council's website. However all comment and issues raised during this period were provided to Cabinet to review all concerns and issues raised prior to a decision being made.

Since publishing the Consultation Report, Cabinet agreed to move on with the school organisation process and Statutory Notices on the proposals were published triggering an Objection Period which was held from April 30th until May 31st 2019.

The objections received during this period have been collated and all have been provided to Cabinet Members to review prior to a decision on the implementation of the proposals being made. The Objection Report will be published within 7 days of a decision being reached.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the proposals once it has been implemented?

The Council's school improvement team will be fully engaged in supporting all head teachers, school staff and the governing bodies of all schools involved during the first year or so, or for however long they require such support. Support with staff recruitment and for the temporary governing bodies, including a clerking service will be provided by the HR Division and the Governor Support service. Perception surveys will be undertaken with parents/carers, pupils and staff after the schools have been in operation for 6 months and annually thereafter. Feedback received will be evaluated and any necessary actions implemented will be shared with learner, parents/carers, school staff and governing bodies. In addition, these outcomes will be shared with the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and Welsh Government 21st Century Schools and Colleges Team.

ADDRESSING THE IMPACT

11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?

Following a robust and comprehensive consultation process, the evidence suggests that the rationale for implementing the proposals for change as outlined in the Consultation Document and summarised in this and previous reports remains entirely appropriate and valid.

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

The evidence outlined in our consultation document and subsequent consultation report demonstrates that this is the right approach. The proposals will be submitted to Elected Members for consideration.

12. ACTION PLAN

You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
Publish Objection Report with objection summary	Director of Education and Inclusion Services	Before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of its determination		
Establish a professional learning forum for core subject area leaders	Heads of Primary and Secondary Achievement	By September 2021	April 2022	Stakeholder feedback and evaluation of programme
Half-termly School Improvement Forums to be established to facilitate the sharing of good practice within and between schools	Heads of Primary and Secondary Achievement	By September 2022	½ termly from Sept 2022	Routine analysis of performance data and challenge advisor/senior officer feedback
Potential Middle Leaders Programme – Excellent Transition Practice to be extended	Heads Primary and Secondary Achievement	Ongoing but new candidates identified by September 2021	April 2022	Stakeholder feedback and evaluation of programme
Potential Middle Leaders Programme – Leading from the Centre to be extended	Heads Primary and Secondary Achievement	Ongoing but new candidates identified by September 2021	April 2022	Stakeholder feedback and evaluation of programme
Support to develop curriculum plans with	Heads Primary and Secondary	By September 2021	April 2022	Development of robust and achievable

Headteachers	Achievement			curriculum plans
Professional learning forum to be established to include all of RCT's all through schools	Heads Primary and Secondary Achievement	By September 2021	April 2022	Stakeholder feedback and evaluation
Early appointment of Heads to ensure robust planning and preparation for the new schools	Head of HR/Director of Education in partnership with Governing Bodies	By September 2021	Termly support and challenge meetings following appointment	Successful completion of performance targets
Programme of transition opportunities to be developed across cluster schools to ensure consistency and quality of learner experience	Heads Primary and Secondary Achievement	By September 2021	Termly	Effective implementation of transition plan/s
Early identification of vulnerable learners to ensure robust person centred planning in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate to ease transition	School ALNCo/CLA or Young Carers Lead in partnership with Access and Inclusion Officers, Young Carers Team and parents/carers.	By September 2021	April 2022	All appropriate person centred plans to be developed dependent on presenting needs. This could include: Pastoral Support Plan; Personal Education Plan; Individual Education/Behaviour Plan; Statement of SEN; or Individual Development Plan.
Early engagement with staff members and trade unions to ensure effective	HR	By September 2020	Termly progress meetings	Trade Union and staff feedback

implementation of the Council's management of change policy and early identification of potential redeployment opportunities for any displaced staff				
To finalise all plans with input from key stakeholders (school governing bodies, school councils, school staff, specialist advisors on ALN, Welsh Government etc) for school building design and construction and repair/refurbishment of existing buildings	Director of Corporate Estates and Head of 21 st Century Schools	By September 2020	Monthly meetings	Regular review of construction programme action plans
To undertake any highways works that are identified as required to improve walking routes and to make arrangements for any transport provision that may be identified.	Director of Highways and Transportation	By September 2022	Monthly meetings	Regular review of construction programme action plans
To agree and provide free transport to eligible learners and support parents/carers during the application process	Director of Highways and Transportation	By September 2022	April 2022	Free transport to mitigate increased travel distances for learners affected.
Work with Governing Bodies	Director of Education	By September 2022	April 2021	Consultation with

to establish childcare facilities to support working families – including breakfast and after school clubs	and Inclusion Services			relevant governing bodies
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13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team
 The Pavilions
 Cambrian Park
 Clydach
 CF40 2XX

Email: equality@rctcbc.gov.uk

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies Revision Date: 01/07/2019
 Job Title: Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Proposals to Reorganise School Provision in the Pontypridd and Hawthorn Areas

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Background

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Annex C of the School Organisation Code.

As part of our proposals in respect of the above, the Council is planning to undertake some reorganisation of Welsh medium primary education provision in this area of Rhondda Cynon Taf, which will not only improve and enhance the learning environment but also increase Welsh medium pupil capacity. It is proposed that the Council closes the Welsh medium stream of Heol y Celyn Primary School, which is a dual language school and YGG Pont Sion Norton; Welsh medium pupils attending both schools will transfer to a new, full Welsh medium school, that will be constructed on the former site of Heol y Celyn, in a new building that will be constructed to 21st Century School standards. This will of course be subject to parental preference.

Our proposals in respect of the Hawthorn area involve the closure of Hawthorn High School, Hawthorn Primary School and Heol y Celyn Primary School, and the creation of a new, 3 – 16 ‘all through’ school on the sites of Hawthorn High and Hawthorn Primary, which are immediately adjacent to each other. The pupils from these schools, together with the pupils from the English medium stream of Heol y Celyn will transfer to the new school, subject to parental preference.

Access to Welsh Medium Education

The vacated Heol y Celyn site will be cleared and a new Welsh medium community primary school will be constructed in its place. This new building will be constructed to 21st Century Schools’ standards and will be a much improved provision compared with the two current school buildings. Information on current building condition and suitability is contained within the consultation document. The capacity of the new school building will be 480 pupils, plus 60 Nursery places, which represents an increase over the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton combined with the Welsh stream of Heol y Celyn of almost 100 places. It is considered that this capacity will be sufficient to cater for current and forecasted pupil demand and it will also allow for growth in the Welsh medium sector.

Pontypridd already has a Welsh medium primary school with surplus capacity of 81 at YGG Evan James and to the north of Pontypridd, YGG Abercynon also has surplus capacity of 54. The consultation responses has suggested that there is a demand for pupil places specifically for a new Welsh medium school in Glyncoch and a demand to maintain the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton. The current demand projections and parental preferences suggest that this is not justified within these communities. A new larger school in the Heol y Celyn area, plus the existing Welsh medium primary school

in Pontypridd at YGG Evan James, and YGG Abercynon, meets future demand for the whole of Pontypridd and provides parents with choice. Nevertheless, this will be closely monitored to ensure that any growth in demand is met with an appropriate and measured response from a school organisation and planning perspective.

The Council is fully committed to the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 target and increasing our Welsh medium places through the delivery of our 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, as well as expanding our early years' provision, significantly increases capacity at targeted gaps to provide additional access points for Welsh Medium Education. In effect growing the language and increasing the opportunities at 'grass roots'.

The Council has invested substantially since 2012 in Welsh medium education and is committed to increasing provision and investing millions in improving the learning environment for existing learners and the number of Welsh medium spaces in our schools.

Any services provided by both YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn outside of school hours, such as breakfast clubs, after school clubs and other community facilities will continue in the new building. Any links with outside organisations such as the Urdd, Menter Iaith etc will be maintained and hopefully strengthened and expanded.

Cylch Meithrin Rhydyfelin does offer wrap around care and the new school will offer more opportunities for this provision to grow, and more opportunities for the Meithrin to work more collaboratively with the school. The nursery provision in the new school will not be dual language, it will be Welsh medium. The current Heol Y Celyn Primary School and YGG Pont Sion Norton both offer full-time nursery provision and there is no reason to expect changes in this provision in the new school. However, decisions relating to the duration of nursery placements is a governing body consideration.

The new school building will have a community room facility and the headteacher will be encouraged to consider using this facility to increase participation in the Welsh language, such as offering opportunities to parents and other community members to learn Welsh.

Nearly 70% of the pupils that currently attend YGG Pont Sion Norton use Home to School Transport, and the location of the new school in Rhydyfelin would enable 100% of those pupils currently within the catchment of YGG Pont Sion Norton to qualify for free Home to School Transport. Therefore, for the vast majority of pupils attending YGG Pont Sion Norton access to school clubs and extra-curricular activities will remain unchanged. It is common for learners accessing Welsh medium education to be transported to and from school and access to before/after school activities can be a challenge in these cases.

The school bus route distances of the new routes proposed will be shorter than the current school bus routes travelled. The Transport Unit have calculated the routes, and the average overall distance travelled for those pupils who already use school transport will be shortened by just over 1 mile per day.’ The actual distances are recorded in the table below. It is acknowledged that traffic congestion can cause issues for all road users and impact on travel times at certain times of the day, however this is something that can be difficult to control.

Contract 163/01 - Ynysybwl Terminus	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pontsionnorton (Current)	10	5.5
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	7.1	7.3

Contract 163/02 - Ynysybwl / Coed y Cwm	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pont Sion Norton (Current)	9.5	5
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	6.6	6.8

Contract 163/03 - Glyncoch	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pont Sion Norton (Current)	8.3	3.8
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	5.4	5.6
	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
Average Overall Distance Variation	-2.9	1.8

Those pupils who currently do not travel to YGG Pont Sion Norton by bus, as they live within the 1 ½ mile in-catchment walking distance, will qualify for free Home to School Transport to the new school. The furthest that these pupils will have to travel to school will be 4.5 miles each way to the new school.

To confirm the available service bus routes, there is a direct bus to Heol Y Celyn from Glyncoch, but from Ynysybwl and Cilfynydd it would require a change of bus in Pontypridd Bus Station which is no different to the current situation for parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl. Currently parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl needing to attend YGG Pont Sion Norton in an emergency via public transport are currently required to change buses at Pontypridd Bus Station, as is also the case for learners who live in these areas attending secondary education in YG Garth Olwg.

It is recognised that these changes will affect parents who live in Cilfynydd but for those that live in the other communities referenced in the objections the status quo will be maintained. RCT is experienced in providing safe transport for pupils upwards from the age of 3, and this service is provided in line with the School Transport Policy. The Council currently transports over 2,000 primary age pupils to school, of which over

250 are in their first year of school (aged 3-4). All primary school contracts are operated by drivers and passenger assistants that have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount to us at all times.

Information on the standards of provision at both of the existing schools were contained within the consultation document. It must be stressed that YGG Pont Sion Norton is a well-established, successful school and whereas this proposal involves its closure, its provision will in fact be relocated to a brand new building to be constructed less than 2 miles away from its current site. We would therefore expect this new school to closely replicate and, hopefully improve upon the current provision and high standards currently available at YGG Pont Sion Norton.

One of the main targets outlined in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020 is to increase the number of children receiving education through the medium of Welsh, which will assist the local authority in working towards the Welsh Government target of having 1 million people in Wales able to speak Welsh by 2050. One of the ways highlighted to work towards achieving this is to consider making our three dual language schools, of which Heol y Celyn is one, in to full Welsh medium provisions. We consider that this proposal will achieve this aim and in addition, the extra pupil capacity in a new, state of the art building will hopefully encourage more parents to choose a Welsh medium education for their children.

In addition, following the recent consultation on the Welsh Government's draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019 guidance which advocates an increase in Welsh medium education provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and in accordance with the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, RCT will consult on establishing a Welsh medium Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 ALN provision in the new school.

Further information is considered in the Equality Impact Assessment in Appendix C to this report.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

TRANSFORMATION OF THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Author: Zoe Lancelott, Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To brief Cabinet on progress with the Cwm Taf Early Years Co-construction Project, and to seek approval to implement the proposed changes to the existing model to deliver the transformation of the early years system in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider and endorse the progress made to date and proposals for further transformation of the Early Years System in Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Cwm Taf region.
- 2.2 Approve the plan to adopt a phased approach to providing funded childcare based on assessed need that is not limited to existing Flying Start postcode areas, as set out in sections 6.8 to 6.11 of this report.
- 2.3 With effect from September 2019, approve the reduction in the number of weeks per year funded childcare places offered from 42 weeks to 39 weeks to align with Flying Start Guidance and current practice in the rest of Wales.
- 2.4 Subject to 2.2 & 2.3 above, submit a formal proposal to Welsh Government seeking Ministerial support to pilot the changes to the Early Years system; implementing the outcomes of the Early Years Co-construction Pathfinder Programme.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In July 2018 the Cwm Taf Public Services Board directed the creation of a single approach to early intervention that focuses on the principles of building of resilience; applies vulnerability profiling data to support the targeting of services; and delivers an integrated Early Years system through improved collaboration on approaches to TAF, in order to fulfil the vision of providing the right support to the right people at the right time.
- 3.2 This work has progressed well in Rhondda Cynon Taf and collaborative working with Welsh Government and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, through the Cwm Taf Early Years Co-construction Board, identified a number of operational changes that were necessary to support the move to a needs based model for the delivery of Early Years services across the region.
- 3.3 A number of these required changes are now complete including the restructure of the Council's Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service. The proposals for a Wellbeing and Resilience Health Visiting Programme is well developed, which if approved, will pilot the delivery of a needs based enhanced Health Visiting service across RCT.
- 3.4 A phased approach to support the transition of services from a model of delivery based upon geographical entitlement to a needs based one is planned, subject to Member's approval and subsequent support from Welsh Government.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Flying Start was launched by the Welsh Government in 2007 aiming to make a decisive difference to the life chances of children aged under 4 in the most deprived areas of Wales. Flying Start eligible areas are identified using the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) data as set out in the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation. Traditionally in RCT this has meant that communities are divided between streets eligible for this enhanced support and those that are not. The Flying Start programme comprises four core elements that have been delivered in RCT in the following ways:
- **Parenting** - formal parenting programmes for parents with children aged 0-4 years living in Flying Start postcode areas
 - **Early Language and Communication** – support for children in childcare settings and support for parents to encourage early language development of children aged 0-4 years living in Flying Start postcode areas
 - **Health Visiting** – enhanced and specialist Health Visiting interventions for children aged 0-4 years and their families living in Flying Start postcode areas only

- **Childcare** - Children living within eligible postcode areas are entitled to receive free childcare for 12.5 hours per week for up to 42 weeks of the year from the term following their second birthday until the end of the term following their third birthday.

4.2 In November 2017 the Cwm Taf Public Services Board agreed to work with the Welsh Government to undertake a joint collaborative approach to redesigning Early Years arrangements across Cwm Taf. The Early Years Co-construction Board was established in December 2017 and was tasked to:

- Explore how early years services might be re-configured within existing budgets;
- Explore what it will take to create an Early Years system locally (0-7 years);
- Work together to deliver services in a co-ordinated, integrated and timely way, including effective transition between services;
- Focus on improving the co-ordination of services, planning, commissioning and identifying and addressing needs;
- Identify barriers to integration and remove them.

4.3 The ambition for the Board, comprising of senior Officers from RCT, Merthyr, Welsh Government, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB and Public Health Wales, was to deliver on the vision which is set out in Prosperity for All; “to create a truly joined-up, responsive system that puts the unique needs of each child at its heart”. This means every service that families and young children come into contact with being clear about how they can best support child development in the broadest sense. It will target parents as early as possible and sustain support where it is needed. Investing in the early years is an investment in the economy and workforce of the future;

‘We want children from all backgrounds to have the best start in life. Our aim is that everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential and maximise their chances of leading a healthy, prosperous and fulfilling adulthood, enabling them to participate fully in communities, the workplace, and contribute to the future economic success of Wales.’

Prosperity for All – the National Strategy (Welsh Government)

4.4 A number of system wide priorities were identified early on as requiring attention, which included overcoming the operational challenge of Flying Start services only being available in specific postcode areas when the need for enhanced support is not geographically confined.

4.5 As a result, a paper was presented to the Public Services Board on 17th July 2018 outlining a proposal to align the work of the Early Years Co-construction Project with the Children’s First initiative and the Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder, in order to transform services in a co-ordinated way. The Public Services Board unanimously agreed the proposals within the

paper and instructed Officers to begin implementing a number of developments including:

- A single integrated approach to early intervention is developed that focuses on the principles of building of resilience; applies vulnerability profiling data to support the targeting of services; delivers an integrated Early Years system through improved collaboration on approaches to TAF.
- An Early Years Vulnerability Profile (0-7 years) is developed to identify the level of need of families and piloted in RCT as an alternative to the geographically based eligibility criteria of Flying Start.
- That any future approach is sufficiently resourced and maximises budgets within Funding Flexibilities and challenges the use and alignment of core budgets.

4.6 As a Funding Flexibility Pathfinder from April 2018, Cwm Taf was given greater flexibility on how ten identified grants were spent to meet Welsh Government's strategic outcomes. Based on the outcomes of this Pathfinder work, two new grants have been issued to Local Authorities from April 2019, and comprise the following programmes:

Children and Community Grant (CCG)

- Flying Start
- Families First
- Communities First Legacy Fund
- St David's Day Fund
- Childcare and Play
- Promoting Positive Engagement (for young people at risk of offending)
- Communities for Work Plus

Housing Support Grant (HSG)

- Supporting People
- Homelessness Prevention
- Rent Smart Wales Enforcement

4.7 The flexible use of grant funding offers the means to strengthen our position through the creation of a single approach across all programmes that sees:

- The removal of the existing eligibility criteria of individual programmes to be replaced by a single mechanism to identify need;
- The development of a single point of access for individuals and families;
- The use of a single assessment process and tool that focuses on identifying support required by the individual/family to build their resilience; and
- The use of a single outcomes framework to measure impact, and to make the approach more meaningful.

- 4.8 However, whilst the Children and Communities Grant has been established with full flexibility, at present the Council is still required to meet the Flying Start grant terms and conditions. This means ensuring the delivery of the four key strands of the programme: Parenting Support; Early Language and Communication Support; enhanced Health Visiting Services; and Childcare.

5. SYSTEM CHANGE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 Following the decision of the Public Services Board to create an integrated delivery model, the following principles were identified by the RCT Funding Flexibilities Lead Officer Group as essential to underpin an effective model in RCT:

- Inclusive target groups – the model needs to be able to meet all the needs of existing target groups and deliver the current benefits of existing individual programmes as a bare minimum;
- Clear identification and assessment of need for early intervention and prevention – the process needs to be robust enough to provide a viable alternative to the existing arrangements;
- A clear pathway of support as part of a continuum that provides the right support to the right people at the right time via universal access to a single ‘front door’ into services;
- Seek to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s) by building resilience through interventions delivered by trauma informed staff;
- Cannot be directed by existing funding criteria or restrictions, e.g. geography / age – full flexibility is required to respond to assessed need;
- Concerned with a whole system change with agreed single vision and a common set of operational delivery principles;
- Can be accessed from community settings;
- Underpinned by a robust outcomes framework.

- 5.2 Having been established as the single integrated delivery model for RCT and already delivering Team Around the Family (TAF) arrangements, the Resilient Families Service was identified as ideally placed to provide the framework for service delivery.

- 5.3 To deliver a new Early Years System for RCT that is truly responsive to the needs of children and families, it is necessary that the Council moves away from the delivery of services that are determined by geographical postcodes to a model that promotes universal access to services for all families in RCT. To do this it is necessary to use the full flexibility of both the Children and Communities Grant and the Housing Support Grant to deliver the vision of providing the right support to the right people at the right time.

- 5.4 Within a needs based approach the key priorities for the delivery of the four strands of the Flying Start programme are:

- **Parenting** – provide open access to informal parenting support and formal parenting programmes for parents with children up to the age of 18 years and specialist support for parents with children with additional needs
- **Early Language and Communication** – delivered as a targeted early intervention for children aged 21 months identified as experiencing language delay and also for children up to the age of 7 years who are not making expected progress
- **Health Visiting** – access to enhanced Health Visiting interventions is available across the whole of RCT for children aged 0-5 years and their families
- **Childcare** – funded childcare for 2-3 year olds is provided as part of a co-ordinated package of support for families based on assessed need

Delivery of all four programme strands within a needs based approach will be facilitated by universal access to a single 'front door' via the Resilient Families Service.

- 5.5 This needs based approach has been developed in partnership with Welsh Government and agreed through the sign off of the joint Families First / Flying Start Delivery Plan for 2019-20.

6. **PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 6.1 As part of the Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder work in 2018-19 a number of Flying Start programme expansions were piloted in Rhondda Cynon Taf with the use of Families First grant money. This included the universal delivery of parenting support for any parent in RCT with a child up to the age of 18 years. It also included the location of Specialist Flying Start Health Visitors and Community Nursery Nurses within the Resilient Families Service (RFS) to provide Health appraisals and interventions for any families open to RFS, not just those living in Flying Start postcode areas. Both of these pilots were successful and have been mainstreamed.
- 6.2 In order to implement the developments as supported by the Public Services Board, the re-organisation of the RCT Early Years and Family Support Service was required to deliver an integrated Early Years System for 0-7 year olds across RCT that is fully aligned with the Resilient Families Service to deliver the right support at the right time.
- 6.3 Building on the pilot work, the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service has been re-organised to facilitate an open access / universal offer to children and families that can deliver targeted enhanced and specialist support to those who need it most, wherever they live in RCT. Based upon an early intervention approach, this new Service structure sees the main

functions of Early Years integrated within existing models of delivery of both universal and enhanced services to children, young people and families.

- 6.4 From 1st April 2019, the Resilient Families Service has been expanded to include a new Parenting Support Team to provide direct and responsive parenting support (including crèche provision) and children's early language and communication intervention for families referred to the Service. Both of these Flying Start programme strands are now universally available for families across the County Borough.
- 6.5 Working alongside Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB, the Resilience and Wellbeing Health Programme has been created to pilot the delivery of enhanced Health Visiting Services on a universal basis across RCT.
- 6.6 The current staffing arrangement of Generic Health Visitors and Flying Start Health Visitors will be replaced with Family Health Visitors able to provide enhanced Health Visiting interventions for any family identified as requiring it across Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 6.7 The governance around the Family Health Visiting model is defined within a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and ensures alignment with the Health Child Wales Programme (HCWP).
- 6.8 The Family Health Visitor determines as per the HCWP a family's needs and determines if the family require *Universal Enhanced* or *Intensive* Health Visiting and has additional support needs outside of Health Visiting
- 6.9 As part of the revised programme, all children will receive a developmental assessment (SOGS) at 24 months and an additional speech and language screening assessment at 20 months; aiming to identify issues of concern and where additional support is required, as early as possible.
- 6.10 Where additional support needs are identified, Family Health Visitors will refer families to the Resilient Families Service, who following assessment will build a bespoke Family Plan to provide the right support at the right time. This plan may include support in relation to:
 - Developing confidence and skills to deal with everyday parenting challenges;
 - Housing issues;
 - Help with family finances;
 - Options for childcare;
 - Early language and communication skills;
 - Transition into school;
 - Strengthening support networks;
 - Accessing community activities/facilities;
 - Help with routines;

- Building emotional resilience;
- Access to employment or training.

611 It will be necessary to employ a phased approach to support the transition from the geographical entitlement model of providing funded childcare, to a model where funded childcare is universally available for those children and families most in need. To ensure fairness and minimise the impact on families of the change to the model, it is proposed that the Council honours any existing offer of childcare made to families in Flying Start areas under the current Flying Start model up until a specified date. Subject to approval of these proposals by Members, the Council will seek support from Welsh Government for the proposed changes after which the dates for transitional arrangements can be confirmed. The principles of the transitional arrangement will be:

All children born in a Flying Start area on or before the prescribed date will be automatically entitled to receive three terms of funded childcare from the term after their 2nd birthday.

For all children born on and after the prescribed date anywhere in Rhondda Cynon Taf, eligibility for funded childcare between the ages of 2-3 years will be determined on assessed need via the Resilient Families Service following referral from Family Health Visitors. Those families who are not deemed as being in need of funded childcare will be signposted to other service areas for information and advice and to other childcare options.

- 6.12 This will require the Council to make a three year commitment to see through the provision of funded childcare for children born on or before the prescribed date in Flying Start areas, with the last cohort leaving childcare placements after three years.
- 6.13 In order to support the financial implications of the Council's commitment to implementing a phased approach whilst at the same time adopting a needs based approach, it is proposed that from September 2019 the number of weeks per year funded childcare places are offered will be reduced from 42 weeks to 39 weeks to align with the rest of Wales. Currently RCT is the only local authority that provides above the stipulated 39 weeks of childcare per year stated in the Welsh Government Flying Start Guidance. The proposed reduction in weeks would release £175k per year, offering a contribution of £525k over the three year transition period towards the provision of funded childcare based on assessed need, equivalent to 165 places.
- 6.14 These three additional weeks are delivered at the end of the summer term and as such attendance rates at settings are consistently poor. The decision to reduce the number of weeks offered from September 2019 would not affect any children currently receiving a funded childcare place, as they will be due to leave placement at the end of the spring term 2020.

- 6.15 Building on the experience of RCT in implementing Vulnerability Profiling to successfully target resources, Welsh Government has provided funding to employ a Vulnerability Profiling Development Officer to provide capacity to accelerate the creation of an Early Years Vulnerability Profile for Cwm Taf. This post currently sits within the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service and discussions are underway with the UHB about the inclusion of child health data in this profile.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Single Equality Duty) requires public authorities to demonstrate in decision making that they have paid 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 7.2 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child also requires the Council to demonstrate that decision making has paid due regard to the rights of children and young people.

- 7.3 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form has been prepared in respect of the transformation of the Early Years System in RCT. The screening has identified that due to the phased approach proposed and the timing of the proposed change in the number of weeks childcare is offered, the changes to the delivery model have limited impact on children and families therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment would not be required at this time. The screening form can be accessed by contacting the author of the report or the Cabinet Business Officer.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation with parents and families was undertaken prior to the implementation of a universal parenting offer across RCT in April 2018. At this time, parents reported that they would like to see more informal support tailored to their needs that they could access in their local communities. They also requested support for specific elements of parenting such as managing behaviour and supporting the educational needs of their children. Further consultation is ongoing on an informal basis with those families who have received parenting support as part of the Resilient Families Service.

- 8.2 A strategy is in place to support communication of the potential changes to the Early Years System in RCT to parents and families. In addition to the usual mechanisms for the dissemination of information via leaflets, website

and social media platforms, all families with children under the age of 5 will receive information via Health Visitors.

- 8.3 Consultation with partners including; health, education, housing providers, childcare and play providers, and third sector organisations takes place on a termly basis via the Resilient Families Service Provider Network Meetings, and also on a one to one basis during contract monitoring visits. All commissioned partners are signed up to providing universal access to family support services as set out in the Council's Resilient Families Programme.
- 8.4 Full consultation on both the new Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service structure and the transformation proposals for the delivery of future Early Years Services was undertaken with staff in January 2019 as part of the Council's Management of Change process.
- 8.5 Public consultation was also undertaken on the proposed Early Years transformation in June 2019. 254 responses were received via an online survey on the Council's website and face-to-face consultation undertaken at the Teddy Bear's Picnic event. Respondents were overwhelmingly in favour (96%) of offering support to any family in RCT with an identified need, rather than restricting support to particular postcode areas. 85% of respondents also supported a reduction in the childcare offer from 42 weeks to 39 weeks per year, and the subsequent introduction of 15 family fun sessions during holiday periods. The full Consultation Report is included at Appendix 1.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 The cost of all transformation activity will be met from existing grant funding as part of the new Children and Communities Grant. The creation of the Children and Communities Grant is providing far more flexibility than the Council has previously had to resource current provision and future initiatives to meet identified gaps.
- 9.2 As with any transitional period there will be budget pressures until the new model is fully implemented. However financial re-profiling of the existing Flying Start grant has facilitated the reallocation of money within the grant to support the transitional period for childcare to enable the Council to honour the exiting Flying Start childcare offer for children born in RCT prior to a date to be determined. Any funding released from re-profiling or from in year grant slippage will be re-allocated into the provision of funded childcare based on assessed need.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications arising from these proposals; however consultation with Welsh Government is ongoing via both the Cwm Taf Early Years Co-construction Board and the Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder

Programme to ensure transformation proposals do not contravene grant funding conditions.

- 10.2 The following legislation has been considered in relation to the development of these proposals:

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014:

- Putting an individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control over reaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being
- Supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of this care and support
- Increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need
- Strong partnership working between all agencies and organisations.

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 The implementation of the new Early Years System for RCT will contribute to the Council's corporate priority to 'promote independence and positive lives for everyone' in the following ways;

- Redesigned local services - integrated and efficient
- Rhondda Cynon Taf's children and young people will receive a great start in life

- 11.2 The Early Years System has been developed in full consideration of the sustainable development principles. The proposal will also support the Council to contribute to the well-being goals:-

- **A prosperous Wales:** children who receive support at the earliest opportunity are more prepared for adulthood and achieving prosperous futures.
- **A healthier Wales:** access to enhanced support that is not restricted by geographical boundaries supports all children who need it to meet their developmental milestones and develop social skills, enhancing their emotional wellbeing.
- **A more equal Wales:** by delivering services based on an assessment of need as opposed to being limited by geographically based eligibility criteria ensures that those children and families most in need of support have access to it irrespective of where they live.
- **A Wales of cohesive Communities:** access to services that are not restricted to particular communities promotes equality and harmony

across communities and the means to share community resources in order to be responsive to need and build resilience.

- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:** children who are given the freedom to progress through the early years in the language of their choice learn to be tolerant and accepting, preparing them for a multi-racial, globalised adult world.
- **A globally responsible Wales:** children who have access to effective early years opportunities are afforded experiences that prepare them to be globally responsible adults.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 This report has provided Members with details of the progress to date and ongoing work in transforming the Early Years System in RCT to deliver the right support to the right people at the right time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

TRANSFORMATION OF THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM IN RCT

REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Background Papers

[Delegated Decision](#)

Officer to contact: Zoe Lancelott, Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience

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Early Years Transformation Consultation

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

July 2019



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This section provides a summary of the main findings from the consultation.
- The purpose of the consultation was to seek views on proposed changes to the way that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council deliver early years' services.
- The consultation period ran from the 14th June to the 10th July. 254 responses were received.
- 73% of respondents had children aged 0-4.
- 48% of the respondents currently accessed the Flying Start Programme.
- Respondents were asked what elements of the flying start programme they accessed. Of those that responded the following elements were reported;

Flying Start childcare for a 2-3 year old	95%
Flying Start Health Visitor	58%
Flying Start parenting programme or parenting support	12%
Flying Start early language support for your child	18%

- The original Flying Start programme is limited to particular postcode areas only. Respondents were asked if they thought it would be beneficial to offer the support provided by the Flying Start programme to any family in Rhondda Cynon Taf with an identified need. **96% agreed with the proposal.**
- **85% of respondents agreed with the proposal to reduce the Flying Start Childcare offer from 42 weeks to 39 weeks** and offer 15 family fun sessions during holiday periods instead, to enable younger and older siblings to access activities as well.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a consultation on proposed changes to the way that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council deliver early years' services
- 1.2 Section 2 outlines the background to the proposals and what the Council would like to change.
- 1.4 Section 3 details the methodology used.
- 1.5 Section 4 presents the consultation results.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Welsh Government Flying Start Programme provides additional services for parents with children aged 0-4 years living in Flying Start postcode areas. These additional services include:
- **Parenting** programmes for parents with children aged 0-4 years living in Flying Start postcode areas
 - **Early Language and Communication** – support for children in childcare settings and support for parents to encourage early language development of children aged 0-4 years living in Flying Start postcode areas
 - **Flying Start Health Visitors**– enhanced and specialist support for children aged 0-4 years and families living in Flying Start postcode areas
 - **Childcare** - Children living within eligible postcode areas are entitled to receive free childcare for 12.5 hours per week for 39 weeks of the year from the term following their second birthday until the end of the term following their third birthday (in RCT we have provided 42 weeks a year, the extra three weeks is the first half of the summer holidays, however these additional weeks are not well attended).
- 2.2 In Rhondda Cynon Taf, this has meant that communities are divided between those streets where families are eligible for this additional support and those streets where families cannot receive it because of their postcode. This has resulted in some families who require additional support not being able to access it.
- 2.3 The Council is proposing to provide the additional services of Flying Start to any child and family in RCT who need it:

- **Parenting** – provide open access to informal parenting support and formal parenting programmes for parents with children up to the age of 18 years and specialist support for parents with children with additional needs
- **Early Language and Communication** – delivered as a targeted early intervention for children aged 21 months identified as experiencing language delay and also for children up to the age of 7 years who are not making expected progress
- **Health Visiting** – all families with a child aged 0-5 years will have a Family Health Visitor who will undertake a developmental assessment at 24 months and a speech and language assessment at 20 months to ensure any issues are identified as early as possible. Where a family has wider support needs, the Family Health Visitor will help them to access this support
- **Childcare** – funded childcare for 2-3 year olds is provided as part of a co-ordinated package of support for families based on assessed need. The childcare will be provided for 39 weeks of the year with 15 family fun sessions provided during holiday periods to enable younger and older

2.4 Access to these additional services would be needs based via referral to the Resilient Families Service.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The consultation period ran from the 14th June to the 10th July.
- 3.2 A questionnaire and FAQ sheet (What You Need to Know) was designed and placed on the Council's website.
- 3.3 Responses were requested via this online survey, a dedicated email address or via a freepost address.
- 3.4 All of the current flying start providers were made aware of the consultation.
- 3.4 Face to face consultation was undertaken at the Council's Teddy Bears Picnic event on the 21st June, using survey tablets.
- 3.5 254 responses were received.

4 CONSULTATION RESULTS

Results – Online Survey

- 4.1 254 respondents completed the questionnaire.
- 4.2 73% of respondents had children aged 0-4.
- 4.3 48% of the respondents currently accessed the Flying Start Programme.
- 4.4 Respondents were asked what elements of the flying start programme they accessed. Of those that responded the following elements were reported;

Flying Start childcare for a 2-3 year old	95%
Flying Start Health Visitor	58%
Flying Start parenting programme or parenting support	12%
Flying Start early language support for your child	18%

- 4.5 The original Flying Start programme is limited to particular postcode areas only. Respondents were asked if they thought it would be beneficial to offer the support provided by the Flying Start programme to any family in Rhondda Cynon Taf with an identified need. 96% agreed with the proposal.
- 4.6 In 2017/18 attendance at Flying Start childcare settings during the 3 weeks of the Summer Holidays dropped by 18%. As a result the Council is proposing to reduce the Flying Start Childcare offer from 42 weeks to 39 weeks and offering 15 family fun sessions during holiday periods instead, to enable younger and older siblings to access activities as well. Respondents were asked if they agreed with this proposal, of which 85% did agree.
- 4.7 Respondents were asked to provide any further comments and these are summarised under the themes below, with a selection of comments. 57 open responses were received.

- **Support for the proposal to expand Flying Start to all areas with identified need;**

“I have experience of delivering this model and it proved successful as all communities differ and it provides the opportunity to develop activities and events in line with individual community need. Our provisions are extremely successful in highlighting key opportunities in throughout the year where families best engage in family events and providing they are planned effectively the impact is positive and measurable.”

“Flying start should be available to all families in Wales regardless of affordability. The postcode selection is utter nonsense as there are families in the poorest areas who do not qualify.”

“It is vital that all children in need be entitled to this opportunity current system excludes children in poverty and must be targeted fairly”.

“I live in between streets that are eligible for flying start support and I am not entitled to it. Using a postcode lottery is silly and unfair”.

“My friend lived just outside and needed it”

Email received from Cllr. Brencher;

“As councillor for the Graig Ward I have been shocked at the inequity of the current system determined to be a postcode lottery in Flying Start provision .There is an overwhelming support for the proposed changes which will make a real difference to the lives of the children involved . One clear concern is that child poverty levels are rising and that through this current system many needy children are excluded. In Philip St alone in my ward half the families are entitled to this excellent and much needed support package whilst others often in greater need are not. This cannot continue...”

- **Positive about reducing from 42 to 39 weeks in Summer**

“I also work within flying start as a setting leader and I do believe that reducing the weeks to 39 weeks per year would be beneficial due to the poor attendance we see usually due to parents not wanting to bring older siblings out of the home to bring the child. Also as a working mother myself I would welcome having the full 6 week summer holidays off with my own children and not have to worry about paying for and arranging holiday care.”

- **Negative about reduction from 42-39 weeks**

“There are a lot of family activities already in the area I would keep it at 42 weeks.”

- Staff issues

"If childcare funding finished at 39 weeks staff would still be expecting to be paid, so unless we were paid to complete a family programme, I would not be willing to fund the additional staff costs or resources".

"We have fairly good attendance during the summer. If the childcare provision were to finish at 39 weeks rather than 42, I feel that 15 family run sessions are a lot for staff to organise and this would not improve attendance overall."

- Working parents

"Need the 42 weeks for working parents"

"Need the 42 for working parents and for support for those with children with additional needs"

"For working parents three weeks child care through the main school holidays has got to be beneficial. Maybe research if parents are in employment to see if this does have an effect of your attendance figures....."

- **Family Fun Sessions**

"Other children could access the fun days"

"Better as I have older children and I could access the fun days with the family"

"Family sessions good to get involved"

- **Concerns with Family Fun sessions**

".....some older siblings may not think its trendy enough or feel it's too much like school. They may want to hang out with friends instead. The younger ones may not want the siblings attending as it's their space....."

- Cost/Setting

"I feel that it would be difficult to deliver family fun in our setting. This is due to the cost which may be implicated and the room size at our setting."

- Poor attendance from experience

"I don't feel families would take part in the family fun sessions. Any family fun sessions we have experienced have always had very poor attendance."

"Family engagement sessions are the hardest to gain a good attendance"

- **General positive comments about Flying Start**

“My older children went to flying start, my baby is too young at the moment. My boys loved the sessions they really helped them progress as they both had speech problems it will be very sad to see the services go”

“Flying start were marvellous with me”

“Flying start was brilliant with my son's speech”

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20 TO 2022/23

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR M NORRIS**

AUTHOR: Barrie Davies (01443 424026)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2019/20 to 2022/23, based on current modelling assumptions in advance of formulating the detailed budget strategy proposals for 2020/21 during the autumn.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- i. Note the current position modelled in respect of the 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 to 2022/23' and receive further updates in the autumn as part of the annual budget setting process; and
 - ii. Determine any requirements for wider communication and engagement with full Council and the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need to keep Members informed of the budget modelling work being undertaken as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements. This work is in advance of the Provisional Local Government Settlement, due from Welsh Government later this year.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Each year as part of the Council's robust financial management arrangements, an update on the Medium Term Financial Planning assumptions is provided to Members in advance of the detailed budget strategy work in the autumn.

- 4.2 The Public Sector continues to face a prolonged period of real term reductions in funding levels with challenging times expected for services across local government. This is coupled with increasing demand and costs associated with many services, in particular Social Care Services.
- 4.3 Locally, this Council has demonstrated its ability and willingness to invest in services, linked to our priorities as set out in the 'Corporate Plan – 2016 – 2020', in order to meet the changing needs of our people and communities. The significant 'additional' investment already agreed by Members during recent years is providing real improvements across many areas including Leisure Centres, Roads and Information Technology. During 2019/20 work will be undertaken to develop, consult and agree a new Corporate Plan for the period 2020 to 2025 that will continue to complement the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements.
- 4.4 Whilst investment through the use of one off funds has been very positive, the Council recognises that it must still address base budget shortfalls and make difficult decisions to balance its ongoing revenue budget into the medium term. This report provides an interim view on the scale of the challenge faced and the actions and arrangements being put in place to address any shortfalls across the planning period.
- 4.5 Members will note the latest indication from the UK Central Government is that the Comprehensive Spending Review, setting public sector expenditure / funding limits, is not likely to happen in line with the original timescale of autumn 2019. The implications of this delay on the 2020/21 local government settlement in Wales will be key to our planning assumptions.

5. CURRENT MODELLING ASSUMPTIONS

- 5.1 The detailed modelling assumptions are included as part of the up-dated 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 to 2022/23' and is attached at **Appendix 1**. The updated plan sets out the detailed basis of the medium term strategy with references to revenue spending, capital plans, income levels and reserves.
- 5.2 Key assumptions used in the construction of the revenue budget modelling to 2022/23 are shown below:

5.3 Income

- Local Government settlement levels are projected to be:

Year	Potential Settlement
2020/21	0%
2021/22	0%
2022/23	0%

- Council Tax increases are currently being modelled at 3% per annum.
- One-off funding from Welsh Government assumed to be mainstreamed into core funding (see para 7.4 below).
- Fees and charges uplifted by inflation only.

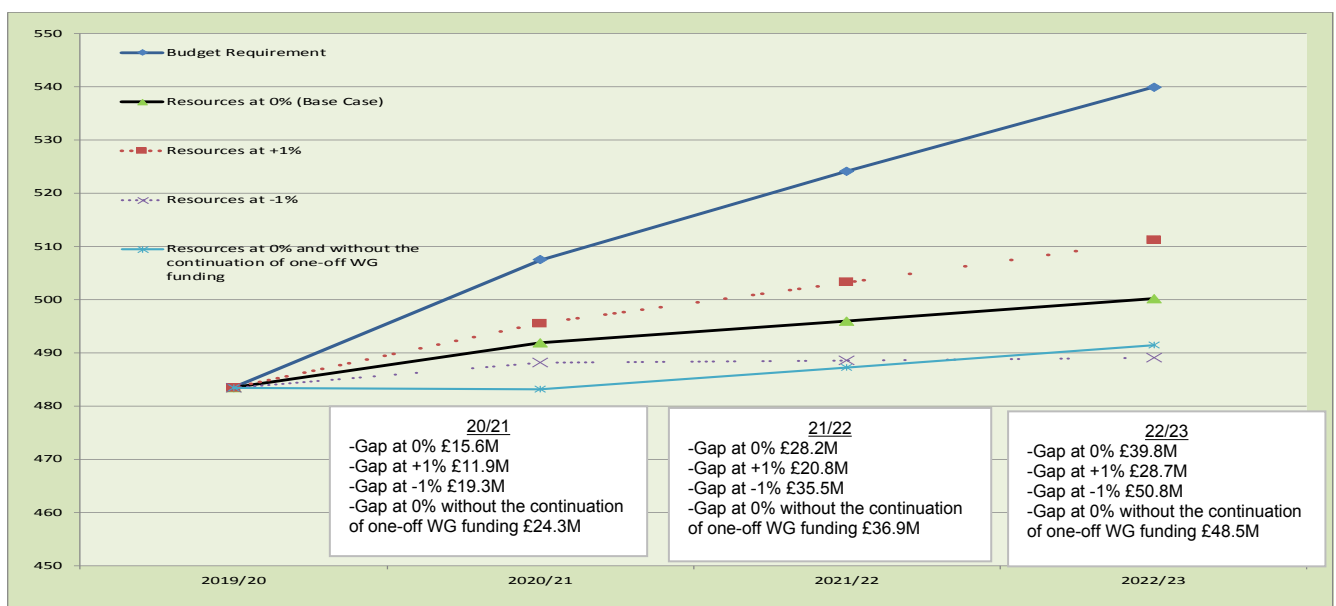
5.4 Expenditure

- Service area pressures reflected which arise from statutory requirements, demand led pressures, demographics etc.
- Uplifts included for pay and non-pay inflation.
- Authority wide requirements reflected including Capital Financing, Levies and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- Schools budget is modelled to receive a cash uplift of £1.5M per year plus the continuation of passported funding for pay and pension pressures (and in the context of the projected level of Welsh Government settlements).

6. CURRENT MODELLING OUTCOMES

6.1 The modelling uses a number of assumptions which are all subject to change and will be reviewed as part of the detailed budget strategy work in the autumn. The 'base case' includes Welsh Government funding being maintained at the 2019/20 level (i.e. a 0% increase for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23). The variability of the potential level of the Settlement from Welsh Government has a significant impact on the budget gap, at £3.6M per 1%. Figure 1 illustrates the outcome of the current 'base case' modelling (pre Provisional Settlement announcement), plus some sensitivity analysis should the Settlement be more positive (set at +1%), worse (set at -1%) and at 0% alongside if the one-off Welsh Government funding received during 2019/20 to fund permanent budget pressures does not continue:

Figure 1 : Modelled Budget Gap 2020/21 to 2022/23



Note: a 3% Council Tax increase per year is assumed as part of the modelled gap

7. **BALANCING THE BUDGET**

- 7.1 The Council continues to focus on the budget gap position over the medium term and has successfully implemented a strategy of early identification and delivery of base budget reducing measures in-year. This has enabled the Council to deliver financial savings early and to replenish the Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation Reserve which has been used proactively as part of the budget strategy for a number of years.
- 7.2 Plans are already being developed across a number of areas to balance the projected budget gap for 2020/21 and the medium term. In particular the focus thus far has been on the continued delivery of an annual efficiency target which protects frontline services. Inevitably the focus at annual budget setting time is for the forthcoming financial year, that is, 2020/21, and the savings quantum required is still to be confirmed pending receipt of the Local Government Settlement from Welsh Government.
- 7.3 Using our 'base case' (0%) modelling forecast, Figure 2 summarises the current savings requirement position, after taking into account an efficiency target for 2020/21 and after factoring in the impact of decisions already made.

Figure 2: Budget Gap and Savings

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Budget Gap Annual	15,591	12,603	11,565
Budget Reduction Measures			
Materials Recycling Facility (part year saving)	- 642		
Office Accommodation (part year saving)	- 39		
Day Centres	- 204		
Social Care - Non-Residential Care charges	- 314		
Remaining Budget Gap	14,392		
Efficiency Target	- 6,000		
Remaining Budget Gap	8,392	12,603	11,565

- 7.4 The forecasted Budget Gap at Figure 2 assumes that the one-off funding made available by the Welsh Government in 2019/20 to fund on-going additional costs associated with Teachers Pension, Teachers Pay and Social Care **will be**

included in local government settlements as permanent funding from 2020/21 onwards. This equates to approximately £8.7M per year for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

7.5 To close the remaining budget gap identified in Figure 2, work is progressing urgently and will be reported to Members as part of the budget strategy work this autumn.

7.6 We continue to focus and prioritise our efforts on a number of key themes over the medium term to identify and deliver a transformation agenda across all of our services. These are:

- *Digitalisation* – taking the opportunity new technology provides to deliver better services for residents, visitors, businesses and how we operate internally.
- *Commercialism* – utilising our scale and expertise to deliver services for other organisations and customers and thereby generate income.
- *Early Intervention and Prevention* – investing in preventative services to deliver savings in the medium term.
- *Independence* – reshaping our services for vulnerable residents to ensure that we promote independence and deliver first class care services.
- *Efficient and Effective Organisation* – challenging our ongoing service delivery and driving out further efficiencies through for example, a reduction in administration costs and reducing property costs linked to new ways of working, for example through agile working.

7.7 As work develops through the themes described in 7.6 above, this will be reported to Members as appropriate.

7.8 Greater clarity will be available on the level of savings required post the Provisional Local Government Settlement later in the year. The position will be reported to Members as soon as possible after the settlement publication.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no immediate equality and diversity implications to consider as an Equality Impact Assessment will be an integral part of the budget strategy itself that will be reported on later in the year.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 There are no specific consultation requirements at this time.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The financial modelling assumptions and implications are set out in the detail of the report. At this stage, the Council or Cabinet is not being asked to make any new financial decisions in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

12. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 12.1 The report supports our Corporate Plan cross-cutting priority of 'Living within our Means'.
- 12.2 The Medium Term Financial Plan is a key enabler for the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and its obligations to support wider partnership objectives.

13. CONCLUSIONS

- 13.1 This report and the accompanying 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 to 2022/23' sets out the current position on the financial challenges facing the Council in the medium term. The report notes, that subject to the level of funding from Welsh Government, a significant budget gap is likely to be faced in 2020/21 and for the following two years.
- 13.2 The report clearly states that the proactive strategy adopted in recent years through early identification of savings and the targeting of key areas such as procurement and new ways of working can still deliver significant efficiency savings.
- 13.3 The focus will switch to the 2020/21 budget strategy upon receipt of the Provisional Local Government Settlement. Given the actions already being worked through, any budget gaps will in the first instance be addressed through efficiency actions and process changes thereby protecting, as far as possible, our much valued frontline services.

Other information

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

18th July 2019

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20 TO 2022/23

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item:

Background Papers

- Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22 - <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Cabinet/2018/07/17/Reports/AgendaItem7MediumTermFinancialPlan.pdf>
- Quarterly Performance Reports during 2018/19 ([Quarter 1](#), [Quarter 2](#), and [Quarter 3](#)).

Officer to contact: Barrie Davies

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**Rhondda Cynon Taf
County Borough Council**

Medium Term Financial Plan

**2019/20 – 2022/23
(updated July 2019)**

Medium Term Financial Plan - Contents

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Medium Term Financial and Service Planning is an essential component of the effective financial management of this Council. It is the cornerstone of good governance and an enabler of service delivery and service improvement within the constraints of available resources.

This Medium Term Financial Plan sets out, holistically, the financial context within which the Council is operating and forward projects the financial challenge facing the Council over a 3 year planning period.

It will also align and link our financial resources to our Corporate Plan Priorities and will enable us to track resource allocation in this way over future years.

Section 1 Background and Context

- 1.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf has a track record of strong and effective financial management. Medium Term Financial Planning is an essential part of these arrangements.
- 1.2 The austerity measures emanating from the actions of Central Government continue to impact on the resources available to Welsh Government and consequently local government in Wales. At a national level, the overall local government settlement for Wales over the last 6 financial years is shown below in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Financial Year	All Wales Settlement
2014/15	-3.9%
2015/16	-3.5%
2016/17	-1.4%
2017/18	+0.2%
2018/19	+0.2%
2019/20	+0.2%

- 1.3 For Rhondda Cynon Taf the real term reductions in funding over many years has translated into a need to make budgetary savings in excess of £90M over the last 10 years, equating to a reduction of approximately 19% of the Council's net budget.
- 1.4 In February 2016, the Council agreed a new Corporate Plan for the period 2016-2020 and in November 2016 Cabinet adopted the Council's Corporate Plan priorities as its Well-being objectives in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Key information set out within the Council's Corporate Plan is reproduced in the following paragraphs.
- 1.5 The Corporate Plan 2016-2020 set the overall direction for the Council over the four year period, describing its vision, purpose and ambition for the County Borough.
- 1.6 The Council's vision is:

“For a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all”.

1.7 The Council's purpose and the reason why it exists is:

“To provide strong community leadership and effective services for the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf to enable them to fulfil their potential and prosper”.

1.8 The Council is focused on the following three priorities:

- 1. Economy - Building a strong economy;***
- 2. People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone; and***
- 3. Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work.***

1.9 The Corporate Plan is a key component of the Council's budgetary and business planning process. The Plan recognises that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the wider public sector continue to face significant financial challenges, even though macro-economic conditions have begun to improve. The improved position is not reflected in the wider public sector and the challenges for services and ultimately residents continues to be significant. The position was summarised in the Corporate Plan as follows:

- *Further spending cuts to come: Despite nearly £100 billion of spending cuts since 2010, the UK budget deficit still stands at around £90 billion meaning that austerity will continue.*
- *Increasing pressure on services: increasing demand on services is driven by a changing population. Rhondda Cynon Taf's population is relatively static but health and social services in particular are facing acute challenges due to the growth in older cohorts, as people live for longer.*
- *Wider financial pressure on households: from energy bills, housing costs, wage restraint, and benefit reforms.*
- *Increasing public expectations: with residents expecting better services and more prompt responses. This means that the Council must plan for the fact that spending reductions will affect all parts of the public sector to the end of the decade and that increasing levels of demand will not be met from simply doing more of what it is currently doing.*
- *The impact on the Council's finances – past and future: In Rhondda Cynon Taf, the impact of austerity has translated to the Council needing to save or generate £76m over the period 2011 – 2015, equivalent to 16% of the Council's budget. Looking ahead, based on assumptions about future public spending and rising demand, the Council is forecasting the need for further savings of over £60million in the latter half of the decade. In real terms, by the end of the decade, the council's total spending power will be nearly half of what it was at the start.*

1.10 During 2019/20 work will be undertaken to develop a new Corporate Plan for the period 2020 – 2025 to deliver the Council's future ambitions and taking into

account the challenging financial climate the Council will be operating within over this period.

- 1.11 Despite austerity, the economy is now growing, with the Cardiff Capital City Region one of the fastest growing areas outside of London. This creates opportunities for the Council; for residents; and for business. In Rhondda Cynon Taf the benefits are already being seen through an improving employment rate and reduced demand for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Despite the recession more new homes are being built in the County Borough and we are actively working with developers in areas such as Llanilid, Robertstown, Hirwaun and Tonyrefail to continue to support the provision of new homes and new jobs. Furthermore, the ten local authorities of South East Wales, Welsh Government and the UK Government have agreed plans for a £1.2 billion investment in boosting the local economy in the Cardiff Capital City Region that will benefit residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 1.12 The Council's agreed budget for 2019/20 amounts to £483.4M. Annex 1 sets out the Council budget for 2019/20 as allocated across services.
- 1.13 The budget has also been analysed across the 3 priority areas of Economy, People and Place as set out in the Corporate Plan (referenced in paragraph 1.8) in order to demonstrate the allocation of Council Revenue resources to these priority areas. Whilst some allocation has been necessarily subject to a degree of 'best fit', this is still felt to be a helpful analysis and provides a basis to track resource allocation over time. This is attached at Annex 2. A similar analysis is also included for the 3 year capital programme at Annex 3.

Section 2 Local Government Settlement – Prospects

- 2.1 As referenced in Section 1, local government as a whole has received negative settlements from Welsh Government in overall terms for 3 of the last 6 financial years and whilst the last 3 years have seen positive settlements, they are still at levels some way below inflation. For Rhondda Cynon Taf the level of settlements received, in comparison to the all Wales average, are shown below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Financial Year	RCT Settlement	All Wales Settlement
2014/15	-3.7%	-3.9%
2015/16	-3.7%	-3.5%
2016/17	-0.9%	-1.4%
2017/18	+0.4%	+0.2%
2018/19	+0.5%	+0.2%
2019/20	+0.8%	+0.2%

- 2.2 Welsh Government have not provided any definitive indication of future year financial settlements, leaving local government to themselves model potential scenarios. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) support local government in this regard.
- 2.3 Nationally, the outcome of the 2017 general election, Brexit and national government leadership changes, along with a forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review have increased the uncertainty over the future of austerity and likely funding scenarios.
- 2.4 The level of Welsh Government funding is a key factor in the Council’s overall resource availability, accounting for 76.5% of our budget. Each 1% change in the level of Welsh Government funding amounts to £3.6M of funding for this Council.
- 2.5 For planning purposes, this Council has developed a base case built upon planning assumptions as summarised in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: RCT Planning Assumptions – Welsh Government Settlement

Year	Potential Settlement
2020/21	0.0%
2021/22	0.0%
2022/23	0.0%

- 2.6 The provisional local government settlement for 2020/21 is anticipated to be received during the autumn (subject to any impact on timing as a result of the delay to the UK Central Government’s Comprehensive Spending Review).

Section 3 Council Tax

- 3.1 Council Tax income accounts for 23.2% of the Council's net budget, generating £111.9M from local taxpayers in 2019/2020.
- 3.2 The total yield from Council Tax is determined by a combination of the level of the tax base and the level at which Council Tax is set.
- 3.3 The Tax Base is the measure of the relative taxable capacity of different areas within the County Borough and is calculated in accordance with prescribed rules. The Gross Tax Base is the number of chargeable dwellings in the area expressed as Band D equivalents after allowing for exemptions, disablement reductions and discounts. This is then adjusted for an assumed collection rate to give the Net Tax Base.
- 3.4 The Tax Base is provided to Welsh Government and is used as part of the distribution formula for the Local Government Settlement. The Tax Base is calculated for the County Borough as a whole and for those areas that have a Community Council.
- 3.5 The Tax Base movement over recent years is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1

Year	Gross Tax Base (£)	Collection Rate	Net Tax Base (£)
2014/15	75,189	96.5%	72,557
2015/16	75,565	97.0%	73,298
2016/17	76,207	97.5%	74,302
2017/18	76,901	97.5%	74,978
2018/19	77,608	97.5%	75,668
2019/20	78,844	97.5%	76,873

- 3.6 The level of any increase or decrease of Council Tax is considered each year as part of the annual budget consultation processes, and subsequently determined by Council as part of the annual budget strategy. The formal resolution is also agreed by Council.
- 3.7 Council Tax levels over recent years are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Year	Band D Council Tax £	Increase over Previous Year
2014/15	£1,248.00	4.5%
2015/16	£1,295.48	3.8%
2016/17	£1,331.17	2.75%
2017/18	£1,361.18	2.25%
2018/19	£1,406.17	3.3%
2019/20	£1,456.85	3.6%

- 3.8 The total amount raised through Council Tax is derived by multiplying the net tax base by the band D Council Tax charge, which for 2019/20 amounts to (76,873 x £1,456.85) £111.9M.
- 3.9 For modelling purposes as part of this report, a Council Tax increase of 3% per annum is currently being used in our medium term calculations, noting of course that this is a key decision for Members to make as part of setting each year's budget. In terms of generating resources, a 1% increase in the level of Council Tax will raise an extra £843k¹ of additional income each year (this is net of the costs associated with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme described in more detail below).

Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)

- 3.10 During 2018/19 the Council paid CTRS to 24,866 eligible applicants at a cost of £22.938M. For 2019/20 the Council has estimated the cost to be £24.336M.

Tax Base

- 3.11 On 19th December 2017 Cabinet approved a policy which enabled the Council to reduce the Council Tax bill for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 who were resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf to zero. The policy has been operational during 2018/19.
- 3.12 During 2018/19 the Welsh Government introduced legislation, effective from 1st April 2019, making all properties in Wales that are occupied by Care Leavers (up to the age of 25) exempt from paying Council Tax. This will remove the requirement for the Council to have its own discretionary policy for this category of residents.
- 3.13 All awards of this new exemption type will be subsequently reflected in the Council Tax Base.

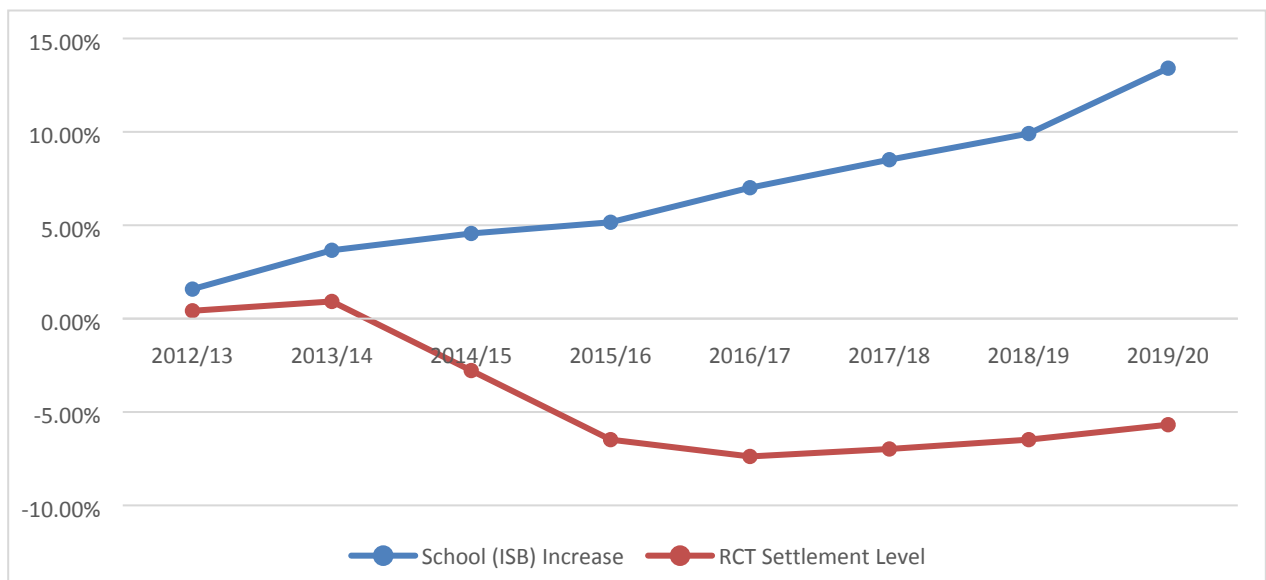
¹ Based on 2019/20 Council Tax Income

Section 4 Individual Schools Budget (ISB)

- 4.1 The total Individual Schools Budget (ISB) for the Council in 2019/20 amounts to £151.6M² and represents over 31% of the Council's net budget.
- 4.2 Since 2012/13, the ISB has increased at a level above other Council services and above the level of the Council's own settlement from Welsh Government. The ISB has been subject to protection requirements by Welsh Government over this period which ended in 2016/17. The comparative ISB increases over the last eight years are shown in Table 4.1 and graphically below:

Table 4.1

Year	School (ISB) Increase	RCT Settlement Level
2012/13	+1.58%	+0.42%
2013/14	+2.08%	+0.5%
2014/15	+0.9%	-3.7%
2015/16	+0.6%	-3.7%
2016/17	+1.85%	-0.9%
2017/18	+1.5%	+0.4%
2018/19	+1.4%	+0.5%
2019/20	+3.5%	+0.8%



² ISB – 2019/20 Base Budget of £151.6M representing an increase in core funding of £2.7M. In addition, £2.5M additional one-off funding directly passported to schools taking the total increase in funding allocated to £5.2M.

- 4.3 Over the 8 year period shown in Table 4.1, the ISB has received an increase amounting to 13.41%, as opposed to the Council's remaining budgets having been reduced by 5.68%. In monetary terms, applied to an ISB of £138M (2011/12 ISB) this amounts to an extra £26.3M being provided to schools over the period.
- 4.4 Pupil number forecasts are modelled across Primary, Secondary and Special Schools sectors with the financial implications included in the Schools Budget requirement.
- 4.5 The levels of school reserves held as at the 31st March 2019 are shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2

Type of School	31/03/18	2018/19 Movement	31/03/19
	£k	£k	£k
Primary	4,174	(470)	3,704
Secondary	(1,230)	(499)	(1,729)
Special	453	(115)	338
All Through Schools	0	694	694
Total	3,397	(390)	3,007

- 4.6 As part of providing sustainable levels of funding for schools over the medium term, it will be critical that the one-off resources received for 2019/20, via the Welsh Government, to fund on-going increases to Teachers' Pension costs and Teachers' pay pressure is made permanent and included in core (RSG) settlements from 2020/21 onwards. These two areas amount to in excess of £6M for Rhondda Cynon Taf and are also referenced in Sections 6 and 7.

Section 5 Fees and Charges

- 5.1 The Council raises approximately £18M of income annually from fees and charges raised across services. The level of charges is reviewed annually.
- 5.2 Cabinet reviewed (14th February 2019) fees and charges levels with the objective to continue to provide a comprehensive range of quality services at affordable prices. The initial budget modelling for 2019/20 had assumed a 2.2% increase.
- 5.3 The outcome of Cabinet's review was a 2.90% standard increase to fees and charges (allowing for rounding adjustments as appropriate) with the exception of a number of areas that would be subject to specific treatment. A summary of these exceptions are set out in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 – Summary of fees and charges not subject to the standard increase

Area of charge	Increase for 2019/20
Parking Charges	Nil increase
Summer and Winter Playing Fees (Sports Clubs)	Nil increase
Cinema (entrance fee)	Nil increase
School Meals (Primary and Secondary Schools)	Nil increase
Pontypridd Lido (entry for adult users)	Nil increase
Rhondda Heritage Park (Underground Experience entry fee)	Nil increase
Meals on Wheels	£0.15 per meal
Day Centre Meals	£0.15 per meal
Houses in Multiple Occupation - Licenses	Revised schedule of fees

- 5.4 Further information on the exceptions in Table 5.1, where appropriate, are set out below.

'Meals on Wheels' and 'Day Centre Meals'

- 5.4.1 The current meal price for both meals on wheels and day centre meals is £3.70, with the price of both to be increased to £3.85. In terms of comparing across Wales, current 2018/19 prices range between £3.30 and £5.36.

Houses in Multiple Occupation – Licenses

- 5.4.2 On the 21st November 2018, Cabinet approved a new Additional Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), to come into force on the 1st April 2019 and be operational for a five year period to 2024. This scheme replaced the 2014 Additional Licensing Scheme for HMOs and was declared using powers in the Housing Act 2004 and includes all types of HMO as defined by that legislation. In addition, the Act allows local authorities to recover the reasonable

costs incurred in administering the process for the determination of a licence application and to thereafter regulate the licensable HMO sector.

5.4.3 In line with the Act, a full review of the costs associated with HMO licensing was undertaken to ensure all reasonable costs incurred by the Council in implementing the HMO licensing scheme and its operation going forward are properly reflected in the fees charged. In addition, recent case law in relation to HMO licensing charges and fees associated with the provision of services by Councils was also duly considered as part of the review.

5.4.4 The outcome of the review was a revised fee structure that comprises a two part payment by applicants:

- Part 1 - will cover the reasonable cost of administering and determining the licence application; and
- Part 2 - payable upon grant of the licence, will cover the reasonable costs to the Council of ongoing regulation and enforcement.

5.4.5 The basis of the two part payment is set out in Table and was implemented from 1st April 2019.

Table 5.2 – Two part payment

	New HMO Application	Renewal (submission prior to expiry of current licence)
Part 1 – Application fee	£420	£400
Part 2 – Fee payable on grant of licence (based on price per unit of accommodation occupied by single household)	£170 (per household unit up to 12 units then £50 per unit thereafter)	£140 (per household unit up to 12 units then £35 per unit thereafter)

5.4.6 The revised fee structure has been calculated on the basis of cost recovery and represents an increase on previous licensing fees charged. The fee structure also includes reduced fees for certain applications to incentivise responsible, compliant landlords as follows:

- An early application for renewal of an existing HMO licence as this reflects the reduced administrative and enforcement burden associated with such applications; and

- Properties that are accredited by the Treforest Property Accreditation Scheme, and therefore achieve a higher standard than the legal minimum, are liable for a 10% reduction in the total cost of a licence (in addition to any reduced fee they may be eligible for through early renewal).

5.4.7 When the revised fee structure is compared to the latest published fees across Wales (i.e. for the 2018/19 financial year), it would be high compared with some others; however, it should be noted that not all local authorities undertake the on-going regulation and enforcement role and, as such, fee structures reflect this position.

5.5 The total estimated additional income that would be generated by the changes is £42k in a full year.

5.6 In addition to the information set out in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, a number of fees and charges decisions have previously been approved and accordingly have already been incorporated into the Council's 2019/20 Budget Strategy. These are summarised in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 – Summary of decisions already approved

Area of charge	Decision approved
Adult Social Care Charges (non-residential care services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously agreed that increases should be in line with Welsh Government's updated limits; Increase from £70 to £80 per week. (Cabinet 20th September 2018)
Burial Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As agreed by Cabinet 15/2/2018.
Leisure Centres and Swimming Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly and annual membership prices frozen until January 2020. (Cabinet 28th September 2017) • Pay and Play increased by 2.9% effective from 1st January 2019. (Delegated Decision 18th December 2018)
Fixed Penalty Notice (for environmental crimes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set at £100 with effect from 1st April 2018 (Cabinet 25th January 2018)

5.7 For completeness, a full list of all 2019/20 fees and charges across all Council services can be accessed [here](#).

Section 6 National and Local Pressures

6.0 Authority Wide Budgets

- 6.1 Appropriate sums must be set aside to cover a number of Authority Wide costs. These include the following:

Capital Financing

The projected level of capital charges are linked to the Council's Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy.

Levies

Levies are raised (against non-service specific budgets) by the South Wales Fire Service, the Coroner, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the Glamorgan Archives (Joint Committee).

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

This demand led area of expenditure is in line with the Welsh Government national scheme introduced from financial year 2013/14.

Miscellaneous

The areas of expenditure held here include:

- Carbon Reduction Commitment
- Graduate and Apprenticeship programmes
- Trade Union Costs
- Local Government Elections
- Planning Appeals
- Former Authority Pension Costs
- Voluntary Termination Costs
- Local Government Pension Scheme including auto-enrolment
- Bank Charges
- Housing Benefit Subsidy Costs
- Energy / Invest to Save
- External Audit Fees
- Vehicle Replacement Funding
- City Deal Costs
- Insurance Costs
- Discretionary Non Domestic Rate Relief
- Apprenticeship Levy

- 6.2 A summary of the projected requirement for Authority Wide budgets from the current year (2019/20 budget) to 2022/23 is shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1

Authority Wide Budgets	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	Current Budget	(Projected)	(Projected)	(Projected)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Financing	18,917	19,213	19,713	20,213
Levies	12,384	12,169	12,412	12,660
CTRS	24,336	25,066	25,818	26,593
Miscellaneous	12,215	14,263	14,780	14,732
TOTAL	67,852	70,711	72,723	74,198
		2,859	2,012	1,475

6.3 Service Inescapable Pressures

6.4 There are clearly areas of our budget which are exposed to more uncontrollable spending requirements which might arise from demand led or demographic changes, legislative or regulatory change, the effect of external market forces (and prices) and the financial implications of policy and service planning decisions made by the Council. These are **inescapable pressures** and include the ongoing implications of inflation and Living Wage on our External Contracts, the cost of increases to Teachers' Pension and Teachers' pay pressures, changes in pupil number projections, Additional Needs Funding pressures and assumptions around reductions in specific grants.

6.5 The amount included for Service Inescapable Pressures within the Budget Requirement is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2

Forecasted Inescapable Budget Pressures	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools (ISB)	8,498	938	500
Education and Inclusion Services	1,712	250	254
Community and Children's Services	4,549	1,907	1,907
Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services	568	424	411
Chief Executive's Division	385	77	141
Total	15,712	3,597	3,213

22,522

6.6 Service Financial Risks

- 6.7 In addition to the above inescapable budget pressures, there are items of risk which have been identified and which are captured and estimated in financial terms. A view is then taken on the potential overall likelihood of the risk materialising and the quantum of it which should be included in the early modelling of the budget requirement. As time progresses the risks will either become inescapable or will fall away, possibly with a longer term impact.
- 6.8 The amount included for Service Financial Risks within the Budget Requirement is shown below in Table 6.3:

Table 6.3

Financial Risks	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Value of Risk included	0	3,709	3,084

6.9 School (ISB) Requirements

- 6.10 Section 4 set out the context for school budgets noting their favourable treatment as compared to other Council services. Notwithstanding this favourable treatment, there is still an expectation that they will make a positive contribution toward balancing the overall Council budget. Consequently, an uplift to school budgets of £1.5M per year has been included for modelling purposes (in addition to passported funding of pay and pension funding), which is set within the context of current planning assumptions for Welsh Government settlement levels. The ISB budget increases are set out in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4

Schools (ISB) Modelled Budget	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Modelled Budget	159,222	160,722	162,222
Modelled Increase **	7,616	1,500	1,500

** Modelled Increase includes passported continuation of Pay and Pension Funding plus an uplift of £1.5M.

Section 7 Inflationary Pressures

7.1 Employee Inflation

7.2 For all categories of employees, including teachers, a 2% allowance is included for each year from 2020/21 to 2022/23. There are currently no known changes planned to employer National Insurance Contributions.

7.3 The Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund triennial valuation (2019) is currently underway, the results of which will be taken into account as part of future and ongoing modelling. In addition, as referenced in Sections 4 and 6, the outcome of Central Government's 4 yearly actuarial valuation of national un-funded pension schemes was concluded in 2019 and resulted in significantly higher costs effective from 2019/20 (due to increases in contribution rates for the Teachers' Pension Scheme plus Firefighters). The Council's Medium Financial Plan has included this cost as an inescapable budget pressure from 2020/21 onwards and is working on the basis that additional core funding will be made available to meet this additional cost.

7.4 Non Employee Inflation

7.5 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee continues to set monetary policy to meet a 2% inflation target. For the MTFP, inflation is included across all expenditure and income heads currently at 1.7%, 2.1% and 2.2% for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively. A number of specific cost areas where inflation is known or anticipated to be above these rates have more appropriate inflationary allowances applied as detailed below.

7.6 Specific Inflation

7.7 There are some budget heads which are particularly volatile and susceptible to variations in rates of inflation which are outliers to the central forecasts. More detailed analysis and procurement intelligence is applied to uplifts for the following expenditure heads:

- Electricity
- Gas
- Fuel (Petrol)
- Food

7.8 The overall cost of inflation to the Council is summarised in Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1

Inflation	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employee Related	5,873	5,991	6,112
Non-Employee Related	3,586	4,110	4,304
	9,459	10,101	10,416
			29,976

Section 8 Specific Grants

- 8.1 The Council is mindful of the opportunities that are likely to accrue by the Council attracting specific grants to supplement its base revenue budget. Whilst specific grants can dilute local accountability, the fact remains that in attracting such funding, it allows us to undertake projects that otherwise we may have had to defer or cancel.
- 8.2 By their nature, specific grants tend to be time-limited and involve an assessment process. It is important therefore, that any specific grant funded programme complements the Council's locally determined priorities. In addition, even if they are initially successful in attracting specific grants, authorities are restricted in their ability to confidently forward plan, as they have no guarantee of ongoing (specific grant) funding. Consequently, because specific grants are time limited it is vital to develop appropriate "exit strategies".
- 8.3 Whilst specific grants come from a number of sources, for 2019/20 the Welsh Government alone will provide over £750M in total to Welsh Local Authorities. The allocation of specific grants remains a key feature of the Welsh Government's annual local government settlements, albeit the Welsh Government is committed to reduce this form of hypothecation in the longer term.
- 8.4 Table 8.1 sets out the main areas of expenditure and services which are funded currently by specific revenue grants.

Table 8.1

Award Body	Purpose	2018/19 Amount £M	2019/20 Amount £M
<u>Community & Children Services</u>			
Shaw Trust & Working Links	Subsidisation of Employment of Disabled Workers	0.314	0.293
Department for Work & Pensions	Housing Benefit Subsidy Bed & Breakfast Scheme	0.100	0.122
Welsh Government	Communities First – Legacy Fund	0.916	0.000
	Children's and Community Grant	0.000	22.318
	Communities 4 Work	1.083	1.093
	Communities 4 Work PLUS	1.714	0.000
	Inspire 2 Work	0.414	0.344
	Families First	2.924	0.000
	Flying Start	6.745	0.000
	School Effectiveness Grant - Play	0.073	0.073

Award Body	Purpose	2018/19 Amount £M	2019/20 Amount £M
	Social Care Workforce Development Programme	0.556	0.570
	Supporting People Grant	9.056	0.000
	Youth Crime Prevention Grant	0.426	0.000
	Substance Misuse Action Fund	2.646	2.971
	Wales Safer Communities Grant	0.067	0.000
	General Practitioner (GP) Referral Scheme	0.185	0.168
	Intermediate Care Fund (Via LHB)	2.118	2.102
	Environmental & Sustainable Development Single Revenue Grant	0.036	0.036
	Community Learning	0.201	0.201
	Youth Support Grant	0.239	0.239
	Child Burial Grant	0.000	0.048
	European Social Fund (ESF) Ignite/Platform 1	0.000	0.141
Youth Justice Board	Youth Justice Provision	0.400	0.304
Police Crime Commissioner	Police and Crime Reduction	0.101	0.197
Sports Council for Wales	Grand/Big Splash	0.278	0.306
	Dragon Sports Scheme	0.098	0.040
	Sports Development	0.583	0.549
	ACW Revenue Grant	0.000	0.150
Total Community & Children's Services		31.273	32.265
<u>Education & Inclusion Services</u>			
Welsh Government	Post-16 Provision in Schools	9.611	9.337
	Education Improvement Grant (EIG) Delegated to Schools	8.884	0.000
	Education Improvement Grant (EIG) Admin	0.018	0.000
	Education Improvement Grant (EIG) Foundation Phase Non Maintained	0.110	0.000
	Pupil Deprivation Grant	7.421	0.000
	Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant - Education Improvement Grant	0.000	8.949
	Pupil Development Grant Delegated to Schools (estimate)	0.000	7.425

Award Body	Purpose	2018/19 Amount £M	2019/20 Amount £M
	Pupil Development Grant Children Looked After (estimate)	0.000	0.367
	Local Authority Education Grant – Minority Ethnic & Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Learners	0.000	0.243
	Local Authority Education Grant – Pupil Development Grant Access (estimate)	0.000	0.173
	Local Authority Education Grant – Support for Pressures Arising from Teachers Pay Award (estimate)	0.000	0.621
	Early Years Pupil Development Grant (estimate)	1.026	1.056
	Seren Network	0.000	0.090
	Nursery Childcare Administration	0.083	0.000
	Nursery Childcare (estimate)	0.380	2.089
	Additional Learning Needs Transformation Grant (estimate)	0.182	0.163
	Period Poverty Grant	0.018	0.000
	Period Products Grant	0.000	0.186
	Reduction in Infant Class Sizes Grant	0.282	0.390
	Music Grant	0.000	0.111
	Out of School Childcare Grant	0.165	0.165
	Small and Rural Schools	0.134	0.000
	Schools Business Manager Grant	0.028	0.053
	Schools Based Supply Cluster Grant	0.072	0.028
Rural Payments Agency	Infant Milk (Estimate)	0.450	0.465
	Total Education & Inclusion Services	28.864	31.911
	<u>Chief Executives</u>		
Arts Council of Wales	Arts Development	0.150	0.000
Department for Work & Pensions	Housing Benefit Administration Subsidy	0.876	0.788
Welsh Government	NDR Admin Grant	0.372	0.394
	Total Chief Executives	1.398	1.182

Award Body	Purpose	2018/19 Amount £M	2019/20 Amount £M
<u>Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services</u>			
Welsh Government	Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing Grant	0.000	0.034
	Environment & Sustainable Development	0.034	0.000
	Sustainable Waste Management Grant	1.245	1.158
	Lead Local Flood Authority Grant	0.065	0.065
	Concessionary Fares	6.789	6.789
	Road Safety	0.114	0.125
	Bus Service Support	0.665	0.665
	Tomorrow's Valley Residual Waste	1.189	1.189
	Tomorrow's Valley Food Waste	0.064	0.064
Total Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services		10.165	10.089
TOTAL SPECIFIC REVENUE GRANTS		71.700	75.447

- 8.5 Assumptions are made in the MTFP about future levels of specific grants, in particular where they are effectively funding core services, for example, the Sustainable Waste Management Grant which provides funding for our Recycling services.

Section 9 Summary Spend Requirements and Resource Availability

9.1 The impact of the aforementioned modelling, including schools, is aggregated into Table 9.1 below to show the forecast budget position over the next 3 years. The modelling shows a projected budget gap over the 3 year period which needs to be addressed and closed with actions during the period. Whilst modelled over a three year period, the Council must also be mindful of its legal responsibility to set a balanced budget annually and for the forthcoming financial year this has to be completed before the 11th March 2020.

Table 9.1

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Budget Requirement	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base	483,469	491,872	495,943
Inflation	9,459	10,101	10,416
Inescapables & Budget Risk *	11,676	4,561	3,889
Authority Wide	2,859	2,012	1,475
Budget Requirement	507,463	508,546	511,722
Resources			
WG Funding (RSG & NDR)	367,339	367,339	367,339
Council Tax	115,817	119,888	124,102
<i>Teachers Pension Funding **</i>	5,516	5,516	5,516
<i>Teachers Pay Funding **</i>	600	600	600
<i>Social Care Funding **</i>	2,600	2,600	2,600
Total Resources	491,872	495,943	500,157
Budget Gap	15,591	12,603	11,565
			39,759

* Inescapables & Budget Risk – includes schools modelled budget increase.

** Funding assumed as continuing / mainstreamed.

- 9.2 Clearly a significant determinant on the budget gap is the level of funding which the Council receives from Welsh Government. To understand the potential impact of changes in the level of funding, Table 9.2 sets out a range of potential settlement levels and the resultant budget gap.

Table 9.2

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base Case - 0%	15,591	12,603	11,565
Budget Gap At +1%	11,918	8,930	7,891
Budget Gap At -1%	19,265	16,276	15,238
Budget Gap at 0% without Continuation of One Off Funding	24,307	12,603	11,565

Section 10 Reserves Policy

- 10.1 Reserves play an important part of the overall financial management and financial standing of the Council. In this regard the Council holds a minimum of £10M in its General Reserves (that is, unallocated reserves). This level is not set by any formula but is a judgment of the Council's Section 151 Officer taking into account the overall quantum of the budget and the financial risks therein and facing the Council.
- 10.2 The Council also holds Earmarked Reserves which are sums set aside for specific purposes. The full schedule of reserves is attached at Annex 3 (as at the draft Statement of Accounts 2018/19).
- 10.3 All reserves are reviewed at least twice yearly, at budget setting stage and as part of the year end closure of accounts process. In between, changes in risk and potential liabilities are continuously monitored as part of the Council's financial management and budgetary control arrangements and changes in reserve levels are actioned, following member approval, as appropriate.
- 10.4 The Council has used reserves prudently as part of supporting its annual budget strategy for a number of years. Whilst reserves can be used to balance the budget, this alone is not a sustainable strategy and more permanent changes / reductions to the base budget must be made. With regard to the budget gap as modelled in Section 9, to balance the budget for the next 3 years using reserves alone would require the use of over £83M of reserves and the Council would still have a need to reduce its base budget by over £39M.
- 10.5 The Council holds reserves for the following purposes:

Capital, Treasury and Insurance Reserves

Reserve	Purpose
Capital Developments	Resources set-aside from revenue budget, earmarked to fund the Council's approved 3-year capital programme.
Treasury Management Reserve	Funding for known and potential future pressures upon the Capital Financing budget.
Insurance Reserve	To provide for estimated costs of incidents that have occurred during the policy year but have not yet resulted in a claim being received.

Other Revenue Related Reserves

Reserve	Purpose
Revenue Budget Strategy 2019/20	Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation Reserve (transitional funding) to be released to fund the 2019/20 Budget Strategy.
Joint Committee Reserve	Reflects the Council's share of General and Earmarked Reserves of the Joint Committees in which it has an interest.
Revenue Grant Reserves (IFRS)	Carry forward of Revenue Grants not yet applied to spend – required accounting treatment to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards.
Financial Management and Human Resources Risk Management	Resources set aside as cover for future liabilities relating to various risks identified and being managed.
Infrastructure / Investment	To fund current and future costs of maintaining and enhancing infrastructure across the County Borough.
Prior Year Commitments	Carry forward of existing funding to finance projects for which commitments have already been made in the prior year.
Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation	Resources set aside as transitional (one-off) funding to support the Council's medium-term financial and service planning requirements.
Invest to Save	Funding identified (pump priming) to support Invest to Save opportunities as and when they arise.
Other Specific Reserves	Represents a number of reserves held for specific and identified purposes.

Section 11 Balancing the Budget

- 11.1 Whilst the budget setting process is necessarily and statutorily an annual process, this Council has for a number of years moved away from the annual cycle for financial planning purposes and seeks to address the budget gap on an ongoing basis over the medium term period.
- 11.2 Part of this process is the early identification and delivery of base budget reducing measures in-year and therefore before the start of a financial year. This has enabled the Council to deliver financial savings early and to replenish our Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation Reserve which we have used proactively as part of our budget strategy approach for a number of years.
- 11.3 In line with the above, plans are already advanced across a number of areas to balance the projected budget gap for 2020/21 and the medium term. Table 11.1 summarises the current position (based on the modelled budget gap set out in Table 9.1):

Table 11.1

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Budget Gap Annual	15,591	12,603	11,565
Budget Reduction Measures			
Materials Recycling Facility (part year saving)	- 642		
Office Accommodation (part year saving)	- 39		
Day Centres	- 204		
Social Care - Non-Residential Care charges	- 314		
Remaining Budget Gap	14,392		
Efficiency Target	- 6,000		
Remaining Budget Gap	8,392	12,603	11,565

11.4 To close the remaining budget gap as shown above, particularly in respect of 2020/21, additional measures are currently under review, including:

- a. Council agreed in December 2015 to voluntarily terminate our PFI arrangement at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. The contract formally terminated in January 2017. The final financial implications of the termination process are still being negotiated with the former contractor and can be taken into account once the process has been concluded which is anticipated during 2019/20.
- b. Our Social Services Transformation Programme, including our significant commitment and investment in the provision of Extra Care facilities, continues to be implemented and work is underway to review residential care home and day care provision (including a public consultation exercise). The financial impact of our ongoing preventative strategy will continue to be modelled alongside the increases in demand for services linked to demographic changes.
- c. Over the last 3 financial years we have continued to see a reduction in demand for Council Tax Reduction Scheme support which has resulted in underspends in this area. We have already reduced this budget for 2019/20 but we will closely monitor demand as we progress through this financial year with a view to reflecting this into next year's budget.
- d. We will continue to review our base budget requirements at both a service level and an authority wide level, with ongoing modelling around key service pressures including inflationary requirements, contractual arrangements and capital charges.
- e. We will ensure that we continue to maximise opportunities to invest for the long term, benefiting residents and reducing our core ongoing spend requirements in doing so. We will continue to collaborate and work with others where it is for the benefit of Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- f. We have identified a number of workstreams to focus and prioritise our efforts over the medium term to identify and deliver the transformational requirements across all our services. These are:
 - Digitalisation;
 - Commercialism;
 - Early Intervention and Prevention;
 - Independence; and
 - Efficient and Effective Organisation.

11.5 For modelling / sensitivity purposes, the remaining budget gap is restated at alternative planning scenarios and is shown in Table 11.2. It should be noted the remaining budget gap for 2020/21 is AFTER the delivery of £6M of targeted efficiencies across services, which in itself is becoming ever more challenging. However we remain focussed and committed to becoming an increasingly efficient organisation where frontline services are protected as far as possible.

Table 11.2

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base Case - 0%	8,392	12,603	11,565
Remaining Budget Gap At +1%	4,719	8,930	7,891
Remaining Budget Gap At -1%	12,066	16,276	15,238
Remaining Budget Gap at 0% without Continuation of One Off Funding	17,108	12,603	11,565

Section 12 Capital Programme

- 12.1 The Council's 3 year capital programme, 2019/20 to 2021/22 was agreed by Council on the 6th March 2019.
- 12.2 The three year Capital Programme is a key component of the overall Medium Term Financial Planning and Resources Strategy for this Council. Targeted capital investment can make a significant impact on service delivery and used effectively, is able to underpin the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities, where relevant.
- 12.3 The three year programme amounted to £173M and includes further additional investment of £6.740M in priorities aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 12.4 The rolling 3 year programme is reviewed and determined annually (in March of each year) and provides service managers with the opportunity to plan investment in our infrastructure and assets over the medium term.
- 12.5 A summary of the current 3 year programme is provided in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1 : THREE YEAR SUMMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

GROUP	BUDGET		
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£M	£M	£M
Community & Children's Services			
Adult & Children's Services	3.667	2.250	1.650
Public Health, Protection & Community Services	4.441	0.570	0.570
Education & Inclusion Services			
Schools	19.313	0.389	0.146
Supplementary Capital Programme	6.886	4.900	4.900
Chief Executive's Division			
Finance & Digital Services	0.707	0.700	0.700
Corporate Estates	1.921	1.050	1.050
Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services			
Planning & Regeneration	36.333	4.429	0.740
Private Sector Housing	7.912	6.268	5.368
Highways Technical Services	15.032	7.084	5.835
Strategic Projects	10.934	1.825	0.325
Waste Strategy	5.620	0.247	0.000
Fleet	5.824	1.743	1.573
Buildings	0.100	0.100	0.100
TOTAL CAPITAL BUDGET	118.690	31.555	22.957

Section 13 Consultation and Scrutiny

- 13.1 Following consideration of this MTFP by Cabinet, it is proposed that this document and the planning assumptions be made available to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee, as part of the consultation on the draft 2020/21 budget strategy.
- 13.2 The MTFP will be used as a basis of planning for our 2020/21 budget strategy consultation processes, updated as appropriate to reflect the implications of the provisional local government settlement which is due to be received in autumn 2019.

Section 14 Other Relevant Documents

Below are links to other documents which are relevant to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Budget Book

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Performancebudgetsandspending/Councilbudgets.aspx>

Statement of Accounts

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Performancebudgetsandspending/StatementofAccounts.aspx>

Capital Strategy Report incorporating Prudential Indicators

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Council/2019/03/27/Reports/Item7201920CapitalStrategyReportIncorporatingPrudentialIndicators.pdf>

Treasury Management Strategy incorporating Investment Strategy, Treasury Management Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Council/2019/03/27/Reports/item6TreasuryManagementStrategyIncorporatingInvestmentStrategyTreasuryManagementIndicatorsAndMinimumRevenueProvisionMRPStatementFor20192020.pdf>

Council Performance Report, Quarter 3 2018/19

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Cabinet/2019/03/19/Reports/Item8CouncilPerformanceReport31stDecember2018Quarter3.pdf>

Corporate Plan (2016-2020)

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/PerformanceBudgetsandSpending/Councilperformance/RelatedDocuments/CorporatePlan201620/CorporatePlan201620.pdf>

Council 3 Year Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Council/2019/03/06/Reports/Item10CapitalProgramme.pdf>

COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET - BY SERVICES PROVIDED

2018/19 Budget		2019/20 Budget
£M		£M
	<u>Community & Children's Services</u>	
80.303	Adult Services	86.802
47.680	Children's Services	47.644
3.083	Transformation	3.228
16.026	Public Health, Protection & Community Services	15.824
147.092		153.498
	<u>Education & Inclusion Services</u>	
26.712	Education & Inclusion Services (Non Delegated)	27.892
148.819	Delegated Schools	151.606
175.531		179.498
	<u>Chief Executive's Division</u>	
0.399	Chief Executive	0.395
2.852	Democratic Services & Communications	2.859
6.654	Human Resources	7.047
1.644	Legal Services	1.622
9.536	Finance & Digital Services	10.660
3.910	Corporate Estates	3.229
24.995		25.812
	<u>Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services</u>	
2.989	Prosperity & Development Services	2.912
51.971	Frontline Services	53.897
54.960		56.809
402.578	Total Group Budgets	415.617
	<u>Authority Wide Budgets</u>	
19.947	Capital Financing	18.917
11.790	Levies	12.384
13.105	Miscellaneous	11.815
0.400	NDR Relief	0.400
23.780	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	24.336
69.022	Total Authority Wide Budgets	67.852
471.600	TOTAL REVENUE BUDGET	483.469

ANNEX 2

COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET - BY PRIORITY AREA		
Budget 2018/19	Priority Area	Budget 2019/20
£'000		£'000
	<u>PEOPLE</u>	
46,809	Children's Services	47,123
83,577	Adult Services	91,076
130,386		138,200
	<u>PLACE</u>	
11,206	Parks / Leisure (including physical participation) / Libraries / Heritage Sites	11,255
315	Anti-Social Behaviour / Domestic Violence / Substance Misuse	457
745	Crime Reduction (inc hate crime)	654
3,887	Highway cleanliness	4,188
17,330	Waste / Recycling	18,384
9,260	Highways Infrastructure / Road maintenance / condition	9,294
1,052	Homelessness prevention	1,030
43,794		45,261
	<u>ECONOMY</u>	
26,161	Economically active people / Job Seekers Allowance Claimants / Job Creation / Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	26,708
188,544	School Attainment	191,126
438	Business start ups / closures	438
584	Town Centre	583
400	Town Centre Vacancy Rates (businesses)	400
147	Housing / affordable housing delivered	24
216,273		219,280
	<u>LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS</u>	
1,530	Customer Care	1,548
5,781	Office Accommodation/Buildings	5,281
7,311		6,829
397,764	TOTAL SPEND ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES	409,570
4,751	REGULATORY PUBLIC SERVICES	5,543
2,291	OTHER SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC	2,234
45,395	AUTHORITY WIDE COSTS	43,116
21,399	CORE SUPPORT	23,006
471,600	TOTAL COUNCIL BUDGET	483,469

COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME - BY PRIORITY AREA

Priority/Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2019 - 2022			
	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Total 3 Year Budget
	£M	£M	£M	£M
People				
Adult Services	9.104	7.712	6.738	23.554
Children's Services	0.323	0.313	0.322	0.958
Total - People	9.427	8.025	7.060	24.512
Place				
Parks, Leisure, Libraries, Culture & Heritage, Open Spaces	5.003	0.400	0.463	5.866
Crime Reduction	0.121	0.075	0.075	0.271
Highways Cleanliness	0.461	0.194	0.075	0.730
Highways Infrastructure	25.648	9.204	6.824	41.676
Waste Strategy	9.306	0.879	0.605	10.790
Total - Place	40.539	10.752	8.042	59.333
Economy				
School Attainment	26.254	5.363	5.046	36.663
Business Support	8.746	0.250	0.250	9.246
Town Centres	27.587	4.179	0.490	32.256
Housing	2.709	0.900	-	3.609
Total - Economy	65.296	10.692	5.786	81.774
Living Within Our Means				
Management and rationalisation of service accommodation	2.055	1.160	1.140	4.355
Customer Care	0.031	0.030	-	0.061
Total - Living Within Our Means	2.086	1.190	1.140	4.416
Total Capital Budget Allocated to Council Priorities	117.348	30.659	22.028	170.035
Regulatory Public Services	0.582	0.164	0.149	0.895
Authority Wide Costs	0.053	0.032	0.080	0.165
Core ICT Systems Support	0.707	0.700	0.700	2.107
Total Capital Budget	118.690	31.555	22.957	173.202

ANNEX 4

COUNCIL EARMARKED RESERVES

Capital, Treasury and Insurance Reserves					
Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31/03/18	Transfers Out	Transfers In	Balance at 31/03/19
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Developments	Resources set-aside from revenue budget, earmarked to fund the Council's approved 3-year capital programme.	53,700	(28,607)	27,562	52,655
Treasury Management Reserve	Funding for known and potential future pressures upon the Capital Financing budget.	2,465	0	0	2,465
Insurance Reserve	To provide for estimated costs of incidents that have occurred during the policy year but have not yet resulted in a claim being received.	8,931	(1,000)	656	8,587
Total		65,096	(29,607)	28,218	63,707
Other Revenue Related Reserves					
Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31/03/18	Transfers Out	Transfers In	Balance at 31/03/19
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Budget Strategy 2018/19	Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation (transitional funding) to be released to fund the 2018/19 budget.	1,022	(1,022)	0	0
Revenue Budget Strategy 2019/20	Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation (transitional funding) to be released to fund the 2019/20 budget.	0	0	1,537	1,537
Joint Committee Reserve	Reflects the Council's share of General and Earmarked Reserves of the Joint Committees in which it has an interest.	123	0	638	761
Revenue Grant Reserves (IFRS)	Carry forward of Revenue Grants not yet applied to spend - required accounting treatment to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards.	3,021	(3,021)	3,856	3,856
Financial Management and Human Resources Risk Management	Resources set aside as cover for future liabilities relating to various risks identified and being managed.	29,766	(26,792)	10,662	13,636
Investment / Infrastructure	To fund current and future costs of maintaining and enhancing infrastructure across the County Borough	6,855	(6,855)	6,534	6,534
Prior Year Commitments	Carry forward of existing funding to finance projects for which commitments have already been made in the prior year.	11,957	(9,256)	3,187	5,888
Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation	Resources set aside as transitional (one-off) funding to support the Council's medium-term financial and service planning requirements.	4,665	(1,537)	175	3,303
Other Specific Reserves	Represents a number of reserves held for specific and identified purposes.	3,692	(900)	504	3,296
Invest to Save	Funding identified (pump priming) to support Invest to Save opportunities as and when they arise.	3,056	0	0	3,056
Total		64,157	(49,383)	27,093	41,867
Total Earmarked Reserves		129,253	(78,990)	55,311	105,574

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th July 2019

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2019 (Quarter 4)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)

AUTHOR: Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services (01443) 680609

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, for the financial year ended 31st March 2019.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

Revenue

2.1 Note and agree the General Fund revenue position of the Council as at the 31st March 2019 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) that incorporates the additional one-off Welsh Government funding to support sustainable social services.

Capital

2.2 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at 31st March 2019 (Sections 3a – f of the Executive Summary).

2.3 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31st March 2019 (Section 3g of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

- 2.4 Note the year-end position regarding progress made against the agreed Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – d of the Executive Summary), Other National Measures (Section 5e of the Executive Summary) and comparison of 2018/19 targets set against prior year and 'All Wales Average' performance information (Section 5f of the Executive Summary).

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To agree the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st March 2019, in line with the requirements set out in its Constitution, and in doing so enable elected Members and other stakeholders to scrutinise the performance of the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides Members with a year-end statement of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 2019.
- 4.2 The aim of the report is to bring together the Council's performance into an Executive Summary and make available more detailed information to the reader through electronic links. Information contained in the Executive Summary includes financial data and progress against our Corporate Plan priorities, and exceptions are highlighted within the detailed sections to ensure that elected Members and other readers are able to quickly identify the key issues.
- 4.3 Table 1 below summarises the performance measures within each Corporate Plan priority area as well as the cross-cutting priority of 'Living Within Our Means'.

Table 1 – Summary of Corporate Plan performance measures

Priority Area	No. of Measures in Priority	No. of measures reported / with a target			
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 4	Quarter 4
Economy	48	8 / 6	23 / 17	30 / 23	48 / 39 ¹
People	20	13 / 11	12 / 10	20 / 16	20 / 16
Place	17	9 / 6	9 / 6	11 / 8	17 / 15
Living Within Our Means	8	6 / 6	6 / 6	7 / 6	8 / 7
Total	93	36 / 29	50 / 39	68 / 53	93 / 77

4.4 In addition to the measures in Table 1, there are a number of national measures that do not form part of the Council's Corporate Plan. These are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Other National Measures

Other National Indicators	No. of Measures	No. of measures reported / with a target			
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 4	Quarter 4
	19	4 / 4	6 / 6	8 / 8	18 ² / 15

5.0 YEAR-END REPORT

5.1 The year-end report is attached and comprises:

- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council at year-end;
- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – d setting out the detailed year-end financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted;
- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – f setting out year-end capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3g covering Prudential Indicators;

¹ The Quarter 3 Performance Report anticipated that the Economy Corporate Plan priority in quarter 4 would report 48 performance indicators / 43 of which would be reported with a target. This position has been revised to 48 / 39 due to 4 performance indicators being reported for 'information only' as a result of changes to the scale of specific projects to that originally anticipated (i.e. LCAP020 and 021 (economical inactivity related performance indicators) and LCAP022 and 023 (young people not in education, employment or training related performance indicators)).

² Other National Indicators – 19 national measures in place and a total of 18 reported at year-end. One measure not being reported (i.e. the number of working day/shifts per fulltime equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence) due to insufficient assurance that the Council's information fully complies with the national definition. The Council has therefore developed a local measure for this area the results of which are included within the Executive Summary.

- **Organisational Health** – includes year-end information on turnover, sickness absence, organisational health related investment areas and Council strategic risks; and
- **Corporate Plan / Other National Measures** – includes:
 - Three action plans (sections 5a – c) setting out year-end performance and progress against measures and actions across each of the three Corporate Plan priorities. An electronic link has been included within the Executive Summary setting out those performance measures ‘Not on Target’ i.e. noted as ‘Red’ performance measures.
 - Performance measures in respect of the ‘Living Within Our Means’ cross-cutting priority (Section 5d).
 - Other National Measures (Section 5e).
 - Target setting (Section 5f).

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council’s Performance Report provides an update on financial and operational performance in line with its Constitution, statutory duties and locally determined arrangements that have previously been formally approved, where required. As a result, no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed required for the purposes of this report.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Following consideration by Cabinet, this Report will be presented to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee for review, challenge and where deemed required, the scrutiny of specific areas in more detail.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

10.0 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 10.1 The operational performance information included within this report has been aligned to the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan and demonstrates the progress Council services are making toward the delivery of these priorities. These priorities were adopted as the Council's Well-being Objectives at a meeting of Cabinet on [2 November 2016](#), alongside the Council's Policy statement, which set out how the Council would respond to and apply its legal duties in respect of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 10.2 The Sustainable Development principles (i.e. the 5 Ways of Working) were considered as part of the development of the action plans supporting each of the Council's priorities of Economy, People and Place. These were presented to Council on [25th July 2018](#) as part of the Council's Corporate Performance Report.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council at year-end, that is, 31st March 2019.
- 11.2 The year-end revenue budget performance of £0.222M overspend represents an improved position compared to the projections reported at quarters 2 and 3 during the year. Members will note that the position incorporates significant budget pressures, particularly in respect of adult social care, and accompanying one-off Welsh Government funding to partly off-set the additional costs in this area. It will be critically important that such funding continues into 2019/20 and beyond to help enable the Council to meet permanent increases in the cost and demand for adult social care.
- 11.3 Capital investment in infrastructure during the year was significant, at £121M, and is making visible improvements across the County Borough.
- 11.4 Progress around the delivery of Corporate Plan priorities was generally positive during the year, within the context of real term reductions in funding, and the year-end report provides a balanced picture of performance for the 2018/19 financial year.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: Paul Griffiths

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

18th July 2019

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2019 (Year-End)

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item:

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 4 2018/19
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Contents

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 2a Education and Inclusion Services;
- 2b Community and Children’s Services;
- 2c Corporate and Frontline Services;
- 2c Chief Executive’s Division; and
- 2d Authority Wide Budgets.

Earmark reserve update – Section 2e provides a breakdown of expenditure against service areas.

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital programme budget – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 3a Chief Executive;
- 3b Corporate and Frontline Services;
- 3c Corporate Initiatives;
- 3d Education and Inclusion Services;
- 3e Community and Children’s Services; and
- 3f Capital Programme Funding.

Prudential Indicators – a detailed breakdown is included in Section 3g.

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- Turnover;
- Sickness Absence;
- Organisation Health related investment areas; and
- Council Strategic Risks.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER NATIONAL MEASURES

Corporate Plan progress updates – Quarter 4 position statements are included in the following sections:

- 5a – Economy;
- 5b – People;
- 5c – Place;
- 5d - Living Within Our Means;
- Overall summary of Corporate Plan performance indicators;
- 5e – Other National Measures; and
- 5f – Target Setting.

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Executive Summary aims to bring together and summarise the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st March 2019.

Throughout the Summary electronic links have been included that enable the reader to access more detailed information, as required.

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance

Service Area	2018/19 – as at 31st March 2019		
	Full Year Budget £M	Full Year Expenditure £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	175.531	175.454	(0.077)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	149.494	150.946	1.452
Corporate and Frontline Services (2c)	63.795	63.886	0.091
Chief Executive's Division (2c)	12.530	12.539	0.009
Sub Total	401.350	402.827	1.475
Authority Wide Budgets (2d)	70.250	70.137	(0.113)
Sub Total	471.600	472.962	1.362
Supporting Sustainable Social Services Grant*			(1.140)
Grand Total	471.600	472.962	0.222

* - Additional £14M one-off funding for 2018/19 announced by Welsh Government on [20th November 2018](#) to support social care pressures across Wales.

Key Revenue Budget variances at year-end

- **Education and Inclusion Services**

21st CENTURY SCHOOLS

- School Planning and Reorganisation (£0.057M underspend); and
- Catering (£0.084M overspend).

- **Community and Children's Services**

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.872M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.117M overspend);
- Provider Services (£0.481M overspend);

- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.391M overspend); and
- Fairer Charging (£0.299M overspend).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£0.126M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.195M underspend);
- Cwm Taff Youth Offending Service (£0.144M underspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.784M underspend); and
- Management and Support Services (£0.050M underspend)

TRANSFORMATION

- Regional Training Unit (£0.094M underspend);
- Group & Transformation Management (£0.116M underspend);
- Service Improvement (£0.112M overspend); and
- Purchasing and Commissioning (£0.059M overspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Public Protection (£0.137M underspend);
- Leisure, Parks and Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.581M overspend); and
- Community Housing Services (£0.054M overspend).

- Corporate and Frontline Services

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Strategic Projects (£0.056M underspend); and
- Waste Services (£0.280M overspend).

CORPORATE SERVICES

- Financial Services (£0.073M underspend).

- Authority Wide

- Miscellaneous (£0.681M overspend); and
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme (£0.842M underspend).

Earmark Reserve Update

- A breakdown of full year expenditure against approved earmark reserves for Service Areas can be viewed at Section 2e by clicking [here](#).

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital Programme Budget

Service Area	2018/19 - as at 31st March 2019
	Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive's Division (3a)	26.299
Corporate and Frontline Services (3b)	34.185
Corporate Initiatives (3c)	1.378
Education & Inclusion Services (3d)	49.468
Community & Children's Services (3e)	9.819
Total	121.149

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 4

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Programme (£2.093M total grant of which £0.293M is shown in the above); Local Transport Fund (£1.474M); WG Transport Consortia Grant (£0.300M); WG Capital Funding Towards Schools Maintenance Budgets (£3.184M); and Intermediate Care Fund (£2.434M).

For information on how the Capital Programme is funded see section 3f by clicking [here](#).

Prudential Indicators

For a detailed breakdown of Prudential Indicators, see section 3g by clicking [here](#).

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- **Turnover**

Service Area	2018/19		2017/18	
	As at 31 st March 2019		As at 31 st March 2018	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	10,592	12.32	10,799	10.12
Community & Children's Services	2,962	6.62	2,934	8.90
Corporate & Frontline Services	1,276	6.90	1,225	5.63
Education & Inclusion Services	1,233	16.55	1,276	7.60
<u>Schools</u> ³	<u>4,832</u>	<u>16.35</u>	<u>5,050</u>	<u>12.73</u>
Primary	3,093	12.90	3,150	11.30
Secondary	1,739	22.48	1,900	15.11
Chief Executive's Division	289	9.34	314	7.32

- **Sickness Absence**

Service Area	2018/19	2017/18
	As at 31 st March 2019 %	As at 31 st March 2018 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	4.34	4.37
Community & Children's Services	5.55	6.17
Corporate & Frontline Services	4.58	4.07
Education & Inclusion Services	4.57	4.21
<u>Schools</u> ³	<u>3.56</u>	<u>3.58</u>
Primary	3.69	3.99
Secondary	3.34	2.90
Chief Executive's Division	2.45	2.13

For a more detailed breakdown of Quarter 4 2018/19 sickness absence information, click [here](#).

³ Schools (i.e. for information reported 'As at 31st March 2018' for Turnover and Sickness Absence) – revised position to that reported within the Council's 2018/19 Quarter 1 Performance Report to reflect up dated information between the primary and secondary sectors.

Organisation Health related investment areas

There continues to be a focus on investing in organisational health related areas, for example, IT infrastructure and invest to save energy efficiencies schemes, with this work being supported through existing resources.

- **Council Strategic Risks**

The Council's Quarter 4 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by clicking [here](#). The following updates have been made to strategic risks / risk ratings since the 2018/19 Quarter 3 Performance Report:

- RISK 4 (21st Century Schools – Band A) – 'If projects are not delivered on time and/or on budget then this could impede the delivery and intended (positive) impact of the 21st Century Schools Band A Programme within the Council.' Risk score revised from 8 to 6 due to good progress being made across the Band A programme, for example, completion of the school buildings at Tonyrefail 3 – 19 school.
- RISK 19 (Customer Services) – 'If the Council's agenda for modernising its on-line customer service provision is not supported by a programme of up-skilling citizens and re-designing its internal processes then citizens could be indirectly excluded and they may also receive an inefficient service.' Risk score revised from 9 to 6 reflecting the positive progress being made to increase the take-up of services on-line and re-designing and streamlining processes.

All strategic risks will continue to be reviewed on an on-going basis and, where appropriate, revisions made to the Strategic Risk Register.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan progress updates

- **ECONOMY** (Section 5a)

Summary of progress to 31st March 2019

During the year we have continued to make positive progress in our Economy Priority. Amongst other things we have:

- Continued to work towards enhancing the long term economic prospects for the County Borough through progressing the development of the Cardiff Capital Regional City Deal, involvement in the Valleys Taskforce and delivery of strategies for five strategic opportunity areas.
- Progressed the delivery of a Regional Planning Strategy.
- Led a collaborative project to improve town centres and collaborated with public and private sector organisations to progress regeneration projects in our own town centres, including Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd and the Boot Hotel, Black Lion and Exchange Building in Aberdare.
- Continued to deliver our 21st Century schools programme, including opening three new ‘through’ schools – Porth Community School, Tonyrefail Community School and Ysgol Nant Gwyn - and a brand new primary school for Cwmaman, and new or refurbished facilities for many other schools.
- Consulted on proposals for a further £168M Band B 21st Century school investment
- Helped more people into work through bespoke employability support and continued to deliver a range of apprenticeships, traineeships and graduate programmes
- Expanded 30 hours childcare for 3 and 4 year olds in partnership with Welsh Government

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Progress in our KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS as at 31st March 2019

Total no. of PIs in the Priority	Total no. of PIs reported this Qtr	No. of PIs reported this Qtr with Target	On Target		Not on Target		Within 5% of Target	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
48	48	39	19	49	15	38	5	13

Progress in our Investment Priorities – Economy

Investment Area	Investment Value ⁴ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Empty Property Grant	1.500 ⁵	During 2018/19 88 properties were approved, 102 properties surveyed and works completed on 61 properties (of which some works were commenced in the 2017/18 financial year).
Graduate Officers	0.200	Of the 10 graduate officers appointed in September 2016 (2 year fixed term contracts), 7 have been successful in gaining permanent employment with the Council and 3 have secured employment in other organisations (note: since 2016, annual in-takes of graduates have continued, funded through existing resources).
Schools	1.000	Funding relates to that agreed by Council on 28 th February 2018 (£0.500M) together with the allocation of £0.500M from the Tonypany Town Centre project (where the costs were lower than originally anticipated). Scheme progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bryncelynog Comprehensive (3G pitch and running track) and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun (3G pitch) – works have commenced and both projects are scheduled to be completed in quarter 1 of 2019/20. • Ferndale Community School – the 3G pitch was completed on 24th August 2018 and the changing room improvement works are scheduled to be completed in the last half of 2019/20. • Maesgwyn Special School – main works completed and further works will be undertaken during the Easter 2019 holidays to paint the Multi-Use Games Area playing surface.
Transport Infrastructure	1.200	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 1 st March 2017 and is continuing to support a wider programme of highways capital works. This has included: the completion of schemes for Cwmbach Roundabout, Main Avenue (Treforest Industrial Estate) and Hirwaun Road (Trecynon); works in-progress at the Asda roundabout, Aberdare and Bridge St. roundabout, Pontypridd; and various schemes at the design and construction stages.
Taff Vale Development	2.024	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 30 th November 2016 (and is in addition to the £1.5M approved by Council on 28 th October 2015). During Quarter 4, positive progress continued to be made on the structures of the three buildings and the footbridge contractor was appointed in January 2019 (and preparatory works started). In parallel, a new scheme name was announced: Llys Cadwyn.

⁴ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

⁵ Empty Property Grant - £1.5M investment funded from resources set aside following the agreed change around Council Tax Discount for long term empty properties (as per 17th January 2018 Council).

Investment Area	Investment Value ⁴ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Apprenticeships	0.200	The investment funding has been combined with existing service resources and enabled 33 apprentices to be appointed from September 2017 (note: since 2017 the annual in-take of apprentices has continued, funded through existing resources).
Park and Ride Programme	1.000	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 29 th November 2017 and is supporting the development work needed to create additional 'park and ride' car parking spaces at Abercynon (opened March 2019), Pontyclun (feasibility / preliminary design is on-going) and Porth (Planning application submitted and design is on-going).
Tonypany Town Centre	1.000	Main construction works are now complete and additional footways were completed during March 2019.
Traffic Developments	0.500	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 28 th February 2018 to contribute to highways network improvements in road safety, active travel and traffic flow. This has included the completion of schemes at Thai Elephant (Cymmer), Abercwmboi Crossing Improvements, Tonteg Road (Treforest Feasibility), Pencoedcae 20mph and also the completion of specific traffic calming works at Hendreforgan (Gilfach Goch) and the puffin crossing Trebanog Road, Trebanog.
Strategic Regeneration Investment (previously Town Centre Regeneration)	1.100	<p>Funding comprises £0.100M approved by Council on 28th February 2018 and further funding of £1.000M approved by Council on 24th October 2018.</p> <p>This investment will support the Council's commitment to regenerate its town centres, encourage investment in the high street economy and deliver the vision as set out in the strategic opportunity area strategies. A targeted approach to acquiring, upgrading and redeveloping key strategic sites and premises will help achieve this and continue to deliver economic growth and job creation across Rhondda Cynon Taf. In addition to the purchases of 52-53 Taff Street, Pontypridd (Iceland) and 1-4 Oxford Street, Mountain Ash during in quarter 3, works continued in relation to the redevelopment of Guto Square, Mountain Ash.</p>
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 24th October 2018.</p> <p>Robertstown – work on-going to progress the Flood Consequence Assessment in conjunction with Natural Resources Wales.</p> <p>Coed Ely – a tender process for the construction contract has been initiated with the programme of work being planned in partnership with Welsh Government who are responsible for the site's infra-structure.</p>
Total	13.924	

PEOPLE (Section 5b)

Summary of progress to 31st March 2019

We continue to make positive progress in the people priority, promoting independence and positive lives for everyone. This year we have:

- Continued our programme of building Extra Care Homes to help residents remain part of the community and stay independent for as long as possible. Maesyffynnon (Aberaman) is projected to be complete by the end of 2019 and planning permission for the former Magistrates Court in Pontypridd has been granted. Plans for a further three sites in Mountain Ash, Porth and Treorchy will continue to be developed with our partner, Linc Cymru, over the next few years.
- Continued to encourage people to take regular exercise, helped by ongoing investment in our Leisure Centre facilities. Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre benefitted from a complete refurbishment making it the largest Leisure for Life Gym in RCT.
- Progressed the Resilient Families Programme to deliver accessible family support, preventing problems from escalating to a level where specialist intervention is required. Current children looked after data reflects this. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service now also includes a pathway from the Resilient Families Service, supporting their work in building family resilience and delivering positive outcomes.
- Implemented a new regional 'Front Door' for Foster Carers across Cwm Taf as part of our aim to help to give children a great start in life by improving our fostering services and recruit more Foster Carers.
- Developed an Accommodation and Support Strategy for those leaving care, taking into account their vulnerabilities and needs and providing them with a range of suitable accommodation that will give them the best chance to live a positive and independent life.

With regard to the performance indicators that are not on target, we continue to work hard to meet these challenging targets in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for people.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Progress in our KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS as at 31st March 2019

Total no. of PIs in the Priority	Total no. of PIs reported this Qtr	No. of PIs reported this Qtr with Target	On Target		Not on Target		Within 5% of Target	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
20	20	16	5	31	6	38	5	31

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE

Investment Area	Investment Value⁶ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Leisure Centre Changing Rooms	0.750	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 29 th November 2017 in respect of supporting improvement in changing room facilities. Works have been completed as planned at Rhondda Sports Centre (completed August 2018) and at Abercynon Sports Centre (completed December 2018). Works at Sobell Leisure Centre are scheduled to be undertaken in summer 2019.
Extracare Housing	4.000	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 28th February 2018 (£2M) and 24th October 2018 (£2M) to support the modernising of accommodation options for older people.</p> <p>During quarter 4 works progressed at the former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site; Planning consent was approved for the Pontypridd scheme and scheme development is progressing; and consideration of development proposals for Rhondda (Porth), Treorchy and Mountain Ash schemes were on-going.</p>
Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre	1.000	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 28 th February 2018 to deliver a new indoor sports pitch and gym. Works were completed at the start of January 2019 and, following additional staff training, the new gym and all other facilities became fully operational and open to the public on 14 th January 2019.
Total	5.750	

⁶ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

- **PLACE** (Section 5c)

Summary of progress to 31st March 2019

We continue to make positive progress in the PLACE priority, as a Council and with partners including Welsh Government, Housing Associations, and as part of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board. This year we have:

- Implemented the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Pontypridd and Aberdare with positive results to date
- Progressed the Community Alcohol Partnership in Pontypridd to support the culture of responsible drinking with our young people.
- Obtained 'Green Flag' status for 8 of our parks, and held events to encourage learning, volunteering and opportunities to improve mental and physical wellbeing events at these beautiful outdoor spaces.
- Progressed the development of Community Hubs to bring a wide range of services and community support together in locations across RCT.
- Implemented a new housing allocation scheme that will better support long-term housing need.
- Made changes to our mobile library offering and promoted the '@HomeLibraryService' to support and provide a service to the more vulnerable in our communities.
- Held Arts events and activities that involve residents, increase confidence, encourage the development of new skills and reduce isolation.
- Continued to invest in our roads and highways infrastructure.
- Increased the amount of waste that we recycle.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Progress in our KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS as at 31st March 2019

Total no. of PIs in the Priority	Total no. of PIs reported this Qtr	No. of PIs reported this Qtr with Target	On Target		Not on Target		Within 5% of Target	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
17	17	15	11	74	2	13	2	13

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACE

Investment Area	Investment Value ⁷ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	15.264	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 1 st March 2017 (£2.264M), 28 th February 2018 (£1.000M) and 24 th October 2018 (£12.000M). The additional resources will be used in conjunction with existing resources to deliver a programme of highways infrastructure repairs between 2019/20 and 2021/22.
Outdoor Leisure Facilities	1.250	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council in respect of 3G pitches i.e. 1st March 2017 (£0.600M for Abercynon Sports Centre and Ferndale Community School) and on 29th November 2017 (£0.650M for Bryncelynog and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun Schools, and will be combined with an agreed contribution from the Education budget).</p> <p>The Abercynon Sports Centre pitch was brought into use in February 2018 and further enhancements to the gravelled area at this site have also been completed.</p> <p>Updates in respect of the 3G Pitches at Ferndale Community School, Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun are included within Section 5a – Economy (Investment Area – Schools).</p>
Play Areas	0.500	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 28 th February 2018. During 2018/19 24 out of 28 planned play area schemes were completed. The remaining schemes will be carried forward into 2019/20 where the current position is: 2 schemes under construction; 1 scheme designed, costed and scheduled; and 1 scheme to be designed.
Waste Recycling Centre (Dinas Community Recycling Centre)	0.150	Scheme complete.
Cynon Gateway South – Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link	3.750	The project is progressing as planned: Cardiff Road junction complete, A4059 junction complete and the main works contract on the bridge and Miskin highway are forecast to be completed by summer 2019. During March 2019, Welsh Government approved a further £1.461M of Local Transport Grant funding to support this project (the funding for which will be incorporated into the Council's Quarter One Performance Report for 2019/20).
Structures: St Albans Bridge, Brook Street Footbridge and	4.600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Alban's Bridge - tenders were received in March 2019 and costs are currently being analysed (with the bridge being subject to monitoring and remaining open). • Brook St. Footbridge - planning approved and detailed design

⁷ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

Investment Area	Investment Value ⁷ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Pontrhondda Bridge		<p>ongoing - works anticipated to take place in 2019/20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pontrhondda Bridge - works ongoing and completion scheduled to be 2019/20 (new contractor appointed).
Structures	2.000	<p>The £1.5M additional investment approved by Council on the 28th February 2018 has been allocated to structure projects with the works at various stages of design, procurement and construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pontypridd Road, Porth – repair works to wall completed. (Morrisons exit is pending planning permission). • Pontygwaith River Wall – works completed. • Heol Miskin Wall, Pontyclun – works completed. • Hopkinstown River Wall, Pontypridd – works due to commence in quarter 1 of 2019/20.
Parks and Green Spaces	0.600	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 28th February 2018 and 24th October 2018. Out of the 47 schemes, 42 schemes completed, 1 on hold, 2 ongoing and 2 schemes carried forward into 2019/20.</p>
Llanharan Bypass	1.500	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 29th November 2017 (£1.000M) and 24th October 2018 (£0.500M), and is supporting preliminary design work, ecology surveys and the design / tender of ground investigation work (Welsh Government have approved a further £0.350M in Local Transport Grant funding, as set out in the quarter 3 Performance Report, to support this project). A public exhibition was held in March 2019 regarding the option choices that were indicated in the Local Development Plan.</p>
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	2.500	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 29th November 2017 (£1.000M) and 24th October 2018 (£1.500M) to support the dualling of this section of the highway. Public exhibitions have been held, the preliminary design has been completed on dualling and design has commenced on the new fire station access (Welsh Government have approved £0.434M in Local Transport Grant funding to support this project, as set out in the quarter 3 Performance Report).</p>
Community Hubs	0.750	<p>This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 29th November 2017 (£0.500M) and 24th October 2018 (£0.250M) to support the creation of community hubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhondda Fach Hwb (Ferndale) - is scheduled to be launched in July 2019 (with the childcare element to be opened in April 2019); • Canolfan Pennar (Mountain Ash) - is scheduled to open in June 2019; and • Porth Plaza – works commenced on the lower ground floor and will continue into 2019/20.

Investment Area	Investment Value ⁷ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Gelli/Treorchy Link Road	0.200	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 24 th October 2018 for investigatory works for a cross valley type link at Treorchy (Welsh Government have also approved a £0.050M Local Transport Fund Grant to support the works, as set out in the quarter 3 Performance Report). Feasibility and the WelTAG process has commenced.
Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Bypass	1.000	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 24 th October 2018 for preliminary design for a Bypass continuation from A4059 Aberdare to Hirwaun. Preliminary design on-going.
Bryn Pica Eco Park	0.200	This investment funding relates to that approved by Council on 24 th October 2018 for enabling works, planning & ecology for the development of an Eco Park at the Waste Management Facility. During March 2019 Welsh Government approved a £300k grant for site clearance and drainage to create a development plateau.
Total	34.264	

LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS (Section 5d)

The Council's Corporate Plan aims to apply a disciplined and planned approach to meeting the financial challenges ahead and has set a number of measures to gauge efficiency and the use of resources. These can be viewed by [clicking here](#) and a summary position is included below.

Progress in our KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS as at 31st March 2019								
Total no. of Pls	Total no. of Pls reported this Qtr	No. of Pls reported this Qtr with Target	On Target		Not on Target		Within 5% of Target	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
8	8	7	7	100	0	-	0	-

• OVERALL SUMMARY OF CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Progress in our KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS as at 31st March 2019								
Total no. of Pls	Total no. of Pls reported this Qtr	No. of Pls reported this Qtr with Target	On Target		Not on Target		Within 5% of Target	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
93	93	77	42	55	23	30	12	15

Those performance indicators that were 'Not on Target' can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

• OTHER NATIONAL MEASURES (Section 5e)

In addition, there are a number of national measures that do not form part of the Council's Corporate Plan. These can be viewed by [clicking here](#). A summary is provided in the table below.

Progress in our KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS as at 31st March 2019								
Total no. of Pls	Total no. of Pls reported this Qtr	No. of Pls reported this Qtr with Target	On Target		Not on Target		Within 5% of Target	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
19	18	15	9	60	3	20	3	20

• TARGET SETTING (Section 5f)

An analysis of 2018/19 targets set compared to previous year's performance and targets, and 'All Wales Average' performance levels, where collected, can be viewed by [clicking here](#).



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18 JULY 2019

THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Author: Paul Griffiths - Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines Rhondda Cynon Taf's draft Corporate Performance Report (CPR) which contains progress for 2018/19 and plans for 2019/20 in respect of the Council's three strategic priorities. It also sets out how the CPR enables the Council to meet its statutory reporting requirements.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Endorse the draft CPR (Appendix 1) and recommend its approval by Council on 31st July 2019.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council's three key strategic priorities for 2016-2020 were agreed in [February 2016](#) and are set out in the Corporate Plan, '[The Way Ahead](#)'. 'The Way Ahead' sets a clear direction for the Council, which all staff and Managers can see, understand and work toward through their Service Delivery Plans. There are transparent, robust and regular reporting and scrutiny arrangements in place which also ensure that residents are able to hold the Council to account.

- 3.2 The three strategic priorities are:

- Economy - Building a strong economy;
- People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone; and
- Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work.

- 3.3 Progress in the delivery of these priorities was reported as part of the Council's quarterly Performance Reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees during the year, and were also made available on the [Council's website](#).
- 3.4 There are two separate but related legislative requirements that are met by the Council's draft CPR:
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires public bodies to set and publish well-being objectives, take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives and publish an annual report of progress; and
 - The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, which requires all local authorities in Wales to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions by setting Improvement Objectives and to make a public assessment of their performance for each financial year by no later than 31 October following the end of the financial year to which the information relates.
- 3.5 Improvement Objectives need to reflect the strategic priorities of the Council and to all intents and purposes, Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives can be treated as one and the same. Therefore, by integrating processes for setting and reporting on these improvement objectives, the Council can discharge its duties under both areas of legislation.
- 3.6 This was supported by Cabinet at its meeting on the [9 March 2017](#) whereby the Council's Corporate Plan priorities would also serve as the Council's Well-being Objectives.

4. THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

- 4.1 The Council's draft CPR is included as **Appendix 1** and is structured around the Council's Priorities of 'Economy', 'People' and 'Place'. The content of the draft CPR has been reviewed and challenged by Council officers and its purpose is to provide a high level, easy to read summary of:
- The evaluation of progress and achievements in each of the three priorities during 2018/19. The detailed evaluations and other relevant support documents, which also forms the basis of the Council's Quarter 4 Performance Report for 2018/19 (and reported to the 18th July 2019 Cabinet meeting), are included as links within the document to enable the reader to access more detailed information, as required; and
 - What the Council intends to do in each of the three priorities during 2019/20. The detailed plans and targets are also included as links within the document.
- 4.2 In this way, the draft CPR intends to provide elected Members, partners, residents, staff and regulators with an overview of progress and plans, as well as access to further detailed information. This approach also ensures the Council meets its legal duties as set out in 3.4 above.
- 4.3 The draft CPR has been subject to pre-scrutiny by the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee on the [8th July 2019](#). The overall view of the Committee was that the document:

- Presented a balanced and evidenced based assessment of the Council's 2018/19 performance in its Corporate priority areas;
- Set out the Council's ambitions for 2019/20 in an understandable way that will enable progress and impact to be measured and scrutinised; and
- Shows how the Council is maximising its contribution to the 7 national well-being goals.

4.4 As part of its pre-scrutiny of the CPR, the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee also made a number of important observations in relation to the progress of the priorities reflected in the CPR and the draft minutes of this meeting are set out at **Appendix 2**. Where relevant, the observations have been incorporated into the draft CPR for Cabinet's consideration.

4.5 Subject to Cabinet agreeing a version of the draft CPR, this will be reported to the 31st July 2019 Council meeting for final consideration and, if deemed appropriate, approval. Following Council agreeing a final version, this will be translated and made available on the Council's web-site and notified to partners and other stakeholders.

4.6 Finally, the Wales Audit Office has a statutory duty to audit the approved version of the Council's CPR, the results of which will be formally reported to Council in 2019/20.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 There are no consultation requirements emanating from the recommendations set out in the report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The report aims to ensure the Council complies with its legal duty under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

9. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

9.1 This report evidences the Council's progress in delivering its strategic priorities as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan – *'The Way Ahead'*. It also evidences how the Council, through its Corporate Plan, is improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the area by maximising its contribution to the seven national Well-being goals and also applying the sustainable development principle through the five ways of working, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Council's draft CPR for 2019/20 demonstrates the positive progress made in 2018/19 in delivering its strategic priorities and sets out clear and understandable plans for 2019/20.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

as amended by

THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT, 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

Report of the Chief Executive

Author: Paul Griffiths – Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services

Item - THE DRAFT CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

Background Papers

- Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee Report [8 July 2019](#)
- Quarterly Performance Reports during 2018/19 ([Quarter 1](#), [Quarter 2](#) and [Quarter 3](#)).



The Council's draft Corporate Performance Report

2019-20

All data included in this report will be subject to final checks

This document contains the Council's priorities which are the Improvement Objectives as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and also the Council's Well-being objectives as required by the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. To all intents and purposes, Well-being objectives and Improvement Objectives can be treated as one and the same. Therefore, by integrating processes for setting and reporting on these key objectives, the Council has discharged its duties under both areas of legislation.

***This document is available in other languages and formats on request.
All data included in this working draft will be subject to final checks prior to publication***

NB Pre- design version

Planning the Way Ahead.....

This is the Council's annual Corporate Performance Report. It sets out our priorities for 2019-20 and how we performed in 2018-19.

We welcome your views on this report, our plans for the future and how we did last year. We would also like to know how you, your family and your community have been affected by our work to improve services.

You can get in touch

Via the web	www.rctcbc.gov.uk/sayit www.rctcbc.gov.uk/Reportit
Via Twitter	@rctcouncil or @cwmtafconsult
Via Facebook	www.facebook.com/RCTCouncil
Via The Leader's Blog	www.rctcbc.gov.uk/TheLeadersBlog
Help us to improve by providing your comments, compliments and complaints	www.rctcbc.gov.uk/feedback
Join the Citizens' Panel	www.rctcbc.gov.uk/jointhepanel
Get involved in our consultations	www.rctcbc.gov.uk/GetInvolved
Consultation Team	consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk
Cwm Taf Engagement Hub	www.ourcwmtaf.wales
Your Councillor	Find the contact details of your local Councillor www.rctcbc.gov.uk/councillors
If you are interested in taking over the running of a Council run building or service	www.rctcbc.gov.uk/rcttogether

Contents section to be completed in design version

Leader's Message – to be completed nearer to final version

DRAFT

Continuing to deliver our priorities in 2018-19

The Council's [Corporate Plan](#) for 2016-2020, '*The Way Ahead*' continues to put residents at the centre of what we do. The plan was originally developed and shaped by residents, staff and partners who told us what mattered most to them. It has set the direction for everything we have done since 2016 and its final year, it sets the firm foundations for our new plan which will be in place from 2021.

The Corporate Plan sets out a Vision for the future for *a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all*, and it has focused on three priorities

- **Economy** - *Building a strong economy*
- **People** - *Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone*
- **Place** - *Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work*

The Plan also sets out the key principles we follow to deliver these priorities, i.e.

- providing essential services well;
- helping people and communities to help themselves;
- building a sustainable County Borough; and
- living within our means.

Following these principles achieving our longer term Vision has meant that we have needed to involve people and communities in our shaping services, think about the effect of what we do now has on people and communities in the future, carefully plan what we do so that we can work with others where it is best to do so, and put in place services that will help prevent problems from happening or getting worse.

The detailed plans for 2018/19 to deliver our three priorities were set out in our [Corporate Performance Report for 2018-19](#). Since then we have been continually monitoring our progress. The Corporate Plan doesn't tell you about all the services that we deliver directly to or organise for our residents, communities and businesses. You can find out more about all the services we deliver and the progress we are making on the [Council's website](#), and on the Council's [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) pages.

As you will see throughout this report we have made positive progress in tackling our three priorities since 2016. Our work has been reviewed and checked by Councillors every three months and at the same time, reports have been put on the Council's website so that residents and other interested organisations can see our progress for themselves. We are now at the end of the 2018/19 reporting year, so this report contains the year end assessment of our progress and provides examples of where our work has made a difference to the lives of people that live, work and visit Rhondda Cynon Taf, and also where we need to do better.

The Council's three priorities will remain in place until 2020. However, what we intend to do, the targets we have set ourselves and next steps have been refreshed and strengthened

as part of the plans we are putting in place for 2019/20. Our progress so far will help us to prepare to respond to the challenges we face beyond 2020.

To help us to achieve our ambitions and respond to the impact of austerity and increasing financial pressures, we are continually looking at ways we can make more of the resources we have available by tackling

Digitalisation so that customers can access more of our services online and also helping to increase access to technology for people and communities.

e.g. online transactions have increased from 36% in 2016/17 to 63% in 2018/19. This means that our resident can access more services more quickly and easily, e.g, booking a visit to the Lido, applying for a job or checking recycling arrangements and many more online services. Our plans to provide free Wi-Fi access across seven Town Centres across the County Borough over the coming months will support residents and businesses alike.

Commercialisation so that the Council takes more opportunities to act as a business to earn income rather than cut budgets.

e.g. renting out our properties and building industrial units for rent and bringing new jobs into the area.

Early Intervention and Prevention so that we spend more on stopping problems and less on trying to fix them once they have happened.

e.g our [Resilient Families Service](#) working with families experiencing difficulties so that their problems don't get any worse. The information available to date shows that 74% of the families that were referred to the service accepted support. Of these families, 95.4% said they were better able to cope as a result of this support.

Independence so that our vulnerable residents stay as well as they can for as long as they can.

e.g. our [Stay Well@home](#) Service getting people safely out of hospital when they are well enough to leave and giving them the support to cope better when they get home. This joint service received an award from NHS awards 2018 for '[Working Seamlessly across organisations](#)'.

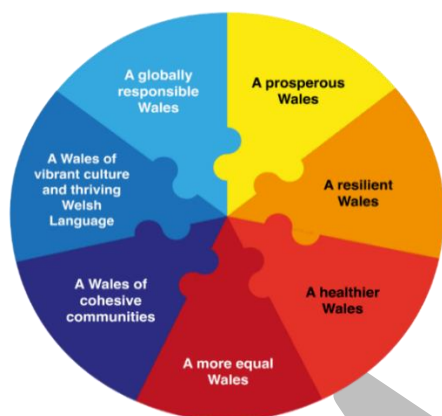
Efficient and Effective Organisation so that we challenge everything we do to see if we can do it better.

e.g. centralising office based administration to make the most of the skills and expertise available behind the scenes. Also helping staff working in the community by providing 'hot desks' that they can use in different locations so that they spend more time working with residents, communities and businesses and less time travelling across the County Borough back to an office.

In 2018 we also continued to embed the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) into the Council's work and priorities. This Act applies to 44 public bodies in Wales including all Councils, Health Boards, Fire and Rescue Services and Natural Resources Wales. Having adopted our three priorities as our Well-being Objectives in [March 2017](#), we have also

continued to strengthen those aspects of our Corporate Plan that have changed or moved on since it was introduced in 2016.

The Act means that as well as the Council showing continual improvement, it also needs to carry out “sustainable development” which means the process of improving the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural well-being of the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Act also asks us to “maximise our contributions” to seven national Well-being Goals, which you will see throughout this report.



Our three priorities have provided a clear starting point to help us to show how our work is contributing to these seven national Well-being goals, but we know we need to do more.

The Act directs us to make sure that we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. To do this we need to work differently, where we are not already doing so, and

1. involve those with an interest in our plans and seek their views
2. balance short term need with long term and planning for the future
3. work together with other partners to deliver objectives
4. consider the impact on all well-being goals together and on other bodies
5. put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse

These five ways of working make public bodies in Wales, including the Council, think more about the long-term, work better with people, communities and each other, look to prevent problems and also take a more joined-up approach to the work we do.

You will see many examples of how we are doing this throughout this report and also where we show that we are contributing to the seven national Well-being goals, there is an easy to read section containing examples, set out in section 17. However, we need to continue to build and improve on this positive platform.

Delivering for the future

For many years, Councillors have been faced with financial challenges that have meant they have had to make tough choices and difficult decisions. These choices and decisions have allowed the Council to prioritise services, particularly for those who are most vulnerable, whilst at the same time make the savings needed to balance the books. We are continually reducing our management structures and administration, finding new ways to work in partnerships with other councils and public bodies and are reducing the number of Council buildings and making better use of the buildings and office space we have.

We have achieved these changes because we are continually looking to see where we can do things differently or better and where we can get better value for our money. We ask our residents and our staff for their ideas, we use all the feedback we receive from inspections and audits and we learn from organisations that are the best at what they do. We also regularly review and challenge every Council service. This means that we know our strengths and areas for improvement and are better able to respond quickly to change and continue to provide quality services with reducing resources, including fewer managers and staff. We are making best use of limited resources by working with others where it makes sense to do so. By continuing to challenge what we know about our services and the needs of our residents and communities, both now and in the future, we can better understand how and what we need to change. This helps us to make sure that we focus on improving what matters most now and also make sure that the needs of future generations can be met.

The Council also works partnerships with other public bodies e.g other councils, Cwm Taf Health Board, South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue, the Third Sector and Natural Resources Wales. You can see some examples of how we work with others on [our website](#). Some of the partnerships are because we think we can deliver better services together. Other partnerships work because some problems cannot be dealt with by one organisation alone.

The Welsh Government recognised the value of partnership working and has put in place laws that direct public bodies to work together e.g. the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) which is described in more detail in section 12.

Another law that directs how we work is the [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#). This Act gives people more a say in the care they receive. To do this, the Act asks Councils to work in partnership with Health Boards and the Third Sector to work together better to improve the well-being of adults and children who need care and support, as well as their carers. To do this, in RCT we work as part of the Cwm Taf Regional Partnership Board, which has put in place a Cwm Taf Social Services and [Well-being Area Plan](#) that sets out what it intends to do to work better together to benefit

- children and young people
- older people
- health/physical disabilities
- learning disability/autism
- mental health
- sensory impairment
- carers who need support
- violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

with priority given to

- older people with complex needs and long term conditions, including dementia.
- people with learning disabilities.
- carers, including young carers.
- integrated Family Support Services and
- children with complex needs due to disability and illness.

As a Council, working alone and also working in partnership with others, we continually strive to improve everything we do so that we can provide better, more efficient, effective and joined up services to our residents and communities.

In its most recent report published in [September 2018](#) our independent regulator, the Wales Audit Office, indicated that “the Council continues to meet its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement”. You can see this and other reports from our inspectors [here](#).

DRAFT

Progress on our Corporate Plan 2016-20

The Council launched its first Corporate Plan '[The Way Ahead](#)' in 2016. The Plan was put in place to set the direction of the Council's work for five years, up to 2020, set ambitious targets for improvement and focus on three areas of work that would improve the lives of the people and communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf

1. Building a Strong Economy - **ECONOMY**
2. Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone - **PEOPLE**
3. Creating Neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work - **PLACE**

The Plan describes ambitions for the future and how the Council will achieve those ambitions, including where we have planned to work with other partners to get the best possible results for residents. Since the Plan was launched, the decisions that the Council has made, the resources that have been put in place, the risks that have been managed and the training and development opportunities that have been provided to staff have all been directed to making a difference to the lives of the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf. We have seen investment of over £365M across 21st Century Schools, highways, transportation and other infrastructure, parks, play areas, leisure centres and outdoor sports facilities and our community assets.

Our progress in what we set out to achieve in 2016, has been set out in regular reports for Councillors to challenge and check, and for residents to see for themselves. Our progress in the last year is also set out in this report. Looking back at our progress since 2016 we can show that we have achieved most of what we set out to achieve

ECONOMY

We wanted to regenerate RCT, build new homes and create new jobs and we have seen

- the ratification of the £1.2billion City Deal which includes the implementation of the South Wales Metro and associated local transport schemes.
- a new building at the heart of the regeneration of Pontypridd, [Llys Cadwyn](#), nearing its planned 2020 completion following the demolition of the former Taff Vale precinct.
- over 2, 000 new jobs coming to the County Borough. These include over 1,000 jobs to the new Headquarters of Department for Work and Pensions in Treforest, 500 to Llys Cadwyn for Transport for Wales and 300 already in the Health Education and Improvement Wales Offices in Nantgarw.
- more business start ups and registered businesses/enterprises as well as fewer business closures
- 1,654 additional housing units provided and 550 affordable homes delivered to date, together with £4M extra social housing investment.
- confirmation of the Eisteddfod being held in RCT in 2022, and the development of two designated destination gateways at Dare Valley Park and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park.

We wanted to our schools to be among the best in the country and we are seeing pupils enjoying new or refurbished schools in Y Pant, Treorchy, Porth, Tonyrefail, Cymmer, Ferndale with more improvements on the way, and more of our pupils achieving better results in level 2 + threshold (English, Welsh and Maths) at Key Stage 4 leading to the highest ever RCT performance at this level.

We wanted to put in place a broad range of skills and employment programmes for all ages and we are seeing young people and adults of all ages supported to gain qualifications and find employment through our employment pathway, which provides support for people at every stage, from improving essential skills to gaining sector specific qualifications and work experience for jobs that are available locally. This helping to get more people in work with fewer people who are unemployed and fewer people claiming out of work benefits.

PEOPLE

We wanted to provide our residents with the care they need to live in their own homes for longer and we are seeing more people helped to live independently, however despite the new Stay Well@home service there are fewer older people getting back to their homes from hospital more quickly, this is because the demand for home care has increased as we support more people to live at home rather than in residential care. We have seen happy residents living in a new extra care facility in Ty Heulog, Pontyclun, a second new facility in Aberaman nearing completion and firm proposals in place for a third in Pontypridd. There more adults choosing their own care providers and more people better able to remain independent following a package of care. We are continuing to work hard to get people home from hospital more quickly so that they have the best chance of remaining independent.

We wanted to make services more joined up and efficient and by working closely with others we improved our support for families so that they are less affected by poverty. We also improved our substance misuse services across Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr to make it easier for people to access the help they need.

We wanted to give RCT's children and young people a great start in life so we put in place a [Resilient Families Services](#) and are seeing that families get the help they need at the right time. We have also seen fewer children fewer children subject to statutory intervention and fewer children re registered on the Child Protection Register (CPR) but there have been more children taken into the care of the Council.

PLACE

We wanted RCT to be among the safest places in Wales, with communities helping each other and residents feeling safe so we changed the way we deal with victims of Domestic Violence and also put in place technology to help protect older and vulnerable adults from unwanted phone calls and cold callers. We visited schools to talk to pupils about hate crime and how to report it, helped more people to enjoy socialising in town centre by putting in place Public Spaces Protection Orders in Aberdare and Pontypridd to help control anti-social behaviour because of the misuse of alcohol. We have also seen more residents who have been victims of anti-social behaviour feel safer after our involvement.

We wanted RCT's parks and green spaces to continue to be valued by residents, and we have seen high levels of residents satisfied with RCT as a place to live, continuing high levels of cleanliness across RCT, fewer roads in poor condition and more waste recycled.

We also know that there is still more work to do where we haven't made as much progress as we had planned e.g.

Economy - the achievement of our more vulnerable pupils is still too far below their classmates. We also need to work with schools to improve school attendance and reduce the number of pupils excluded

People – we are not able to get all people home from hospital quickly when they are well enough

Place – we need to continue to encourage residents to recycle their waste. We also need to meet the Welsh Government's national recycling target of 70% by 2025.

It is impossible for our Corporate Plan to show information about the many different services we deliver to or organise for our residents, communities and businesses, but there is lots of information available about all our services is available on the [Council's website](#).

We are starting to prepare a new Corporate Plan that will take the Council beyond 2020. To do this we will build on what we have achieved so far and make sure every town and community in the County Borough is a great place to live, work and visit. We will be looking at how we can take the opportunities and also meet

the challenges facing RCT both now and in the future and will be talking to people and communities about what matters most to them.

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

A measure which shows how well areas in Wales are doing to create the conditions for communities to improve both now and in the future, the [Thriving Places Index](#) was launched in 2018 and looks at Local conditions, Sustainability and Equality. The [index](#) shows that across 55 measures, we already have a solid platform in place that will help us to make further improvements to our place and environment, mental and physical health and education and learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The [2019 index](#) shows that the lowest score across all of the categories for Rhondda Cynon Taf is for Mental and Physical Health.

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Long Term Data

In RCT

- the population is projected to increase to 246,481 by 2039
 - 0-15 year olds a 0.5% increase (44,717-44,941)
 - 16-64 year olds a 5.3% decrease (148,976 - 141,479)
 - 65+ year olds a 32% increase (45,434-60,061)
- 68.7 % of adults will be obese or overweight by 2025
- life expectancy will increase by 5 years for both men and women by 2066

You can see more information about the 'Future Trends' that will affect the residents and communities of RCT, [here](#).

How are we performing compared to the rest of Wales?

In 2018/19, there were fewer nationally set measures in place. This means that there are fewer measures with which we can compare with other councils in Wales. Of the 35 national indicators we report, we can compare our performance for 18 with other Councils ¹. Our comparisons show....

- 4 of our indicators were in the top quartile in Wales
- 10 indicators showed improved performance.
- 8 indicators performed better than the Wales Average.
- 5 indicators were in the bottom quartile in Wales, 1 of which had improved.
- 7 indicators showed performance declined from last year
- performance in 1 indicator remained unchanged and continued to be in the top quartile in Wales.

To see a full summary of how we performed compared to the rest of Wales in 2018/19 please view our [PI comparisons](#). To summarise, comparing our performance against other Welsh Councils we were among the top quartile in Wales for

- % of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness
- % of households threatened with homelessness successfully prevented from becoming homeless
- % of empty private sector properties brought back into use during the year through direct action by the local authority
- % of non-principal (C) roads that are in overall poor condition

we were among the bottom quartile in Wales for

- % of pupil attendance in primary schools and secondary schools
- % of Year 11 school leavers known not to be in education, training or employment (NEET)
- % of principal A roads that are in overall poor condition
- % of B roads that are in overall poor condition

Comparing our performance with other councils can raise more questions than answers. This is positive as it can help us to better understand what we do, learn from better practice as well as provide us with an indication on how well we are performing. If we can see that our performance is not improving over time and remains below the Welsh Average without good reason, we can then focus on what we need to do to improve.

We have also compared our performance against the targets we set ourselves for 2018/19 and found

- 10 indicators met or exceeded target and 6 indicators were within 5% of hitting the target
- 2 indicators missed the target, both of which were also below the Wales average.

¹ We have used the most recent all Wales data from 2017/18 to compare our 2018/19 performance

Performance indicators are not the only measure of how well services are performing, nor do they tell the whole story, but they can help. We also look at residents' views and survey responses, and the comments, compliments and complaints we receive through social media. We compare our performance with published best practice, we also consider what our auditors and inspectors are telling us. There is always something we can learn to continually improve what we do. All of these steps help us to make sure that the services we provide help to make RCT a great place to live and visit.

We also need to contribute to the seven national Well-being goals for Wales set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which is described in more detail in section 12. In 2018, the Welsh Government published its second report, [Well-being of Wales 2018](#) which sets out the progress being made across 44 public bodies in Wales, to meet these seven national goals. Whilst the report is not about Rhondda Cynon Taf, we can use this information to look at the Council's contribution to the 7 national goals. At the same time, for the first time, the Welsh Government also published a separate report on the [Well-being of Children](#) across Wales which we are using to consider what we do in RCT.

DRAFT

ECONOMY

Building a Strong Economy

We put in place the **ECONOMY** priority as we believe that economic growth will drive prosperity and bring opportunities to our residents and business as well as the Council. A growing economy will support jobs for our residents and will also allow the Council to generate more income to fund services, keep Council Tax down, support businesses and invest in the infrastructure needs of the County Borough. Helping to create these conditions will also help to improve the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural well-being of residents and communities. Residents told us this is important to them and studies have shown that work is good for people and can benefit individual mental health and contribution to communities.

We want to support residents, particularly our young people to realise their potential by getting the best education, fulfilling jobs and good quality housing, irrespective of their backgrounds.

We also want to make sure that RCT is best placed to take full advantage of the many different opportunities that will arise from the [Cardiff Capital Regional City Deal](#).

Making RCT Town Centres more attractive will not only benefit our residents, it will also add to the appeal of the area as a visitor destination, which help to increase tourism and will in turn support local businesses as well as provide more opportunities for jobs for our residents.

We also know that we have to plan to meet higher expectations from our residents with less funding so we have to do things differently.

The steps we put in place to achieve this Priority are

- **Putting in place a responsible approach to regeneration, with new homes being built and job opportunities created – including investments in town centres and the commercial infrastructure such as Treforest Industrial Estate**
- **Making Rhondda Cynon Taf's schools amongst the best in the country, with all children achieving the best they can**
- **Making sure there is a broad offer of skills and employment programmes in place for all ages - by using European Social Fund monies where we can**

As part of our preparations to put in place a new Corporate Plan from 2020, we are considering whether we have made enough progress in the past three years as well as looking ahead to see what Social, Economic, Environmental and Cultural challenges we are facing and how we can work better with others so that we prevent problems from happening so that our work has the biggest positive impact both now and in the future.

Key information about the ECONOMY of Rhondda Cynon Taf

- 6,700 people (5.8%) were unemployed in the year to December 2018 compared to 6,100 (5.5%) in 2017 and unemployment remains higher than the Wales average of 4.5%
- 47% of areas in RCT are within the more deprived areas in Wales.
- 10.1% of adults have no qualifications and 18.2% of adults have fewer than 5 grade C GCSEs.
- 53.1% of pupils achieved at least 5 GCSEs grade A*-C including English/Welsh and mathematics, compared to 49.8% last year.
- 28% of pupils entitled to Free School Meals achieved at least 5 GCSEs grade A*-C including English/Welsh and mathematics, compared to 24.2% last year.
- 17.8% of children in RCT are living in poverty. However, when the cost of housing is deducted from household income, this figure increases to 28%.
- 2,885 private sector dwellings have been vacant for over 6 months, 67 more than last year

Looking ahead

- Over the next 10 to 20 years, up to 35% of existing UK jobs will be at high risk from automation. Advances in technology, computerisation and artificial intelligence could result in the loss of 700 occupations in the UK.
- However, there will be an increase in the number of higher level professional and technical jobs and in caring and service occupations.
- By 2022, 1 in 5 new jobs in the UK will be in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
- The number of households in Wales looks set to increase significantly.
- The number of single person households is predicted to rise by over 30% in the next 20 years.
- Recent trends in house building indicate that the number of properties available may not keep up with this rise in households. Growth in population and housing will not be uniform across Wales.

In 2018 we said we would continue our work to Build a Strong Economy, focusing on improving our economy by supporting business growth and helping individuals improve their skills. Overall, we continue to make good progress as a Council and as part of wider partnerships and we have exceeded many of our expectations. Much of the work in this priority will be seen in the longer term but we are also seeing good progress in our shorter term plans. However, we still have more to do to keep up with changes in technology and the economy, including preparing for the continuing uncertainty of Brexit.

Alongside our work in delivering our ECONOMY priority we are continually building on our experience of doing things differently, what has worked and what we need to do better. We are also increasing our understanding of the affect of the changes we are making for the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf and the wider Cwm Taf Region.

Our work within the ECONOMY priority is overseen by Cabinet, relevant Scrutiny Committees and, where appropriate, the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Cwm Taf Public Services Board and others Boards.

You can see more detail of our progress against what we set out to achieve in 2018/19 in our [ECONOMY Performance Evaluation](#).

DRAFT

Putting in place a responsible approach to regeneration, with new homes being built and job opportunities created

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- 83 affordable homes delivered, less than in 2017/18 (226) (Worse) *proposed schemes considered for the AHG not progressed as planned*
- 213 empty properties brought back into use, more than in 2017/18 (204) (Better)

Among other things we have...

- identified the five areas in RCT with the potential to create more jobs and prosperity, i.e. the Cynon Gateway, Wider Pontypridd, Pontypridd Town, the A4119 corridor and Llanilid/M4 corridor.
- continued to lead and work with partners to support the City Deal projects that will bring investment, improved transport, housing and jobs into the region
- delivered 83 affordable homes and brought 213 empty properties back to life
- undertaken 452 interventions to tackle long term empty properties
- continued to promote RCT as a visitor destination. The wider partnership destination management plan is not yet in place, but will be completed in 2019.
- continued to see
 - positive signs of business start ups with of 34.2% start ups, almost double the 17.8% for SE Wales, and significantly more than the whole of Wales and the rest of the UK.
 - fewer business deaths at 8.9% in RCT, compared to 11.1% in South East Wales, 10.4% in Wales and 12.3% in the UK.
- identified wider Pontypridd/Treforest as a Strategic Hub for economic development by the Valleys Taskforce, with detailed work to consider opportunities for future development underway.
- achieved the halfway point of the new [Llys Cadwyn](#). Pivotal to the regeneration of Pontypridd, the building is on target for completion in 2022.

Business is Blooming in Tonypandy...
With funding from a business support programme, the owners of the Flower Room were able to able to improve a derelict building to create premises where they could start their new business as part of the regeneration of Tonypandy town centre.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- supporting our Town Centres to be social centres and gateways to local services in Porth, Mountain Ash Treorchy and Tonypandy.
- reviewing the support we provide to local businesses to make sure it meets their needs.
- working with local businesses to make our town centres safer.
- promoting Rhondda Cynon Taf to visitors by making the most of our landscape and delivering the Valleys Regional Park.
- expanding the range of housing available to all residents, including new developments, social housing and self build opportunities.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more property improvements in our Town Centres
- no of registered businesses and new start ups

- we will know how many homes have been built by local businesses
- we will continue to deliver affordable homes and bring empty properties back to life;

Making Rhondda Cynon Taf's schools amongst the best in the country, with all children achieving the best they can

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- 53.1% of RCT pupils achieved L2+ threshold (5 GCSEs at Grade A* to C including English/Welsh and Maths), an improvement from the previous year (49.8) and closing the gap with the Wales average (55.1) (Better)
- 28.0% of pupils eligible for free school meals achieved L2+ threshold, compared to 24.2% the previous year (Better) *but still too far below peers*
- 18.04 fixed term exclusions per 1,000 pupils in primary schools and 108.29 per 1,000 pupils in secondary schools. (Both Worse) previous year 14.2 primary and 95.7 secondary per 1,000 pupils). *However, the number of permanent exclusions decreased. We are working with teachers to get children and young people safely back in lessons.*

Among other things we have...

- opened 3 new through Schools as part of the 21st Century Schools programme, i.e. Porth Community School, Tonyrefail Community School and Ysgol Nant Gwyn in Tonypany. A new community primary school also opened at Cwmaman.
- continued to work with our regional partners in the Central South Consortium to challenge and support schools to improve achievement and well-being outcomes for pupils.
- continuing to put in place support for pupils well-being so that they can better cope with the challenges they face inside and outside school that may affect their ability to learn and to reach their full potential. This includes help in school e.g. Mental Health First Aid, as well as well as help for the whole family through the Resilient Families Service.
- put in place a 'Food and Fun' summer school holiday programme following a successful pilot in 2017. Almost 1,500 meals were served in five schools over the school summer holiday. 178 children enjoyed sport, fun and educational activities with old and new friends. Both pupils and parents gave it a thumbs up!

Glenboi Primary school, has a high number of disadvantaged pupils. The school put in place many ways to support, nurture and challenge the pupils and also to develop strong, supportive relationships with parents so they can in turn also better support their children's learning. From weekly mindfulness sessions, providing advice for learning at home and having a Family Engagement Officer to help parents to cope by providing practical as well emotional support. As a result of the work of everyone involved, pupils have a great starting point from which they can progress. In March 2019, the school's work was recognised as excellent by Education Inspectors. You can see a detailed Case Study on the [Estyn website](#).

Food and Fun "Routine is vital to my child and they have loved spending time with their friends. I have no one to help with childcare so this has had a huge positive impact for my family"

In 2019/20 our plans include

- continuing with long term improvements to our school buildings through the 21st Century Schools programme and involving parents and communities in developing plans for future projects.
- expanding the opportunities for school buildings to be available for delivering community services outside of school hours, e.g. community learning hubs.
- reviewing the support we provide to children with Additional Learning Needs before they start school.
- working with Health to make sure that all parents have support that most benefits their children's development.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more pupils including pupils eligible for free school meals, will achieve good results in their GCSEs
- fewer pupils will be excluded from school
- more pupils will attend school more regularly

Making sure there is a broad offer of skills and employment programmes in place for all ages

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year. Through their hard work and our support

- 2,000 people gained training, qualifications or work experience
- over 600 people improved their basic skills including digital skills
- 568 people, including 20 with learning difficulties or disabilities, gained employment
- Pupils not entering jobs, training or education when leaving school
 - aged 16 – 1.9% (45 pupils) compared to 1.1% (Worse)
 - aged 18 -2.9%, (31 pupils) compared to 2.6% (Worse)

(New Data Protection laws introduced in 2018 have made it difficult to collect this personal data about all young people making it difficult to accurately compare the data with previous years)

Among other things we have

- continued to support people, including those with additional learning needs or disabilities, to gain work
- worked with partners to develop adult community learning opportunities that will support people to gain essential skills, enhance their wellbeing and confidence
- continued to work with employers to provide opportunities for RCT residents to develop skills that will help them to compete for jobs

BWRDD
GWASANAETHAU
CYHOEDDUS
CWM TAF
PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD

EMPLOYABILITY PLEDGE

Cwm Taf public sector organisations pledge to join forces to provide local people with more opportunities in the world of work

Public sector organisations across the Cwm Taf area are working together to provide residents with better access to a wide range of inspiring career and training opportunities.


The Cwm Taf Public Services Board Employability Pledge unites the partner organisations with a common ambition to provide quality employment and to attract a more diverse workforce, benefitting the local community within the wider region. The public sector in Cwm Taf aims to be recognised as an employer of choice, offering generous terms and conditions and paying the Real Living Wage.

Opportunities the organisations may provide include:

- Apprenticeships, for both new and existing employees
- Work experience placements, to inspire and enable people to gain experience and develop new skills
- Employability programmes aimed at those furthest from the job market which provide training and, where possible, a guaranteed job interview
- Volunteering opportunities giving people the chance to develop transferable skills and to contribute to the community
- Working with schools, colleges and universities, highlighting the wealth of careers on offer in the public sector and providing students with work experience

Joining forces for all - creating a diverse, fulfilled workforce in Cwm Taf

The organisations united under this Pledge include: South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Natural Resources Wales, Interlink RCT and Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil.



Communities for Work

A, is a 19 year old woman caring for her mother, she was isolated and lacking confidence. She initially struggled to engage with the 'Communities for Work' because of a number of setbacks, including family bereavements. A's Support Worker kept in touch with her until she was ready to enrol on a 'Steps to Excellence' course. The course helped A to make friendships, increase her confidence and get work at a local factory.

- expanded Digital Fridays in the Council’s libraries, helping 273 people to improve their digital skills
- offered free childcare to more eligible 3 and 4 year olds, with over 1,200 places available
- worked with PSB partners to develop an ‘Employability Pledge’ that commits all public sector partners across Cwm Taf to work together to provide better access to job and training opportunities, making sure that the public sector, in the Cwm Taf areas, is seen as an employer of choice.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- providing support to people with long term health conditions and disabilities to stay in work.
- improving advice and practical opportunities for young people so that they can make more informed choices about their future careers.
- supporting more digital and creative work opportunities.
- working with employers to develop a skilled workforce that will help more RCT residents to compete for jobs.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more people, including young people, will be supported to get jobs;
- more young people will leave school and go on to further education, employment or training
- more people with health conditions will be supported to stay in work
- local businesses will be supported to help people stay in work

The work in our Economy priority is contributing to an RCT and Wales that is

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

You can see more detail about how we continue our work to Build a Strong Economy in our [2019/20 ECONOMY Plan](#).

PEOPLE

Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone in Rhondda Cynon Taf

We put in place the **PEOPLE** priority as we believe that the best way to support people live long and healthy lives is to support people to make informed choices and keep control of how they live their lives and support and contribute to their communities. Residents told us this is important to them.

From the latest available, 2017 data, the population of RCT is 239,127, which has increased from 231, 937 in 2001. As people are living longer, the proportion of older people in RCT is also growing. We want our residents of all ages to stay as well as they can for as long as they can but, inevitably, age related conditions in more older people will mean an increase in the need for health and social care.

We know that in RCT we have high numbers of vulnerable residents of all ages as well as deprived communities. We want to make sure people of all ages have the best chance of benefitting from the opportunities available to them including taking control of the services and facilities they value. We also want to focus on those in most need and to make sure that they have the right support at the right time.

We also know that we have to plan to meet higher expectations from our residents with less funding so we have to do things differently.

The steps we put in place to achieve this Priority are

- **Personalising and Integrating Health and Social Care services, with more people supported to live longer in their own homes**
- **Giving our children and young people a great start in life**
- **Redesigning local services so that they are joined up and efficient**

As part of our preparations to put in place a new Corporate Plan from 2020, we are considering whether we have made enough progress in the past three years as well as looking ahead to see what Social, Economic, Environmental and Cultural challenges we are facing and how we can work better with others so that we prevent problems from happening so that our work has the biggest positive impact both now and in the future.

Key information about the PEOPLE in Rhondda Cynon Taf

[Population of RCT](#) as at 2017 was 239,127

- 18.7% under 16
- 62.3% between 16-64
- 19% over 65

According to the latest [National Survey for Wales](#).

- 17% of households in RCT are in material deprivation, i.e. unable to afford things like keeping the house warm enough, making regular savings, or having a holiday once a year.
- 10% of adults in Wales exhibited fewer than two of the five healthy lifestyle behaviours. Men, middle-aged adults, and those in the most deprived areas were most likely to exhibit fewer than two of the behaviours i.e. smoking, not drinking above weekly guidelines, eating 5 fruit or vegetables (previous day), being physically active for at least 150 minutes (previous week) and obesity levels.
- 17% of people in RCT are lonely.

As at the 31st March 2019, there were

- 674 children in the care of the council
- 498 registrations on the Child Protection Register

In the latest Welsh [Thriving Places Index](#) RCT has been rated

- **4.47** for social isolation, increasing from 4 in 2018. A score of 10 indicates exceptionally good conditions for well-being and a score of 0 represents exceptionally poor conditions.
- **3.36** for Mental and Physical Health, a marginal increase from 3.23 in 2018

Latest Available Data applying to Cwm Taf – i.e. RCT and Merthyr

- Cwm Taf has the second highest rate of alcohol specific death in Wales 2015-17
- Alcohol accounted for 43% of referrals to specialist substance misuse services across Cwm Taf in 2017-18
- In 2018, 65.2 % of adults in Cwm Taf were obese or overweight.

Looking ahead

- Population of RCT will rise to 246,481 by 2039, with the greatest increase in the number of people aged 65 (32%)
- Life expectancy will increase by 5 years for both men and women by 2066
- 68.7 % of adults will be obese or overweight by 2025 PE
- There will be an increase in the number of adults with chronic conditions, including diabetes, heart conditions and stroke as well as common mental health conditions
- The number of people aged over 65 years living with dementia in Wales is estimated to increase from 44,275 in 2017 to 72,769 in 2035.

In 2018, we said we would continue our work to promote independence and positive lives for everyone – Overall, we continue to make good progress as a Council and as part of wider partnerships, and we have exceeded many of our expectations in supporting our most vulnerable residents. Progress in our short term measures show improvement, but not all,

and we know we still have more to do to help keep our residents of all ages and backgrounds safe and well.

Alongside our work in delivering our PEOPLE priority, we are continually building on our experience of doing things differently, what has worked and what we need to do better. We are also increasing our understanding of the effect of the changes we are making for the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf and the wider Cwm Taf Region.

Our work within the People priority is overseen by Cabinet, relevant Scrutiny Committees and, where appropriate the Regional Partnership Board and Public Services Board. In the last year, two areas of work in this priority have been subject to external review or inspection. We have not yet seen the final findings but they will be reported to Councillors and made public once they are available.

You can see more detail of our progress against what we set out to achieve in 2018/19 in our [PEOPLE Performance Evaluation](#).

Personalising and Integrating Health and Social Care services, with more people supported to live longer in their own homes

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- More clients who completed a period of reablement needed less support 6 months later (85.43% compared to 84.95% in 2017/18) - Better
- Fewer clients who completed a period of reablement no longer needed support (73.47% compared to 77.63%) – Worse – *there was a 7% increase in the number of adults who received reablement, however, only a 1% increase in the number of adults with no package of care and support.*
- More people admitted to residential or nursing care (420 compared to 417 in 2017/18) – Slightly worse.
- More people are using a direct payment to manage their own care arrangements (16.1% from 14.67% in 2017/18) – Better
- More visits to sports and leisure centres per 1,000 population (8,302 compared to 8,140 in 2017/18) – Better
- Fewer people, per 1,000 population, were able to return home from hospital more quickly (increased to 5.06 from 3.31 in 2017/18) – Worse – *The demand for intensive care and support for people leaving hospital is increasing the pressure on the health and social care provided in the community, especially in those areas where we are finding it hard to recruit care staff.*

We asked people with a Care and Support Plan in place about what matters to them from the care they receive

- 93% feel they live in the right home for them (89% 2017/18)– More
- 77% can do what matters to them (50% 2017/18)– More
- 94% they feel safe (79% 2017/18)– More
- 69% feel part of their community (52% 2017/18) – More
- 90% felt involved in any decisions made about their care and support (78% 2017/18) More
- 95% received care and support through their language of choice (94% 2017/18) - More

Among other things we have...

- completed our second Extra Care Housing facility in Maesyffynnon in Aberaman.
- continued our Stay Well@home service, which has created increased demand for Home Care Services.
- continued our investment in playgrounds and leisure centres to make them more attractive and accessible for residents and communities to encourage them to become more physically active and stay healthier for longer. Investments include improvements to Bronwydd and Hawthorn fitness suites, Llantwit Fadre, Rhondda and Abercynon Sports Centres together with 3G pitches across RCT.

Every Little Helps – we are helping to improve physical and dental health by reducing the sugar intake of our residents and staff. RCT is one of the partners in the Cwm Taf partnership that has committed to remove all added sugar drinks from offices, cafes and canteens, leisure centres and vending machines by July 2019.

We are also working as part of the Cwm Taf Public Services Partnership Board (PSB) to deliver the changes it has set out in the [Cwm Taf Well-being Plan](#). For the Council in particular the Cwm Taf Well-being Objectives of Thriving Communities, for which RCT is the lead and also Loneliness and Isolation is relevant to our own priorities. This is the first full year of delivering the PSB's work so there is still lots to do to deliver the long term plan.

'Thriving Communities' – as part of a wider partnership and working closely with the Ferndale community and local groups, we have been working to put in place the Ferndale Community Zone with a Community Hub building, known as the 'Hwb' in the former Ferndale Infants School. The main focus will be to help children and young people that have to cope with difficulties in their homes. The Community Zone is housed in a Community Hub building, where there will be a community space and services such as child care provision and employment courses.

'Loneliness and Isolation' – working with partners we have been looking at ways we can work together better to support communities to do more to tackle loneliness and isolation. Work so far includes finding the good work that is already going on and seeing how we can support more like it, working with schools to develop more volunteering opportunities as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate and Duke of Edinburgh Award and starting to hold volunteering fairs in schools.

You can see more about our work as part of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board [here](#)

In 2019/20 our plans include

- continuing to work with partners to put in place improved and enhanced community based solutions so that people will be able to get out of hospital more quickly and safely.
- putting in place a way forward for residential care that best meets the increasing demand and changing needs of our residents.
- progressing our programme of Extra Care housing.
- continuing to make sure that there is appropriate housing, accommodation and support for our residents with learning disabilities.
- making better use of technology that will allow people to safely stay in their own homes.
- working more closely with other public bodies in ways that will strengthen communities.
- continuing to invest in improvements to our leisure centres, parks, playgrounds and other facilities where our residents can get active and keep well.

You will know we have made a difference because

- there will be fewer people admitted to residential or nursing care.
- more adults who complete a period of reablement will need less support 6 months later
- more people will return home from hospital more quickly
- more people will be using a direct payment to manage their own care arrangements, so they can choose who provides care and when
- there will be more visits to our sports and leisure facilities.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's children and young people will receive a great start in life

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- Of the 6,209 contacts we received about concerns for the care of children and young people, in 30.6% of cases, the involvement of Statutory Social Services was needed (we are unable to compare this data with previous years as WG has changed the way this national measure is calculated)
- Fewer children were in the care of the Council (674 compared to 676 in 2017/18) – Better
- 798 families received support earlier through the Resilient families service, helping them to resolve or cope better with the challenges they were facing new measure for 2018/19

Continuing to break down barriers to learning by putting in place sanitary products in schools across RCT so that female learners can manage their periods with dignity and confidence and they don't miss out on school. Since we introduced the scheme in RCT, Welsh Government has committed funding so that females in all schools across Wales have access to appropriate products and facilities.

Among other things we have

- surveyed and talked to children and young people in the care of the Council to find out what matters to them as part of the 'Bright Spots' programme. The feedback was mostly positive but we know we still have more to do give these children and young people the best possible start in life.
- taken steps to increase and improve the accommodation available for children who cannot stay with their own families by putting in place a Regional Fostering Service with our partners in Merthyr Tydfil CBC. The new service started on 1 April 2019, to provide a 'Front door' to potential foster carers across the areas of Cwm Taf.
- talked to young people leaving our care to see how we can make improvements so that they are better prepared and able to contribute to the communities they live in. The detailed findings are not yet complete but from our work and information available so far, the things that are most likely to help them get the best start in life are
 - ensuring that children who cannot live with their parents live in suitable accommodation in RCT.
 - developing a clear accommodation pathway for young people leaving our care so they can see their options or 'journey'.
 - developing a scale of accommodation as well as support to meet the needs of young people leaving our care.
 - reducing the numbers of young people leaving our care who are placed in B&B accommodation so that they can be supported in more suitable accommodation.

Bright Spots

- *88% Children and Young People felt safe in their placements all or most of the time*
- *80% of Children and Young People thought that their lives were improving*
- *90% of Young People felt that they could do the same things as their friends*

- developing a comprehensive support package for care leavers including independent living skills, a handbook of useful information and making sure that young people are informed and ready to take up tenancies.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- strengthening the support we give to Foster Carers, particularly those who care for children with challenging behaviour.
- improving the availability of information, advice and assistance to children, young people and families.
- improving housing options and support for vulnerable people to prevent homelessness.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more families will receive support at an earlier time, which will mean fewer children will require intervention from Statutory Social Services.
- fewer children will need to be taken into the care of the Council.

DRAFT

Redesigning Local Services for our residents so that they are integrated and efficient

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- more people we worked with reduced, abstained or sustained their substance misuse from programme start to most recent review (89.21% from 88.26%)-(Better)
- 761 (95.4%) of families reported that they were better able to cope with their difficulties following the involvement of the Resilient Families Service (*New PI for 2018/19 – no comparable data*)

**A fresh start-
A resident helped by the Substance Misuse Service told us**
"I have now been abstinent for months.... I am not so isolated and really enjoying being around positive people. For the first time ever I am looking forward to the future!"

A family supported by the RFS to cope with difficulties including the impact of alcohol misuse told us
"We couldn't have done any of what we have if it was not for Resilient Families Services (RFS) help and support. We really appreciate everything they have done for our family and we'll be sorry to see them leave".

Among other things we have...

- continued to strengthen our support to families through the Resilient Families Service and wider Resilient Families Programme as well as working closely with partners to make sure that we are better able to find the children and young people in greatest need of our help. We are also making sure that this support is closer to families across RCT in the new Community Hubs.
- talked to parents, families and service users about how we can improve our Early Years Services. The findings will be used to shape and inform the new arrangements.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- strengthening the way we deliver a range of services to families with children in their 'Early Years'.
- embedding the new Substance Misuse service within Cwm Taf.
- improving Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services within Cwm Taf.
- working more closely with South Wales Police so that we can identify, and provide earlier support to those children facing harmful experiences in their households.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more people will reduce their substance misuse.
- there will new arrangements in place for people experiencing Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence so that they will feel safer.
- more families will be better able to cope with the help of the Resilient Families Service.

The work in our People priority is contributing to an RCT and Wales that is

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

You can see more detail about how we continue our work to 'Promote independence and positive lives for everyone' in our [2019/20 People Plan](#).

DRAFT

PLACE

Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

We put in place the **PLACE** priority as we believe that despite public sector austerity, the Council must look positively to the future through the growth and regeneration of the County Borough's infrastructure. Millions of pounds have and will continue to be invested in schools, new housing, our principal towns and the transport networks that will benefit the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural well-being of residents and communities, helping more residents and families to become more independent. Residents told us this is important to them and there is much to enjoy and celebrate about the County Borough.

We want to help residents and visitors to RCT to get on with their lives by maintaining the environment for a thriving County Borough where they can get around efficiently and safely whether they are commuting to work or enjoying RCT's rich and varied landscape to stay active and healthy.

We know that our residents have pride in their communities and we believe that by giving choice and power to local people you get better results and achieve better value. We want to help communities to do more themselves and give them more control over local services such as libraries and other cultural and community facilities.

However, it would be wrong to spend more than we can afford, and/or to pass on financial problems to future generations. This means we have to make difficult decisions, manage our budgets and focus on our priorities

The steps we put in place to achieve this Priority are

- **Rhondda Cynon Taf will be amongst the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion, and residents feeling safe**
- **Rhondda Cynon Taf's parks and green spaces continue to be valued by residents**
- **Involved and resilient communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf**
- **Rhondda Cynon Taf's local environment will be clean and attractive, with well-maintained roads and pavements, flowing traffic, increased recycling and less waste sent to landfill**

As part of our preparations to put in place a new Corporate Plan from 2020, we are considering whether we have made enough progress in the past three years as well as looking ahead to see what Social, Economic, Environmental and Cultural challenges we are facing and how we can work better with others so that we prevent problems from happening so that our work has the biggest positive impact both now and in the future.

Key information about Rhondda Cynon Taf

- As at 2017, there were 104,032 households in RCT
- 85% of journeys in Wales are made by car, 8% by rail and 8% by bus
- 96.54% of adults aged 60+ held a concessionary bus pass in last year.
- In 2016, RCT emitted 1,095.2 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the main greenhouse gas emission. This equates to 4.6 tonnes of CO₂ per resident.
- There are 8 Green Flag Awards for parks and open spaces in Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Issued **129** Fixed Penalty Notices for Dog controls
- We recycled 74,791 tonnes of waste in 18/19 this year, and sent 2.420 tonnes of waste to landfill
- The health benefits for people living with a view of a green space are worth up to £300 per person per year
- Wales spends £16m on 3.8m anti-depressant prescriptions every year.
- RCT is one of four¹ defined flood risk areas in Wales. 11.3% of the population of RCT is at risk from surface water flooding due to excess rainwater issues.
- We have classified the properties in at risk areas of flooding as:
 - 7,623 in high risk,
 - 14,182 in medium,
 - 26,682 in low risk.

Looking ahead

- Current trends suggest that, despite growth in rail use, private vehicles are set to remain the main mode of transport in Wales in the short to medium term at least. The expected advent of autonomous or driverless vehicles in the next 10 to 15 years could in turn have implications for our transport systems.
- By the 2050s it is estimated that average summer temperatures in Wales will increase by 1.0-4.6°C, average winter rain, snow, sleet or hail will increase by 14% and average summer rain will decrease by 17%. Droughts and flood events may become more common.
- Climate change poses risks within the next two generations including from flooding; drought (with consequences for agriculture, farming and food production); and damage to ecosystems and biodiversity.PL PHW
- Flooding affected by future climate change poses the greatest long-term risk to the performance of our transport networks, energy and digital infrastructure and public water supplies. The growing risks from heat, water scarcity and landslides caused by severe weather could also be significant.
- Wales' biodiversity and habitats will be under ever greater pressure, mirroring the global situation.

In 2018 we said we would continue our work to 'Create neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work'. Overall we continue to make good progress as a Council and as part of wider partnerships, exceeding many of our expectations. Many of our short term measures show improvement although we know we still have more to do to achieve some of our longer term plans in each of the four steps within this priority

¹ As defined by the Natural Resources Wales Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment in December 2018

Alongside our work in delivering our PLACE priority we are continually building on our experience of doing things differently, what has worked and what we need to do better. We are also increasing our understanding of the affect of the changes we are making for the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf and the wider Cwm Taf Region.

Our work within the PLACE priority is overseen by Cabinet, relevant Scrutiny Committees and, where appropriate the [Cardiff Capital Region Cabinet](#) and the [Cwm Taf Public Services Board](#).

You can see more detail of our progress against what we set out to achieve in 2018/19 in our [PLACE Performance Evaluation](#).

Involved and resilient communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf

Measure (infographic) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- 86.5% of residents are satisfied with Rhondda Cynon Taf as a place to live - Same

Among other things we have...

- progressed our Community Hubs programme. The new Mountain Ash Hub, [Canolfan Pennar](#) is now open, Ferndale 'HWB' is almost complete, and work in the former St Mair's Day Centre is starting soon. There will be 6 more Hubs in place over the next 2 years.
- put in place new plans to improve library provision in library buildings, library vehicles and digital libraries so that we can better meet current and future community need.
- put in place a varied Arts programme for resident of all ages and from all backgrounds to enjoy. We also marked 80 years of the Coliseum Theatre with a varied programme of events to celebrate the past and present and look forward to the future by setting up a new Cynon Valley Cultural Network.
- talked to more residents about what they would like to see in our programme, their feedback helped us to shape our first [Rhondda Arts Festival](#).
- put in place a new housing allocation scheme that supports long term housing need and includes making social housing more accessible.
- put in place the funding and outline plans for the Bryn Pica Eco Park that will turn rubbish into resources.

We are also working as part of the Cwm Taf Public Services Partnership Board (PSB) to deliver the changes it has set out in the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan, in particular the [Cwm Taf Well-being Objectives](#) of Thriving Communities, particularly in our work to put in place Community Hubs and the wider support to residents and communities identified in our PEOPLE priority plan.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- continuing to progress the Community Hubs development in Rhondda Fach (Ferndale) and Porth Plaza.
- improving our arrangements to support all our residents including homeless people, to find suitable long term accommodation.
- continuing our work to put in place an Arts programme with and for our communities.

- progressing the first phase of Bryn Pica Eco Park. This includes securing available technology to process three targeted material groups: rigid plastics, absorbent hygiene products (AHPs) including nappies and waste paint

You will know we have made a difference because

- fewer people/households will become homeless.
- Residents will be satisfied with Rhondda Cynon Taf as a place to live

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Rhondda Cynon Taf will be amongst the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion, and residents feeling safe

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- 93.52% people did not reoffend after attending the DIVERT programme (Worse 96.45% in 2017/2018)
- 17% of residents felt unsafe in our Town Centres (New – no comparative data)

Among other things we have...

- delivered community safety services and programmes that involve residents including...
 - promoting responsible drinking in our communities with 'no alcohol zones' in Aberdare and Pontypridd Town Centres and surround areas.
 - working with residents, businesses and police to help develop a culture of sensible drinking by putting in place a Community Action Plan Partnership (CAP) for Pontypridd.
 - helped to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in our community by
 - providing training and awareness opportunities for pedestrians and drivers of all ages to join in programmes and fun events to learn and understand more about road safety.
 - introducing improved technology to strengthen our enforcement of parking restrictions outside schools.

Pontypridd Youth Club In our talks with young people about the Pontypridd CAP, young people told us that there weren't enough activities for them that didn't involve alcohol. So we set up a weekly club where young people can take part in different activities and socialise with their friends without alcohol. From May 2018 around 33 young people attended the club each week. The club also provides support to vulnerable adults and advice on substances, ASB and ways of coping with difficulties at home.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- using the lessons learned from putting in place the Pontypridd CAP to see how we can apply it to other areas.
- raising awareness of the harms associated with knife use and knife crime to make sure that we keep knife crime as low as possible.
- working with partners to deliver effective interventions to reduce ASB including targeted patrols of ASB hotspots and improving information about youth provision available within RCT and taking steps to improve support to vulnerable young people.
- continuing to protect vulnerable people in our communities from rogue traders and doorstep crime.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more people will feel safe in our town centres
- vulnerable or repeat victims of anti-social behaviour will feel safe following our intervention

Rhondda Cynon Taf's local environment will be clean and attractive, with well-maintained roads and pavements, flowing traffic, increased recycling and less waste sent to landfill

Measures (infographics) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- 61.01% waste recycled, marginally less than in 2017/18 (61.31%) (Worse) *Tonnage of recycling has increased, as has the total of overall waste. Only 1.97% of the waste we collect is sent to landfill, with the remaining waste, including food, used to produce energy).*
- fewer Fixed Penalty Notices issued (129 compared to 170 in 2017/18) (Better) *A sign that most residents are keen to keep their communities clean. Most notices were issued for dog fouling, particularly on sports pitches.*
- maintained high standards of keeping RCT clean (99.4%) (Same as 2017/18)

Among other things we have...

- continued to improve the condition of our existing roads and highways e.g. resurfacing part of A4059 in Aberdare and sections of the Sardis gyratory in Pontypridd. We also repaired bridges and river walls, replaced footways, put in place new road safety measures and completed our LED street lighting replacement which means all street lighting in RCT is more energy efficient.
- progressed major new schemes e.g. Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley link, Llanharan By pass, dualling of Ely Valley Road, Gelli/Treorchy Relief Road and Cynon Gateway North (A4059 Aberdare Bypass Extension).
- progressed transport schemes that will join with other transport provision, e.g 10 new Park and Ride Schemes, more buses including new low floor buses and schemes that will promote walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- continued with our flood alleviation schemes in [Cwmaman](#); [Bwllfa Road](#), Cwmdare; [Rhydyfelin](#), [Cae Nant Flats](#)- Rhydyfelin; [Nant Cae-Dudwg](#), Cilfynydd; [Nant Gwaw](#) - Aberaman and [Nant y Fedw](#), Ynysboeth. We have also improved the information that is available to residents so that they can make more informed choices.
- involved schools and residents in projects to encourage more recycling including community projects in Ynysybwl, Brynna, Tonteg, Cwmbach.
- continued our campaigns to prevent littering, dog fouling and flytipping and worked with residents and communities to help them tackle local issues but we have also issued Fixed Penalty Notices and have also taken court action as a last resort.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- continuing to improve the condition of our roads and highways.
- continuing to progress major schemes that will be beneficial to communities both now and in the future.
- progressing transport schemes that will join with other transport provision, including active travel.
- completing our initial review of the infrastructure needed for low carbon vehicles.
- continuing to work with partners including Natural Resources Wales, to prevent the risk of flooding.
- continuing to involve residents in schemes to increase recycling.
- taking steps to prevent environmental crime through education, engagement and as a last resort, enforcement.

You will know we have made a difference because

- more of our waste will be recycled;
- fewer penalty notices will be issued
- the condition of our roads will continue to improve

Rhondda Cynon Taf's parks and green spaces continue to be valued by residents

Measure (infographic) to illustrate the key measures we set out last year

- 80.7% of our residents were satisfied with our parks and open spaces – (Worse 86%) *We are continuing our investment in parks and open spaces to make them more attractive and accessible to all our residents*

Following successful bids for funding, we are continuing to develop and improve our parks and open spaces and also helping to support volunteering activities. There are more plans in plans for 2019, and meantime among other things ...

- the new 'Friends of the Ynysangharad Memorial Park' group has been involved in many community activities and events.
- Rhondda Heritage Park was recognised as 'Family Venue of the Year' at the Welsh Hospitality Awards, gained the Autism friendly award by the National Autistic Society and achieved official Museum status.
- Aberdare Park saw improvements to its play area, George V fountain and surfacing used for the Road Race. Weekly Parkruns have been introduced and the Park achieved its first ['Green Flag'](#) Award.
- In total, eight of our parks have been awarded 'Green Flag Award' including Ynysangharad, Taffs Well, Aberdare and Dare Valley Country Parks. This international award recognises the high standards of our parks and green and outdoors spaces.
- we improved our use of social media to let our residents know about events and activities.

Ynysangharad War Memorial Park has seen 50 volunteers on its Volunteer programme, giving 1,650 hours of their time to support community developments e.g. Poppies in the Park, Schools community flower bed, vegetable patch, Bat Walk and Mindfulness programmes

In 2019/20 our plans include

- taking steps to make RCT more 'Green' including investing in our parks and green spaces, tree planting and reducing air pollution.
- identifying ways to further improve air quality across Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- considering the impact of the speed reduction on A470 on the air quality in the surrounding areas.
- continuing to invest in outdoor play facilities
- progressing plans to link Parks across the Valleys region as part of the Welsh Government's ['Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways'](#). This will connect the Valleys as a region, tell the stories of its rich cultural and industrial heritage, and encourage people to be more active and explore the Valleys landscapes.

You will know we have made a difference because

- our parks will maintain 'Green Flag' status

- residents will be satisfied with our parks and open spaces
- air quality will have improved

The Place priority is contributing to an RCT and Wales that is

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

You can see more detail about how we continue our work to 'Create neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work' in our [2019/20 PLACE Plan](#).

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Making the Best use of our budget – Living within our means

Rhondda Cynon Taf, like all Councils in Wales, has faced a prolonged period of operating with reduced resources alongside rising demand and costs associated with many services. Despite this challenging climate, we have delivered over £90Million in efficiency savings over the last 10 years or so and have achieved this through carefully managing our finances and prioritising investment, planning ahead and changing how we work.

As part of setting the 2019/20 budget, we took account of expenditure requirements such as changing service demands and inflation at around +2.2%, together with the money we would receive from our main funding source, Welsh Government, of +0.8%. This meant that we needed to make savings of £6.9Million in addition to £7Million of savings already agreed. We were able to make these savings through, for example, becoming more efficient in how we purchase goods and services, reducing the number of senior managers and office accommodation costs and also through the use of specific one-off grants. As part of setting the budget, a Council Tax increase of 3.6% was agreed, the lowest increase in Wales for the second consecutive year. More detail on our 2019/20 revenue budget of £483.469Million can be viewed [here](#).

As part of our forward planning, we have estimated that we will need to find further savings of around £43Million (as per latest Medium Term Financial Planning document – July 2018) by 2021 to off-set continuing reductions in government funding and increasing demand for services, particularly in social care. We know it will be harder to deliver year-on-year savings in the future and that is why we are continuing with our approach of examining every part of the Council's budget alongside a programme of significant investment in key areas. Our work and investment is continuing to focus on:

- Early intervention and prevention work in a wide range of areas to improve the lives of residents. This includes our Early Years and Family Support Service, Resilient Families Programme and Youth Engagement and Participation Service.
- Keeping adults independent, by, for example, working with partners to deliver the regional Stay Well@home service, providing home adaptations, support for carers and also involving residents in helping to shape social care over the longer term in areas such as Extra Care provision.
- Bringing more empty properties back into use to support the provision of good quality housing and to generate income from Council Tax.
- Offering more services on-line such as applying for Taxi licenses, involving customers in the design of services and continuing to use digital technology to modernise how the Council works and
- Thinking longer term and investing in the future through improvements to the highways infrastructure to reduce on-going maintenance costs and invest-to-save energy efficiency schemes that reduce energy consumption in Council buildings.

In parallel with the above, our 3 year capital programme for 2019/20 to 2021/22, we are investing £173Million in priority areas to further improve infrastructure and facilities available for residents. These include regeneration projects, improving school buildings and facilities, improving the condition of both roads and community assets such as parks and playgrounds

as well as further investment in Leisure Centre facilities. We will continue to work closely with partners over this period to ensure we make the best use of resources and take all opportunities to attract additional funding should it become available.

Rhondda Cynon Taf is also a member local authority of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and is playing a central role in delivering an exciting and ambitious plan to improve the economy of South East Wales over the next 10 years.

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WORKING NOW FOR THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) puts a duty on the Council to improve the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of its residents. This new law asks all Councils and many other public bodies in Wales to change what they do and how they do business so that they can make improvements.

We want to make sure that we embed the Act into everything we do. What this means is that in delivering our priorities of ***Economy, People and Place***, and across all our services we are working hard to

- balance the short term needs with planning for the future.
- work with other partners to deliver objectives.
- involve those with an interest and seek their views.
- put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse.
- consider the effect of our work with that of other public bodies and organisations.

You can see many examples of how we are doing this throughout this report but we know we have more to do to make sure we do everything asked by the Act. We believe that we can best do this by making sure it is part of and not separate from our everyday work.

The Act also means we need to think about those services which are behind the scenes, and make any changes necessary so that they also work in a way that helps the Council to succeed in its plans. Since our Corporate Plan was introduced in 2016, we have made good progress in making sure that these services are working well. Given the Council's ambition and the pace of change required to deliver our priorities, the level of progress in implementing the Act is generally positive. This is reflected in each section of this report but we have used the Act to check where we can do better, and used resources being developed by the [Future Generations Commissioner](#) to provide relevant support and challenge as we continue to embed the Act into the Council's arrangements and processes.

WFG Corporate Theme	RCT Progress
Corporate Planning	The priorities in our Corporate Plan for 2016-20, 'The Way Ahead' were tested against the Act in 2017 and were adopted as the Council's Well-being objectives. Since then, we have increased our understanding and application of the Act and it is being used to shape our performance and monitoring and planning processes, among other things. Our annual corporate and service assessments include a review of how we are putting the Act in place across the whole Council. We are now starting work to renew our Corporate Plan. The new Plan, which will be in place from 2020, will set out what matters most to our residents and communities, the direction for all Council services both now and in the future and also what we will do to get there.

Financial Planning	We spend our budgets on what matters most to residents and communities and find ways to work more efficiently, work better with partners and share our resources.
Work force Planning	We train our staff so that they continue their personal development and keep up to date with the skills they need to help the Council to improve. We think that the physical and mental well-being of our staff is key to a well motivated workforce and make sure that they are supported to stay as well as possible. We also look to the future e.g. with our graduate scheme and our apprenticeship programme which won an award in the National Apprenticeship Awards Cymru in 2018 . We want to make sure our residents are also able to develop their skills so that they can take advantage of work and digital opportunities so we also put in place activities to help them e.g. Digital Fridays, opportunities to get involved in intergenerational projects and supporting them to maintain services and facilities as part of ' RCT Together '.
Procurement	We make sure that anything we buy for the Council is value for money, benefits society and makes as little impact as possible on the environment. We also make sure that our policies take into account other social responsibilities e.g. promoting anti-slavery, the use of Fair Trade products and buying electricity that is generated from 100% renewable energy sources. The arrangements we have put in place with our major contractors have provided over 100 people with jobs.
Managing our Assets	We make sure that we make best use of our buildings to benefit our residents and communities, e.g. community use of our schools and also provide staff with the equipment they need so that they can spend more time with residents, communities and businesses. We share office space with other organisations where it makes sense to do so. e.g. Porth Plaza contains a library, childcare facilities, private training businesses and our One4All centre. We are also working with Public Sector partners to see how we can improve services, make better use of all partners' buildings and so reduce costs. All of this work also takes account of our drive to deliver a carbon neutral service.
Managing Risks	We identify short, medium and long term risks that will need to be mitigated in order to help us to deliver our Corporate Priorities.
Managing our Performance	We make information about what we do and how well we do it, widely available on our website. This report is one of the ways we make this information more accessible to people, communities and our partners. We make sure that everything we do is focussed on the things that people have told us are important to them and are engaging more of our residents in the decisions that affect them. We want to put in place improved arrangements to share relevant data with our partners to help us improve all public services in RCT and also strengthen the information we have available. We are also working with Data Cymru to improve access to a wider range of

	consistent, timely and relevant information about future trends that will help us to better prepare for longer term.
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We know there is always more to do to as we plan for and keep up with the speed and scale of changes facing the Council and all public bodies in Wales. We continually challenge why, what and how we do what we do so that we can make changes that will benefit the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf, both now and in the future.

In 2018, we looked at how we were applying the Act as part of the way we review our services to see what we can improve or do differently. We saw that we have a positive platform from which to build but some areas of our work were progressing more quickly than others. We used the Commissioner's 'Journey checker' to help us reflect on our progress so far. It is difficult to apply the Checker across the many and varied actions involved in delivering our objectives but overall whilst we can point to examples where we are "Leading the Way" e.g. the Stay Well@home service, we also know that we have more to do.

Over the next year we will

1. use advice, guidance and feedback from the Future Generations Commissioner, the Wales Audit Office and best practice to continue to embed the Act into our work.
2. use what we learn from our own pilot projects to further improve our arrangements.
3. continue to work with national bodies, e.g. Welsh Government and Future Generations Commissioner so that we can improve how we join together the different national policies we need to put in place.
4. work with national partners to find stronger and more consistent information about the future that will help us to improve our long term thinking.
5. continue to positively contribute to and support the Cwm Taf Public Services Board particularly in its joint working with Bridgend County Borough Council.

You can see more detail about how we are applying the Act in our Corporate Assessment [here](#).

We know we can't do everything ourselves and we have a good track record of working with others. From well known partnerships like the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to smaller partnerships, you can see some examples of how and where we do this [here](#). There are also many other everyday examples of where we talk to and work with other public bodies so that we can overcome shared local difficulties more easily. We also work with and alongside local community groups to provide residents and communities with direct support to get things done in their communities, e.g. through our 'RCT Together' programme, supporting them to prepare community bids for Welsh Government funding.

The Act puts a duty on the Council to work in a more formal partnership with other public bodies in a Public Services Board (PSB). What this means is they must work as part of a Public Services Board, finding out how they can make the biggest difference to people and communities by working better together.

As RCT works with many of the same public bodies as Merthyr Tydfil CBC, e.g. South Fire and Rescue, South Wales Police, Cwm Taf University Health Board, in 2016 we agreed to join together to form a joint PSB, the [Cwm Taf Public Services Board](#) (PSB)

The Cwm Taf PSB set out how it will work together to improve the Well-being of the Cwm Taf area in four Well-being Objectives which are set out in more detail in a [Well-being Plan](#) published in 2018. The four Well-being Objectives for Cwm Taf are

Thriving Communities	promoting safe, confident, strong, and thriving communities improving the wellbeing of residents and visitors and building on our community assets
Healthy People	helping people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges
Strong Economy	growing a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf
Tackling Loneliness and Isolation	finding new ways to channel the undoubted strengths of our communities, including volunteering to tackle more effectively the loneliness and isolation which often exists within many of them.

The Council is the lead partner for the Thriving Communities objective and is also actively involved in the other three Well-being objectives. You can see more information about the PSB's work and progress on its [website](#). How we are working with our PSB partners has been described throughout this report.

As well as working together to tackle the big issues in Cwm Taf, the PSB also wanted to set a quick and positive example of how partners could support residents to improve their health. Recognising the high number of staff working for all the PSB partners who also live in the Cwm Taf area, the PSB has agreed to replace all added sugar drinks across all the partner organisations (PSB), you can see more about this in the People priority.

The PSB is also looking at how the transfer of Health Care services in Bridgend from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg UHB to Cwm Taf UHB to form the new [Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board](#), will affect the partnership arrangements in place and provide opportunities for further joint working with Bridgend CBC.

The PSB will publish its first annual report in July 2019.

The Future Generations Commissioner has also set out six areas of work that people have told her are the biggest challenges facing Wales and where she could have the most impact.

These areas are

1. [Skills](#) – our work includes putting in place an employment pathway supporting people to develop their skills in line with the needs of local employers.
2. [Housing](#) our work includes putting in place new housing, bringing empty properties back to life and providing all our residents with the opportunity to live safe independent lives in purpose built accommodation.

3. [Transport](#) our work includes putting in place active travel routes and also creating a sustainable, accessible transport system for all by investing in public transport as part of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal as well as considering the infrastructure requirements for electric vehicles.
4. [Planning](#) our work includes how planning can be used to create the right places, communities and infrastructure for future generations. [Making Wi-Fi available in Town Centres will help](#) support high street business
5. [Adverse childhood experiences \(ACEs\)](#) our work includes helping children and young people and their families to cope with the difficulties they face including through our Resilient Families Service and providing work opportunities for young people leaving care.
6. [Better Ways to keep people well](#) our work includes helping to increase the resilience of young people through the Arts and encouraging volunteering as ways to keep well.

These are just some of the ways we are already tackling these areas of work identified by the Commissioner. You will find more detail included in our progress to date and our plans for the future throughout this report.

You can give your thoughts and experiences on the Commissioner's priorities on the [People's Platform](#).

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Equalities – A fair and equal RCT and a more equal Wales

<p>RCT Population (2017 MYE)</p> <p>Total - 239,127 Males - 117,201 (49%) Females - 121,926 (51%)</p>	<p>RCT staff data (March 2018)</p> <p>Over 80% of employees live in the Council area</p> <p>Total 10,491 Male 25.4% Female 74.6%</p>		
<p>Age range</p> <p>0-15 -18.7% 16-64 -62.3% 65+- 19%</p>	<p>Age Group</p> <p>16-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+</p>	<p>Total</p> <p>746 1,986 2,557 3,213 1,894 245</p>	<p>% of Workforce</p> <p>7.0% 18.7% 24.0% 30.2% 17.8% 2.3%</p> <p><i>More detailed information about the workforce can be found in the annual equalities monitoring report to Cabinet 19 March 2019.</i></p>
<p>The Thriving Places Index Wales for Equalities measures inequalities in Health, Income and Well-being. The 2019 data gives RCT a rating of 4.60. The measure covers many different services and different providers at a local, regional, national and international level and has fallen from 5.26 since its introduction in 2018.</p>			

In the last year we have maintained our good progress towards a fair and equal RCT and we can point to many positive examples of this throughout this report as well as in our annual Equality Report which was presented to Cabinet in [March 2019](#). Examples include helping children and young people aged 0-25 years who as a result of their personal or family circumstances, need assistance to access and/or engage in play opportunities and youth activities and extending the [Home Library service](#) so that people with long-term illness, mobility problems or are full-time carers are also able to access books as part of the new @homelibraryservice.

In the last year we have also

- put in place our new Strategic Equality Plan for 2019-22 (link when available) which sets out our detailed work programme with a focus on five key areas that our residents told us were most important to them
 - better understanding the needs of our communities and the barriers they face to thrive.
 - reducing inequalities that exist within our communities.
 - promoting safe communities.
 - reducing the gender pay gap within the Council
 - creating an inclusive workforce within the Council that represents the differences in our communities

This plan reflects the Well-being of Future Generations Act and in particular helps us to show how we are contributing to [a more equal Wales](#) -a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.

In the meantime we have continued to

- tackle hate crimes and improve the monitoring of the impact of our work so that it can be robustly scrutinised by the Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Group
- encourage service managers to gain a greater understanding of customers by collecting equality monitoring data and ensure diversity is represented in decision making;
- provide awareness about our employee networks and increase their membership;
- continue to implement the WAVE action plan with a specific project on whether barriers exist for career development for senior women in the organisation;
- continue to tackle the stigma of Mental Health through our commitment to the 'Time to Change' Wales Pledge;
- encourage new membership to the Disability Forum to ensure it reflects our diverse communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf;
- increase our knowledge and understanding of our workforce.

Tackling hate crime and improve the monitoring of the impact of our work so that it can be robustly scrutinised by the Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Group

Among other things, we have focussed on Early Intervention, Education and Training

With pupils in RCT schools

Working with 45 schools to deliver training to pupils to raise their awareness of Hate Crime and how to report it with the aim of increasing inclusion and reducing discrimination and inequality within schools. 2,200 pupils received the training which looked at five characteristics defined in Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Criminal Justice Act 2003, which helped to encourage discussion about young people's understanding of

1. Disability – *pupils discussed all aspects of disability including physical disability, mental health awareness, learning difficulties, dementia and Autistic spectrum disorder.*
2. Race – *pupils often demonstrated a good understanding of race and the issue of racism.*
3. Religion - *pupils often demonstrate a good understanding of different forms of religion and good knowledge of other cultures.*
4. Sexuality – *pupils were encouraged to talk about sexuality and look at celebrities who are openly lesbian, gay or bisexual with the aim of challenging stereotypes.*
5. Gender identity-*pupils were encouraged to think about different gender identities including people who identify as non-binary and gender fluid. Pupils are also provided with guidance on the use of appropriate pronouns.*

At the end of the session pupils are asked if they understand more about Hate Crime and how to report it. You can see more about our work in schools in the PLACE evaluation.

With students in Further Education Colleges

'Drop in' clinics have been held in Aberdare, Nantgarw and Rhondda campuses of Coleg Y Cymoedd, with the aim of increasing awareness of Hate Crime and how to

report it. During this time, 138 students dropped into the clinics. As a result of these drop in clinics, further formal training has been arranged with students.

With Police Youth Volunteers

Hate crime awareness training has been delivered to 8 Police Youth volunteers to raise their awareness of hate crime and reporting mechanisms.

With Adults with Learning disabilities

Working with Adults with learning disabilities in Talbot Green and Llwynypia 'Learning Curves' helping them to recognise hate crime that may be directed at them, and how they can report it.

With residents

Open Events for residents were held in Local libraries and Leisure Centres to help to increase general awareness of hate crime and how to report it. These events have been run with South Wales Police as part of Hate Crime Awareness Week 2018, but have also held on other occasions throughout the year.

We also participated in National Hate Crime Awareness Week

During National Hate Crime Awareness week in October 2018, we worked with South Wales Police to host a variety of community events. During these events we talked to residents about their experiences of Hate Crime and were able to raise greater awareness. The event also provided a valuable opportunity to record and collect more accurate information to gauge public understanding of Hate Crime and barriers to reporting it.

During this week

- 20 community events were held across RCT.
- 429 residents took part in our formal survey, with more people sharing their personal experience of hate crime and its effects in individual discussions.
- we launched local social and mainstream media campaign on hate crime and how to report it.
- South Wales Police used its 'Pride car' in four events across RCT and Merthyr, creating great interest and opportunities to engage with residents. The car was also taken to Ysgol Hen Felin, where Council staff and Police officers discussed diversity topics with pupils aged between 3 and 19.
- working with South Wales Police and Pontypridd RFC, the week culminated in an event at Pontypridd RFC (awaiting links). To support National Hate Crime Awareness Week, the club used social media to advertise the event, produced a 'Be heard' banner, shared numerous photographs of players, residents, police and councillors on social media platforms and also printed an article in a match day program explaining hate crime and how to report it. These actions prompted a positive response from social media followers, although we are not able to measure the total number of residents have seen the message in its various forms.

Monitoring Hate Crime

Working with our partners, including South Wales Police, we have strengthened our collection, scrutiny and use of Hate Crime data and are taking steps to ensure that residents receive a positive and consistent response when they report Hate Crime.

The Council works with South Wales Police and other partners including Trevallis, [‘Show Racism the Red Card’](#) and [Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team](#) (EYST) as part of the Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Group. In its quarterly meetings, the Group considers and scrutinises Hate Crime data from the past quarter and the progress it is making. This data comprises Stop and Search Data and all Hate Crimes and incidents which have been reported in the RCT and Merthyr areas broken down by protected characteristics. The latest data in respect of Hate Crime provided by South Wales Police is set out in the [PLACE evaluation](#).

The Group is able to identify emerging trends or hot spots and also compare its data with that of other South Wales Police force areas to see if it can improve and learn lessons. In the past the low number of reported hate crime has made this difficult to achieve. However, the recent uncertainties surrounding Brexit, has led to a greater emphasis on identifying residents, community groups and networks that may be vulnerable to harassment or experience increased fear.

Continuing to tackle the stigma of Mental Health through our commitment to the ‘Time to Change’ Wales Pledge.

We have continued to hold regular ‘time to talk’ sessions to tackle the stigma of mental health, although, we are now working towards a wider wellbeing strategy. However, monitoring our sickness absence data continues to show Mental Health as being a key issue for employees, with 32% of all absences related to Mental Health. Consequently the focus this year has been on overall wellbeing and the introduction of a Well-being Working Group to analyse data and identify workforce trends and good practice that we can use to improve our arrangements. In January 2019, a Well-being day for staff was held in Abercynon Leisure Centre, where stress busting and mindfulness sessions took place along-side [other wellbeing initiatives](#) and information. The work to raise awareness of mental health issues is still in progress and will continue into 2019 as we focus on management induction and training.

Providing awareness about our employee networks and increase their membership

500 of our Managers have been briefed on the existence and benefits of the Council’s three employee networks, Perthyn our LGBT+ Network, our Allies Network and our Disability and Carer Network, so that they can make staff aware of the support available to them. As a result of these briefings, Membership to some networks has increased slightly but there is still much to do. Our work will continue during 2019/20. Staff networks have been actively involved in supporting events including LGBT coffee morning, Time to Talk sessions and Pride. In December 2018, we also

Supporting Trans pupils in schools by providing information that will help teachers to better support them

launched our new staff Disability and Carers Network as part of International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Encouraging new membership to the Disability Forum to ensure it reflects our diverse communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

We have successfully attracted new members to the forum, including people with disabilities and also parents of disabled children to ensure that members are representing the range of disability diversity. Among other things, members of the Disability Forum have been supporting the Accessible Wales' Considerate Parking Campaign in Aberdare in conjunction with South Wales Police and have been involved in a number of consultations including the annual budget review, the Council's new Local Toilets Strategy and the new Strategic Equality Plan.

Parks for all to enjoy

Following a visit to test the accessibility of Aberdare Park, the Disability Forum helped to inform a programme of work to make it easier for people with sensory and mobility loss to get around the park and enjoy the facilities on offer. We have already completed footpath improvements and other improvements have been planned.

Encouraging service managers to gain a greater understanding of customers by collecting equality monitoring data and ensure diversity is represented in decision making.

We recognise that we need to know more about the diversity of our residents and customers. Without detailed knowledge we are unable to be fully confident that the decisions we make fully represent and meet the needs of our communities. We have not made as much progress as we planned while we focussed on our Strategic Equality Plan. Some data relating to people with protected characteristics is captured as part of the equality monitoring section of the Customer Satisfaction and Consultation surveys, but this is not enough. We have already talked to residents about the potential to seek more information from them as part of our monitoring arrangements and they told us that they were mostly happy to answer equality monitoring questions, but also indicated that we need to give more thought and provide clarity about how responses will be used. We are developing relevant privacy notices to ensure data compliance.

Continue to implement the Women Adding Value to the Economy (WAVE) action plan with a specific project on whether barriers exist for career development for senior women in the organisation

As part of our monitoring of the WAVE project and to meet our legal obligations, we published information about the Council's Gender Pay gap in our [Annual Equality Report 2017-18](#). The information showed a slight reduction in the gender pay gap from 2017. To further reduce this pay gap, we are continuing to implement the WAVE action plan, including the specific project on whether any barriers exist for career development for senior women in the organisation.

Owing to the potentially complex and sensitive information disclosed by female staff, an experienced gender pay expert is involved in the Project and undertook the research into women's progression routes into senior management posts. Phase 1 of the project has been completed and the findings are imminent. We will continue to prioritise this area of work and

are committed to positive action to encourage more female staff to undertake management development programmes

Increase our knowledge and understanding of our workforce.

There is a significant amount of data about our workforce set out in our annual Equality Report presented to [Cabinet on 19 March 2019](#). This workforce data allows us to monitor the diversity and make up of our employees and also monitor any gaps in protected characteristics. An example of this is we know that employment and retention for young people working for the Council is lower than for other age ranges. Our apprenticeships programme help to recruit young people, and we have successfully recruited 27 apprentices in 2018/19, 19 of who are under the age of 25.

Breaking down barriers at work
75% of our work force is female and 80% will experience noticeable changes as a result of the Menopause. We launched our Menopause Guide on International Women’s Day. We aim to create an environment where our employees feel confident about raising issues about the effect of their symptoms.

In 2019/20 our plans include

- Implementing our new Strategic Equality Plan for 2019-22 with its focus on the five key areas that our residents told us were most important to them.
- meeting our responsibilities under the ‘Disability Confident’ Scheme.
- continuing our commitment to the ‘Time to Change Wales’ pledge, ‘Stonewall Diversity Champions’ programme and ‘Stonewall Equality Education Index’.
- continuing to deliver Dignity and Respect training to colleagues across the Council and inform them of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and to encourage them to challenge negative attitudes.
- strengthening equality training for staff dealing with complaints about the Council’s services and ensure information is used to inform service improvement.
- continuing to focus on Mental Health, making sure it is included in all relevant training.
- strengthening our understanding of the needs of our armed forces veterans.

Breaking Down Barriers to travel
.... by providing ‘Travel Training’ that helps people of all ages, abilities and needs to improve their road safety awareness and knowledge of how to travel by public transport so that they have more opportunities to get out and about independently and with confidence. They also have more chance of getting jobs and enjoying other activities available in their communities and further afield.

Contributing to an RCT and Wales that is

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Welsh Language - Delivering services in the language of your choice

We are making good progress with our work to deliver services to you in the language of your choice, although we know that there is more to do, especially if we are to play our part to help Wales to achieve 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

- The number of Welsh speakers in RCT has remained fairly consistent since 2001.
- The greatest proportion of Welsh speakers are under 25 years old.
- The 2011 Census tells us there are 27,779 Welsh speakers in RCT (12.3% of the population). Data from an ONS population survey [December 2018](#) suggests that there are now more Welsh speakers, 51,400 (22.4%). However, the ONS survey involved fewer people so it might not be a true reflection.
- Since 2003, there has been almost 1,000 additional places in our Welsh schools (990)
- RCT has highest % of pupils taught Welsh as a first language from within the 5 Councils covered by the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service, 19.04% in Primary schools and 19.35% in secondary schools.

Between 2015/16 – and 2017/18

- The number of 7 year olds being taught through the medium of Welsh has remained around the same (543 in 2017/18, 2 less than in 2015/16). However, there are now slightly more 7 year olds being taught in English so the overall percentage of pupils learning through Welsh has decreased by 0.72%
- 0.42% more learners achieving A*-C grades in Welsh first language Key Stage 4 outcomes

Since 2016 we have provided Level 1 Welsh Language training to 1,562 staff.

As a result of the improvements in recruitment and training for Welsh Language since 2016, more of our staff have indicated they are fluent in Welsh.

There has been a 30% increase in the workload for Welsh Services, including translation, ensuring that services are provided to residents in their language of choice.

We are committed to encouraging residents to deal with services in Welsh, and making it easier for them to contact and do business with the Council in the language of their choice. The number of Welsh speakers in our communities is currently low at 12.3% of our population ^{*1}27,779 and compares to the whole of Wales at 19%. As a result, the number of local people applying for jobs in the Council who are able to speak Welsh is also low as the majority of Welsh speakers in RCT are not of working age.

What this means is that we need to support and encourage our existing staff to use and improve their Welsh skills at work and encourage our residents to engage with us in Welsh. It also means that we need to plan ahead so that we are able to take advantage of the Welsh Language skills our young people have to offer as they leave full time education and reach working age. To help with raising the skills and confidence of our staff, we recruited a Welsh Language Tutor. Between April 2018 and March 2019 over 400 staff have had Welsh language lessons from our tutor which helps staff and services to respond better to the needs of residents.

¹ As at 2011 census

Along with the proposed significant investment in our Welsh medium schools, [the announcement](#) in March 2019, that Rhondda Cynon Taf will host the Royal National Eisteddfod in 2022 is an exciting opportunity to further boost the use of the Welsh language in our communities. This will also contribute to helping the Council to meet the national Well-being goal of a ‘Wales of vibrant culture and Welsh language’ as well as other national goals.

The Council also needs to adhere to the Welsh language laws and apply national Welsh Language Standards, making sure that we:

- treat the Welsh language the same as the English language, and
- offer people the opportunity to receive their services from us, as well as from those funded by us, in Welsh.

The Welsh Language Standards apply to all parts of the Council’s work, including to Council meetings, where translation facilities and translators have been put in place. A national Welsh Language Commissioner is responsible for making sure that the Welsh Language Measure and the Standards are being implemented across Wales. We report our work and progress to the Commissioner every year, you can see our most recent report [here](#). The Council also has its own arrangements in place to make sure we are making progress and the Welsh Language Commissioner has recognised these arrangements as good practice on his [website](#) indicating that the Council “*has shown its commitment to ensuring compliance with the Welsh language standards and the principles of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011*”.

If we do not properly implement the Welsh Language Standards, we could receive a penalty of up to £5,000 for each case. During 2018/19, the Council has been investigated a number of times following complaints from a number of our residents about how it is treating the Welsh Language. But we continue to work closely with the Welsh Language Commissioner’s office to make sure that we do everything we can to resolve any problems and so far we have received no financial penalties.

What we plan to do to meet the standards is set out in two documents that we must publish as part of our duties under the law. These are the:

1. [Welsh Language Standards Action Plan](#)
2. [Welsh Language Promotion Strategy](#)

To make sure that we keep on track and meet the Welsh Language Standards, a Steering Group of Councillors and representatives from other interested public bodies and voluntary groups including Fforwm Iaith:

1. checks the progress we are making against our Action Plan and Promotion Strategy,
2. reviews Audit reports to make sure that all services are delivering services in Welsh, and
3. approves major Welsh language policies that affect all services to our residents.

Each of our services also looks at where they are providing services in Welsh and what they need to do to improve or do more. One way of helping us to improve is to work with others. We work with others, as part of the Welsh Language Forum, made up of voluntary groups,

the third sector and other public bodies, which helps us to develop and implement our plans for the Welsh language.

To increase services we provide in Welsh,

last year we said we would **and amongst other things we**

work more closely with our partners in the community

- worked towards organising Splash, Sing and Learn sessions for parents and babies in our leisure centres in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin
- put in place after school activities e.g. climbing, football, netball and rugby in partnership with the Urdd
- provided Welsh language activities in School Holidays with Menter Iaith
- continued to support Menter Iaith with resources and facilities to hold Parti Ponty
- hold Welsh Medium Book clubs and Mother and Toddler groups in our libraries with Mudiad Meithrin
- encouraged our staff and residents to work with Welsh for Adults to help with their Welsh language skills

help Wales to meet its target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

made sure that

- new staff are trained to Welsh Language Level 1.
- all staff who are promoted or transferred between services also receive Level 1 training
- all Council staff that can already speak Welsh are being helped to continue learning Welsh to Level 2 +
- staff and residents were more aware of the Welsh language
- our Welsh speaking staff continue to wear badges and lanyards
- we use the Cymraeg logo on our communications
- there are posters encouraging staff to speak Welsh

We have also

- provided Welsh language training to the staff in our 'Flying Start' Child Care settings so that they are able to encourage greater use of Welsh with children

contribute to improving Welsh medium education across Wales

by working with partners to show how we will increase and support Welsh medium education in the area, in our ['Welsh in Education Strategic Plan'](#).

We have received positive feedback from the Welsh Language Commissioner about our progress, so we know we are on the right track, but there is always more to do. Among other things, in 2019/20 we will:

- work towards our target of increasing the number of Welsh speakers in RCT by 6.8%, by the next census date of 2021.
- work with the Royal National Eisteddfod Committee on the arrangements to bring the Eisteddfod to Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2022.
- promote key national and local Welsh medium events to raise awareness of the Welsh language including
 - St David's Day
 - Owain Glyndŵr Day
 - Shwmae Su'mae Day
 - National Urdd Eisteddfod
 - the annual youth message of [Peace and Goodwill](#) with the Urdd.
- continue to work with the Welsh Government's Welsh in Business Support Officers to encourage our businesses to see the advantages of Welsh both locally and globally.
- further strengthen the translation facilities in Council meetings.
- continue to meet the Welsh Language standards.
- increase the opportunities for staff to learn Welsh by working with Cymraeg Gwaigh (Work Welsh)

Our work to promote the Welsh Language is contributing to an RCT and Wales that is

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Biodiversity

We are making good progress with our work to protect and enhance our environment in Rhondda Cynon Taf, although we know that there is much more to do to tackle the big environmental challenges both locally and nationally.

- RCT is of national importance for its Rhos pasture marshy grasslands, and other species-rich grasslands.
- We have the most southerly glacial cwm landscape in the British Isles.
- About two thirds of the County Borough is of particular importance for wildlife, including Local Nature Reserves, Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.
- There are at least 85 different kinds of bee on our old coal tips, not to mention many other insects, lichen, fungi and flowers.
- The valley sides are outstanding wildlife highways allowing species to move and habitats to function.
- The mountain above Treherbert is probably the wettest place in the South Wales valleys. Which is why there are extensive peatbogs, being restored amid the new wind turbines. It is also why our mountain streams are so energetic and full of wildlife.
- Wildlife and biodiversity on our door step is amazing, free and there for residents of all ages and abilities to enjoy. We can see Bluebells on the hillsides and in the woods, watch birds of prey like buzzards, peregrines and red kites, or make our gardens more attractive to wildlife.
- There are clear physical and mental health benefits of being outside and engaging with nature.
- Our landscape and history are closely bound to our identity and culture, as well as producing our unique biodiversity. The dramatic geography and story of RCT informs our sense of our place in the world as well as local place names.
- Children and Young People from schools in Wales and England visit the Dare Valley Country Park to learn about, and enjoy, nature and the environment.

There is more information available on our [Biodiversity tour](#)

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 asks us to protect our biodiversity, as well as meeting the challenge of creating jobs and homes, health and education. By working in this way, it will also help to make Wales a low carbon, green economy, ready to adapt to climate change. A more joined up approach to how natural resources, such as the land, water, air and wildlife, are managed will help to make sure that they will still be available for the future. This law works alongside what we need to do to improve Environmental Well-being for the residents and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf, helping to contribute to the seven national well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, in particular, a more Resilient Wales and a Globally Responsible Wales.

You will have seen many examples of how the Council is protecting and enhancing our environment within our priorities. As well as these examples, in 2018/19 we have also:

- continued to make sure that biodiversity is integrated into the plans for new housing estates e.g. sustainable long term management of public open spaces, protecting trees and hedges, meadows and wildlife corridors as well as providing for sustainable drainage, children's play, active travel routes and an attractive environment for new residents and their neighbours. We have also checked the ecological impact of over 1,400 planning applications. We have used GIS mapping to create a more complete picture of how the biodiversity mitigation sites fit with other opportunities across Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- continued to check that developers deliver the long-term biodiversity mitigation to which they committed as part of the planning agreements.
- building on the above, we are developing a 'living landscape' project with partners, including the Wildlife Trust, developers and other local organisations, with the aim of launching a pilot in the south of the County Borough during 2019/20.
- continued to manage grassland and grass verges so that we develop and increase the number of sites providing wildflower and pollinating insect habitat.
- obtained grant funding for three years to March 2022 to continue our 'Healthy Hillside' work following a successful joint partnership bid to develop grass fire mitigation on 6 sites in RCT which will be put in place next year.
- continued to identify and progress other priorities for the Council so that it meets its 'Biodiversity Duty', this includes working with services so that they are able to integrate work to support healthy ecosystems into everyday tasks e.g. grass cutting and vegetation management.
- continued to manage conservation grazing sites which help to sustain those species rich Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. The sites are Dare Valley Country Park near Aberdare; Cwm Fields, Cwm Field Extension, Nant Celyn and Llantwit Fardre Marsh all in the south between Llantrisant and Tonteg.
- continued to take steps to improve air quality, particularly in those few areas that are linked to high levels of pollution. Steps include awareness raising, traffic management and schemes to relieve congestion and park and ride and bus lane improvements. You can see more detailed information in [our latest Air Quality Progress Report](#).

Residents from Parc Nant Celyn checked that water was available for grazing cows in the dry summer of 2018.

Park near Aberdare; Cwm Fields, Cwm Field Extension, Nant Celyn and Llantwit Fardre Marsh all in the south between Llantrisant and Tonteg.

Working together to create Healthy Hillside..... 'Healthy Hillside' is a partnership of RCT, South Wales Fire and Rescue, [South and West Wales Wildlife Trust](#), Natural Resources Wales, South Wales Police, [Butterfly Conservation](#), [PONT](#), Swansea University, other South Wales Councils and Llantrisant Town Trust. Its objective is to develop sustainable land management and community engagement projects, to help to successfully prevent grass fires and promote and develop the multi-benefit outcomes of this work. An example of its work in 2018 is at Y Graig, Llantrisant where bracken and bramble were cut back from an extensive area of the Common to provide more grazing for animals. Butterfly Conservation used the site for 'the Great Rake-Off' volunteer day to clear the cut material and celebrate their 30th Anniversary. Despite the dry summer in 2018, the Common avoided the major fires seen in previous years, and the area of flower-rich grassland has increased. In Autumn 2018, fire breaks and conservation grazing areas were cut using a specialist Fire Service robotic cutter. With the increases in both bracken cutting and pony grazing that the 'Healthy Hillside' Project will provide, we should see further significant improvements in biodiversity over the next 3 years.

In 2019/20 our work includes

- creating a new sustainable drainage feature to prevent flooding at Park Lane School, Aberdare. Tackling this flooding problem has created the potential for a positive community impact, providing public open space, opportunities for outdoor learning and a new marshy grassland (Rhos pasture) habitat for wildlife. The site is next to Aberdare Park and the public footpath between Trecynon and Gadlys. We will work with both Park Lane school and the Friends of Aberdare Park so that the work benefits the school and the wider community. Once complete, the site will complement the network of marshy grassland sites in the Cynon Valley that support [Devil's-bit Scabious](#), a purple flower that is essential for the survival of the rare marsh fritillary butterfly.
- developing a pilot 'Living Landscape' Project that shows how Council, partners and planning agreement land can be successfully managed, to provide a connected framework of biodiversity rich habitat. Linking local sites and community groups with each other can show how working together benefits everyone, as well as the wildlife.
- using social media to promote and raise awareness about the Council's current pollinator and wildflower management work, providing wildflower and pollinating insect habitat, through grassland, cemetery and grass verge management, as well as looking to increase the number of sites where opportunities arise.
- working with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership to review and update 'Action for Nature', i.e. the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and to expand the Partnership.
- considering how litter, flytipping and dumping garden rubbish affects wildlife both locally and globally and what we can do to tackle it.
- putting in place a plan to reduce green house gases across RCT and to respond to the recommendations of [the Committee on Climate Change](#) and the Welsh Government's '[Low Carbon Wales](#)'
- Identifying and progressing the other priorities for the Council as part of our 'Biodiversity Duty'.

Attracting Visitors to RCT

Walking is the top attraction for visitors to RCT. Our [Walking trails](#) cross landscape that have been shaped by both nature and industry. 8 of our Parks have achieved Green Flag status.

Get involved

If you would like to be involved in the review of our Action for Nature, please get in touch with parkscountryside@rctcbc.gov.uk

Our work in Biodiversity is contributing to an RCT and Wales that is

Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language	Globally Responsible
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Involving people and communities in RCT

We have a good track record of engaging with our residents from all backgrounds in many different ways. We also take account of what they tell us in our plans and arrangements. We also know that there is always room to do better. We will continue to look at what we do and where we can improve so that more people can get involved in the decisions that affect them and their communities.

Throughout this report you will have seen many examples of how we have involved people and communities in the decisions that affect them and the services they receive. The methods we have used to involve and engage people range from face to face conversations in town centres and car parks to conducting online surveys or encouraging feedback through [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#). We also make the most of chatting to visitors at Council events e.g. talking to families and parents at the Teddy Bears picnic and RCT residents at Pride Cymru. We have found that talking to people in this way can provide a wealth of information that we can use to help shape our services and also inform some of the more formal surveys and we also get to know what is happening in communities when it isn't always obvious.

We want all our residents to have the opportunity to be involved and give their views in the decisions that affect them. One of the ways we have done this recently is to provide [easy read versions](#) of information so that more people can understand it. An example of this is how people with learning difficulties were able to get more involved in discussions in the changes to Community Day Centres because they were provided with information that was more accessible to them. We also use the [WICID](#) site, which is aimed specifically at children and young people to promote surveys that directly affect them.

By making it easier for people to give us their views, more people are responding to us, using different ways. But we know we need to do more if we are to be fully inclusive and if people are to continue to have a real and lasting involvement in the future of their communities. We also need to improve how we use the information that residents' complaints is giving us so that we get a more complete picture of residents views.

Examples of how residents and communities have been involved in the Council's work include

- providing over 4,000 responses to our budget surveys which were considered in setting the 2019/20 budget.
- telling us what they think of the play opportunities across RCT. This survey is part of the information that helped the Council to put in place its plans for outdoor play areas in agreed by Cabinet in [March 2019](#).
- shaping our new '[Strategic Equality Plan](#)' by telling us what is important to them.
- identifying how the use of Welsh Language is affected by any new service proposal.

For our younger residents, our Youth Forum was involved in a UK survey '[Make your Mark](#)' to identify the top five issues that most matter to young people and should be discussed at parliament. We have also engaged with children and young people in the care of the Council about what they think about the care they receive in 'Your Life, Your Care' survey. *This is described in more detail in the PEOPLE section.*

Last year we said we would

continue to talk to people across the communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf, among other things we

- talked to residents and shoppers in Porth as part of the [Porth Town Centre strategy](#), as well as carrying out online surveys.
- talked to residents and users of Mountain Ash Day Centre and Library as part of the discussions about the [development of a Community Hub in the Mountain Ash Day Centre](#). Listening to their ideas led to a redesign in the centre increasing the available community space and to increase the accommodation available to prepare hot meals.
- started to talk to residents and relatives of all our residential care homes about how we can modernise residential care as well as Day Care services.
- worked with Fern Partnership to talk together with residents about the new Community Hub in Ferndale to see how we can collectively better meet the needs of residents and the community. Once the Hub is open, it will provide a range of services to residents including community engagement, childcare provision and employment support.
- talked to residents, shoppers and businesses in Aberdare and Pontypridd Town Centres as part of the drive to reduce the misuse of alcohol in Pontypridd and Aberdare by putting in place Public Space Protection Orders.
- talked to young people in the Youth Forum about the way the Council prioritises how it spends its money and the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders in Aberdare Town Centre and Pontypridd. We also discussed the Welsh Government plans to introduce voting for 16 year olds as part of the Council's response to consultation.
- talked to older people in the Older Persons Forum about issues that could support their ability to get out and about e.g. the provision of public toilets, changes to community transport services, pavement cafes in Pontypridd.
- held regular discussions with disability groups and also involved the Disability Forum in discussions about how we can improve access to Council services and facilities. This included a visit to Aberdare Park to review its disabled access, described in more detail in the Equalities section.

use the information that residents give us to better focus how we engage and involve them

An example of how we did this is through the 'Your Voice' survey of 11-25 year olds from across Rhondda Cynon Taf who told us about the issues that affected them and how we could improve how we communicate and involve them. The findings from this survey are currently being analysed and the results will be considered as part of our on-going planning.

refresh and update our Citizens' Panel and we are continuing to review the membership so that it more fully represents the communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

As well as talking to people about Council services, we are also involved with partners in asking people about how partnerships can work better together, for example, working with Fern Partnership to expand and increase community engagement as part of the Cwm Taf partnership in the Ferndale Community Hub.

We are also working to support other partnerships, including the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the Valleys' Task Force, where we use our local knowledge to get consistent and timely messages to our residents and communities using our Social Media channels.

In 2019, our plans include

- continuing to improve how we engage and involve our residents and communities so that they are able to provide their ideas and views about the issues and services that affect them now and will do in the future, including increasing the use and availability of easy to read materials.
- involving residents in developing a new Corporate Plan to improve the well-being of the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf. The new Corporate Plan will be in place for 2020 – 2024. Once complete, it will set out our longer term priorities and will show shorter term actions and measures that we can use to show our progress and whether or not we are heading in the right direction.
- continuing to engage and involve residents and communities in matters that affect them so that their voices are heard in Council decisions, e.g. Developing Community Hubs and schemes that will provide Extra Care for our older residents.
- increasing the involvement of children and young people in the care of the Council to make sure that that they can help to shape the services that affect them.
- strengthening how we analyse the ways that residents get involved with us so that we can clearly see what works best for different social groups within communities.
- continue to work as part of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board to support the objectives of the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan, the Safeguarding Board and other partnerships.

In a local 2018 survey, 86.5% of residents told us they were satisfied with RCT as a place to live, compared to 84.8% in 2016.

How our work is contributing to the seven national Well-being Goals

Could be part of CPR or linked off. To be determined see narrative in section 4

National Well-being Goal	Building a Strong ECONOMY	Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone PEOPLE	Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work PLACE
Prosperous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for businesses to emerge and flourish • Building new homes • Creating opportunities for jobs • Providing schools where children can achieve the best they can 	Supporting Children and Young People by giving them a great start in life through our Resilient families programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping people and traffic moving on well-maintained roads and pavements • Progressing schemes that will benefit communities now and in the future
Resilient	Promoting biodiversity by protecting existing habitats where possible and creating new areas for wildlife in our schools	Reducing site disturbance and material waste with shorter construction schedules by using modular construction methods in the construction of our Extra Care facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in and valuing our Green Spaces • Integrating biodiversity into new housing estates • Expanding 'Healthy Hillside' project
Healthier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in our Leisure Centres • Putting in place Walking Routes for residents and visitors and also safe routes to school for children and young people 	Helping people to stay as well as they can for as long as they can by encouraging increased activity through investing in our playgrounds, leisure centres and community facilities in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Flag progress in parks • Continuing to tackle environmental crime • Encouraging healthy activities in our parks e.g. Park Runs
More Equal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing sanitary products to help tackle period poverty for girls in our schools • Providing opportunities to all our residents to improve their digital skills • Freezing prices in Leisure Centres and minimal pricing in the Lido 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure that residents can access services, no matter what their background or circumstances • Creating opportunities for people of all ages to get together to learn from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Community Hubs for all to enjoy and benefit from • Making sure that our residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy our parks and green spaces
Cohesive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving housing for all our residents and creating pleasant neighbourhoods in which communities can thrive. • Organising Community events that bring people together, e.g. Big Bite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping people to stay in their own homes for longer and enabling them to contribute to communities and strengthen social relationships • Continuing 'Food & Fun' during School holidays 	Keeping people safe and helping them to feel safe by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting sensible drinking • tackling anti- social behaviour
Vibrant Culture & Welsh Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating the culture and history of the area in our theatres and parks • Promoting RCT as a visitor destination, including the Eisteddfod 	Providing more opportunities for our residents to communicate with the Council and each other in Welsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising Arts events for all sections of the community • encouraging local talent

National Well-being Goal	Building a Strong ECONOMY	Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone PEOPLE	Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work PLACE
Globally Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting in place transport hubs that will minimise car use and so improve air quality Supporting Fair Trade Initiatives 	Supporting the resettlement of refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerating our recycling and reuse Progressing the Eco Park in Bryn Pica Continuing to celebrate residents who go above and beyond to keep RCT clean and green through our ‘Love Where You Live’ awards

DRAFT

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 8 July 2019 at 5.00 pm at the Committee Room 1, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park. Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee
Members in attendance:-

Councillor M. Powell (Chair)

Councillor G. Holmes	Councillor G. Thomas
Councillor R. Yeo	Councillor S. Bradwick
Councillor T. Williams	Councillor W. Lewis
Councillor G. Caple	Councillor J. Cullwick
	Councillor M. Diamond

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr G. Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr N. Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr C. Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications
Mr P. Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services
Miss L. Lawson, Performance Manager
Mr P. Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services

County Borough Councillors in attendance

Mr M. Adams, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Mr. M. Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.

Co-Opted Members in attendance:-

Mr J. Fish – Elected Parent/Governor Representative

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies of absence were received from County Borough Councillors A. Davies-Jones, S. Rees-Owen, J. Williams and A. Fox.

3 THE DRAFT CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

The Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications began by explaining that the meeting had been called as a 'special meeting' to provide Members with the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the draft Corporate Performance Report 2019/20. The Service Director also advised Members that the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee Work Programme would be reviewed at its next meeting on 23rd of July 2019.

The Service Director- Finance and Improvement Services reported on the purpose of the meeting, which was to provide Members with the opportunity to review, challenge and propose amendments to the draft Corporate Performance Report for 2019/20 in respect of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of 'Economy', 'People', and 'Place'.

The Service Director explained that Members of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee were being asked to form a view on the extent to which the draft Corporate Performance Report for 2019/20 sets out a balanced and evidenced based assessment of the Council's 2018/19 performance in its Corporate Plan priorities and whether the Council's ambitions for 2019/20 were understandable and will enable progress and impact to be measured and scrutinised.

It was pointed out that an updated draft version of the Corporate Performance Report 2019/20 would be presented to Cabinet on 18th July 2019, incorporating any amendments deemed necessary by the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee.

The Service Director also advised that Members will have an opportunity to ask questions to the Corporate Plan priority lead officers as part of the meeting.

Discussions ensued and Councillor Caple queried whether public funds have been allocated for services toward the north of the County Borough in particular for town centre regeneration. The Chief Executive confirmed that public funds are available for this purpose and referenced the Porth Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and transport hub, consideration of cross-valley links and extracare developments. The Chief Executive added that as work progresses to consider proposals, the Council will continue to be proactive in seeking funding from other sources to support developments / projects. Members acknowledged the work currently underway to support town centre regeneration.

Councillor W. Lewis highlighted the positive Key Stage 4 results referenced on page 27 of the CPR and queried how the Council intended to continue to support this positive trend. The Chief Executive reinforced the significant investment made in schools across the County Borough and the improving academic attainment results achieved. The Chief Executive indicated that there would be continued focus on supporting

good leadership and good quality teaching, underpinned by a range of training and support for headteachers and teachers in Rhondda Cynon Taf schools, to help ensure this positive trend continues.

Discussions continued and Councillor Yeo referenced page 33 of the CPR and in particular the increased pressures on Delayed Transfers of Care and queried what the Council was doing to manage the release of people from hospital back to their homes and alleviate the pressures on this service. The Group Director – Community & Children’s Services indicated that the Council’s priority is to respond to the individual needs of residents and is committed to a transformational change in the way it meets the increasing demand for care for people leaving hospital. The Group Director added that there are pressures arising from difficulties in recruiting care staff in some areas of the County Borough and the Council is working collaboratively with partners to address this. The Group Director also brought to Members attention the good progress being made on the Council’s second Extra Care Housing facility in Maesyffynnon in Aberaman and the Council’s ‘Stay well@ home’ service dedicated to support vulnerable residents.

Mr Fish, the Voting Elected Parent/Governor Representative, referred to page 22 of the CPR which referenced the report by Welsh Government on the Well-being of Children across Wales. It was highlighted that the information appeared to give mixed messages in respect of the health and well-being of children and emphasised that there are differences locally in terms of how well children are doing and that the Welsh Government report does not acknowledge this. The Chief Executive indicated that inclusion of extracts from the national report is intended to provide contextual information and added that he would ensure that the work of the Council is given more prominence within the CPR.

Councillor Adams queried how the CPR is being utilised for scrutiny purposes. The Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications fed back that going forward the Council will be advocating a ‘Scrutiny and Challenge’ approach with Corporate Plan progress updates being a key part of this.

Councillor Bradwick raised a concern in respect of dog fouling. The Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services emphasised that the rate of Fixed Penalty Notices has dropped, indicating a positive picture, and is supported by the Council’s approach to tackling envirocrimes. Councillor Bradwick acknowledged the progress made and wanted to also place on record his personal thanks to all the staff involved in the recent Rhydyfelin Community Recycling Event. He emphasised the success of the event and queried whether similar events could be rolled out into other communities across the County Borough. The Group Director indicated that the results of the event and its impact would be analysed to inform any further events.

Councillor Thomas referred to page 16 of the report and the ratification of

the £1.2 billion City Deal for South Wales, which includes the implementation of the South Wales Metro and associated local transport schemes and sought clarification on the number of jobs to be created in the County Borough. Councillor Thomas also noted that a more in depth focus is needed to create more jobs in RCT, particularly in the manufacturing industry. The Chief Executive set out the private sector jobs coming into the County Borough and also the private sector interest in the Taff Vale redevelopment project. The Chief Executive also set out the opportunities that will be provided by the City Deal, emphasising it will open many doors for businesses in RCT, and noted that the positive relationship with Welsh Government is helping in this regard.

Councillor Thomas also referred to page 19 of the CPR and noted that the population projection will be a challenge for the Council. He also referred Committee Members to page 22 of the report and in particular the reference to data in respect of children in workless households, highlighting that there continued to be a lack of clarity around the reason(s) for statistical results varying in this area. The Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services informed Members that the information is compiled nationally and based on survey results of a sample of the population. Councillor Thomas acknowledged this and re-emphasised the need to focus statistics on RCT and the Chair concurred with this view and requested that further work be undertaken in this area during 2019/20 and reported back to the Committee.

Councillor Cullwick queried the Council's plans to support transport and movement around the valleys. The Chief Executive referred Members to the South Wales Metro project, which will replace / upgrade the existing infrastructure and support development in other areas, cross-valley link considerations and also existing bus links that are in place between Rhondda Fach/Fawr and Porth.

Further to this, Councillor Holmes raised concerns in relation to people over the age of 65 that are still working in the County Borough and the reducing number of younger people being trained. Councillor Holmes went on to reference overcrowding on trains and how improved transport facilities could improve access to jobs for residents across the County Borough. The Chief Executive referred Members to: the South Wales Metro project and noted that the number of trains / frequency of service will improve over the next few years and will support and encourage residents to use their cars less; Welsh Government plans to invest in existing / new park and ride facilities; the City Deal focussing on job creation across the region including graduates; and projects such as the Energy Park in Hirwaun.

Councillor Thomas referred to page 24 of the CPR which noted the impact on jobs as a result of automation and artificial intelligence in the future. Councillor Thomas acknowledged that advances in technology can often lead to a loss of jobs, however, emphasised that this has been the case over time and there will be opportunities to create jobs in

technology, machinery and manufacturing. Councillor Thomas went on to seek clarity on the meaning of 'Gateway' as referenced in the CPR (e.g. Cynon Gateway), acknowledging the investment the City Deal will bring to communities and stated that manufacturing needed to be brought back into communities like Hirwaun, to keep residents in work. The Chief Executive indicated that by investing in the County Borough's key town centres, this would have a ripple effect, which will positively impact on smaller towns in the long term, and he made specific reference to the five strategic opportunity areas across RCT that have been identified as having the potential to create more jobs and prosperity i.e. Cynon Gateway, Wider Pontypridd, Pontypridd Town centre, the A4119 corridor and Llanilid/M4 corridor.

Linked to the above discussion, Councillor Powell (Chair) requested that information be provided to the Committee on the number and percentage of available industrial units in the County Borough and occupancy levels, together with any other associated information.

Following consideration of the report, it was **RESOLVED:-**

1. That the draft Corporate Performance Report 2019/20 represents a balanced and evidenced based assessment of the Council's 2018/19 performance in its corporate Plan priority areas;
2. That the Council's ambitions for 2019/20 are understandable and will enable progress and impact to be measured and scrutinised;
3. That the Council is maximising its contribution to the 7 national well-being goals; and
4. To endorse the final draft version of the Corporate Performance Report 2019/20 subject to the comments and minor amendments proposed by the Committee and final data checks being undertaken by officers, for consideration by Cabinet on 18 July 2019.

This meeting closed at 5.54 pm

**Cllr M Powell
Chair.**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18TH JULY 2019

DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON

Author: Giovanni Isingrini, Group Director, Community & Children's Services. Tel. No. 01443 424140

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 includes in Part 8 a Code of Practice with regards to the role of the Director of Social Services.
- 1.2 This replaces Statutory Guidance issued in June 2009 regarding the Duties and Accountabilities of Directors of Social Services in Wales and includes an ongoing requirement for the Director of Social Services to publish an Annual Report.
- 1.3 The new code of Practice states that the Director of Social Services must prepare and publish an annual report about the exercise of the Local Authority's social services functions and that this annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year.
- 1.4 The annual report must evaluate the performance of the Local Authority in relation to the delivery of its social services functions in respect of that year and include lessons learned. It must also set out objectives in relation to promoting the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, for the forthcoming year.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to present the first draft of this revised reporting framework for Cabinet consideration prior to its content being made available for public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the draft Rhondda Cynon Taf Director of Social Services Annual Report (Appendix 1) and scrutinise its contents.

3. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To meet the statutory requirements on the Director of Social Services and ensure the report is circulated for public consultation.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Director of Social Services must prepare and publish an Annual Report about the exercise of the Local Authority's Social Services functions. This annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year and address the following requirements:

- It must evaluate the performance of the local authority in relation to the delivery of its social services functions in respect of that year and include lessons learned.
- It should be presented in such a way as to set out how the Local Authority has achieved the six quality standards in relation to well-being outcomes as described in the *code of practice in relation to measuring social services performance*, issued under section 145 of the Act.
- It must include details of the extent to which the authority has acted in accordance with relevant requirements for assessing and meeting needs (Part 3 and 4 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014)
- It must set out how the Local Authority has exercised relevant requirements contained in the code of practice so as to provide:
 - a) Assurances in terms of structural arrangements within the Local Authority that enable good governance and strong accountability.
 - b) Assurances in relation to effective partnership working via Partnership Boards.
 - c) Assurances in relation to safeguarding arrangements.
 - d) Information in relation to the performance of the handling and investigation of complaints and representations.
 - e) A response to any inspections undertaken in relation to social services functions.

- 4.2 The Welsh Government is committed to the delivery of high quality health, social services and social care services that are centred on users' needs. *More than just words* is its strategic framework to realise this aim.

- 4.3 Directors of Social Services are, therefore, required to provide an update on Welsh language provision and their implementation of *More than just words* as part of the annual report.

- 4.4 It is important that the views of service users in relation to the way the Local Authority has discharged its social services functions are included in

the annual report. People, including children, who have experience of using care and support services, the parents of children who have care and support needs, and carers in the local authority area must be engaged in the process of producing an annual report and the annual report must set out how the Local Authority has engaged with people in its production.

4.5 Annual reports are a key way for local authorities to demonstrate accountability to citizens and should, therefore, be accessible to people, including service users. The Director of Social Services should, therefore, ensure that annual reports are not overly long and are written in a clear and concise way.

4.6 To ensure effective accountability, the annual report must be presented to the Council by the Director of Social Services, a copy of the published annual report sent to Welsh Ministers and copies made available on the local authority website.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no implications associated with this report

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 This draft report will be subjected to a formal consultation process during July this year, the results of which will be considered in finalising this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The Annual Director's report is required under Part 8 of The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

9.1 The Annual Director's Report publishes the delivery, performance, risks and planned improvements of the Social Services function in the Council. As such it provides the public with a summary of the Directorates performance in meeting the corporate priorities for its Social Services.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The Director of Social Services Annual Report 2017/18 sets out how the Council's Social Services performed last year, highlighting the direction and priorities we have set for the year ahead.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18TH JULY 2019

DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON

Background Papers:

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of the Director of Social Services

<http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/160322part8en.pdf>

Officer to contact:

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**Rhondda Cynon Taf
County Borough Council**

**Social Services Annual Report
2018-19**

June 2019

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 As the Statutory Director of Social Services for Rhondda Cynon Taf, I am pleased to present my Annual Report for 2018-19. It explains how the Council's Social Services performed over the year and progress made against the priorities we set out in last year's report. It also highlights the priorities we have set for 2019-20.
- 1.2 Social Services is one of the Council's key functions. Our Wellbeing Services, Adult Services and Children's Services have a dedicated and committed workforce. We provide a wide range of services and support throughout the County Borough. The services protect and support vulnerable children, young people, adults, families and carers. Our aim is to help people to live safely and independently in their own home for as long as possible, which we know helps to improve their long-term wellbeing.

Our priorities and where we are heading

- 1.3 What we do and how we do it is framed by several things. This includes laws such as the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, both of which focus on wellbeing, prevention, partnership, collaboration and integration, and involving people. With other organisations, we have also assessed the needs of the population.
- 1.4 We work to meet the care and support needs of all those who need our help, and the wider community. We have an emphasis on helping:
 - People with learning disabilities
 - Older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia
 - Carers including young carers
 - Families and individual members of families
 - Children with complex needs due to disability and illness
 - People with physical impairment and / or sensory impairments
 - People who have experienced adverse childhood experiences
- 1.5 Our assessments have also told us the following are important to people:
 - Getting information, advice and assistance
 - Stopping problems before they start
 - Stopping problems before they get worse
 - Connecting people to their community
 - Seamless services i.e. different organisations working together as one
 - Making it personal and working with people who need help
- 1.6 Our longer-term aims, which have featured in previous reports, continue to guide our work and what we deliver:
 - Remodelling services for adults to minimise the need for intervention and to maximise people's independence by more prevention and early intervention.
 - Integrating the commissioning of social care services with primary and community health care services to improve the experience of users and to manage more effectively the huge cost of Accident & Emergency and hospital admissions.

- Ensuring more young people with complex disabilities will stay in Rhondda Cynon Taf where they grew up, and live in their own homes, with opportunities to engage in education, training, culture and the arts, thus helping them to grow in independence.
- Delivering more support in the community to people with mental health issues to help them stay well, re-engage in learning, find and keep a job and remain active, with support focused on helping people with their whole life, not simply a diagnosis.
- Helping the area's residents to be some of the most active and healthy in South Wales, benefitting from our leisure facilities, theatres, libraries and heritage sites, parks and open spaces.

What is in this report?

- 1.7 This report summarises our performance in the 2018-19 financial year. Over and above our performance in the day-to-day delivery of services, it highlights progress and developments against the priorities for action we set out in last year's report. Producing this report helps us to be accountable to the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf and open about what we are doing and why.
- 1.8 After this introduction, there are five main parts. **Part 2** provides an overview of the performance of our Adult Services and Children's Services. **Part 3** explains how people are shaping our services and what we do.
- 1.9 **Part 4** reports on action we have taken and are taking to improve people's well-being. It reports on the outcomes people want to achieve and how we work with them, and what we have done to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and well-being. It also covers action to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect and harm, and help for people to develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships. Last but by no means least, it reports the action we have taken to help people to live in accommodation which meets their needs.
- 1.10 **Part 5** explains how as a department we operate, our workforce, our financial resources and how we plan, and our work with other organisations in the area. Given this is a summary report, **Part 6** provides sources of information for further reading if required.

2. Summary of performance

- 2.1 I am pleased to report our teams across Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council have again delivered a high quality of service to people needing care and support. We have continued to demonstrate commitment to joint working, innovation and creativity in further developing our strategic partnerships and new models of care. We continue to work with others in the public, private and third sectors to provide the best services and support we can to help people to improve their wellbeing and to live safely and as independently as possible.
- 2.2 This report summarises our performance over the year. It highlights the scale of the services and support we have delivered, our achievements against plans and targets, and challenges. None of this would have been possible without the committed workforce we have at all levels and we have continued to invest in training, support and developments in the way we work. We are also fortunate to have political and corporate leadership support from the Council as a whole, which is vital to our ability to meet people's needs for services and support and for driving further improvements in services and transformation. This was recognised by Care Inspectorate Wales in its recent review of the Council's statutory social services functions.
- 2.3 The year has seen many developments. For me, some highlights have been the development of our Community Hubs, our Resilient Families Service and, our new models of accommodation for older people. These developments, which will bring further benefits to people's wellbeing, are over and above the wide range of action we undertake every day to meet our obligations to provide good levels of care and support to those with needs.
- 2.4 We are conscious the quicker we can provide help to families in need, the more likely a positive outcome. Our Resilient Families Service is all about quicker response times, sharper diagnosis and assessment of need, the removal of barriers to increase resilience, and improved delivery of family support services. The service is helping families with physical and mental health problems, parental separation, childhood trauma, abuse or offending and drug or alcohol misuse. Most families have been successfully managed by way of a lower level of intervention and possibly at an earlier stage. While it is too early to assess impact of the initiative, the initial indications are encouraging with reductions in referrals to planned care and support services, and enhanced communication and consistency in service delivery. I am pleased this has been also recognised by Care Inspectorate Wales.
- 2.5 An important part of our role in improving people's wellbeing is encouraging and supporting them to learn, develop and participate in society. Our Community Hubs development helps to join up public services, making them more cost effective and accessible. They provide a single point of contact within communities to access good quality information, advice and assistance to find support and a platform for learning, volunteering and to develop community capacity, and flexible community space for people to meet and socialise, thus helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation. As such, Community Hubs play an important part in preventing ill health and improving health and wellbeing.
- 2.6 We have also made considerable progress on developing alternative models of accommodation to provide more choice for older residents, enabling them to live healthily and safely for as long as possible, increasing independence and reducing social isolation, which are key parts of our agenda. Our Extra Care housing programme is well underway and we have developed plans to increase capacity for those with dementia.
- 2.7 As Director I am supported not just by my own team but by colleagues across the council where we are supported in our work to support the well-being of individuals. Whilst Social Services is within a distinct Council department, there are other things the council does, such as maintaining community-based services like libraries and leisure centres which contribute to the well-being agenda. The work of our staff requires a robust infrastructure and IT support

services and thanks to the support of dedicated staff within the group and our Corporate IT colleagues service during 2018/19 we successfully introduced the Welsh Community Care Information System (WICCS) and have enhanced our agile working arrangements. The Welsh Community Care Information System is a Welsh Government investment into a national IT solution. It provides a shared information platform that has been designed to support the delivery of improved care and support for people across Wales. When it is fully rolled out, it will be accessible to all health and social care professionals within Wales. It will assist staff to work together to plan, co-ordinate and deliver support and/or services for individuals, families, carers and the community.

- 2.8 I am also pleased that Council is also continuing to develop its corporate approach to safeguarding as evidenced in the update report to Overview and Scrutiny committee in February 2019.
- 2.9 I will end my summary by again taking the opportunity to again thank all the dedicated staff who continue to work tirelessly to ensure we provide the best possible response to the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.

3. How are people shaping our services?

- 3.1 We have continued to reach out to people who use our services and to the public more widely. We use a variety of approaches, including information and awareness raising, social media, surveys, meetings with people who use services and feedback questionnaires. We encourage feedback whether positive or negative and, in some cases, make special arrangements to help individuals to take part. This year we have placed a greater focus on the use of social media and our online platform, which makes it easier to see what residents are being asked.
- 3.2 “RCT Together” is the Council’s innovative approach to engaging with its residents and communities to explore how we can work together to develop alternative ways of delivering services and facilities. This helps us to keep them running in the future. The approach has led to several successful community asset transfers, which ensure they continue to provide valued services to local communities. For example, the leasehold transfer of St Mair’s Day Centre in Aberdare to Age Connects Morgannwg.
- 3.3 During the year, we engaged with people in many ways: For example:
- We facilitated a session with children looked after to review and develop the content of a website. This resulted in the launch of the “2 Sides” website as part of the existing “Wicid” web site. The latter is a youth information and media website produced by young people themselves. The site, which has more than 2,400 registered users, already runs features and information relevant to children looked after. Linking them was a logical step.
 - We liaised with a group of young people, the “Blue Print Forum”, which is facilitated by Voices from Care. They meet regularly to capture the views of young people. We use their feedback to inform the evaluation of our services and further developments. They are members of the Corporate Parenting Board and have also worked with our staff to develop a Leaving Care Support Framework and a housing strategy.
 - Children Services are involved with the Youth Engagement and Participation Service via our young person’s forum. This has been set up across the County Borough to improve the way we engage with young people. It consists of young people representing their schools. They in turn, report back to their School

Councils to enable young people to be involved in important issues which affect them. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service is making good use of social media. Its Facebook page receives approximately 30-40,000 hits per month while its Twitter page has 28-30,000.









- 3.4 We regularly review our services to ensure they meet people's needs and provide value for money. We consider carefully the findings of reviews, the results of surveys, the views expressed in consultations and people's comments when they contact us with complaints or to compliment us. A good example is the Maestrisant housing complex in Talbot Green.
- 3.5 Adult Services reviewed the provision of domiciliary care and support for four people at the Maestrisant complex, which is a 31-bed scheme. We consulted with each person receiving care and support from the internal Support @Home Maestrisant Service. We commissioned Age Connects Morgannwg to provide independent advocacy to support each person through the consultation process.
- 3.6 We know that we need to do more to ensure the voice of carers. Although the recent Care Inspectorate Wales inspection confirmed "*practitioners were well-motivated and increasingly adept at ensuring people's voices are heard; and ensuring this is incorporated into the assessment of their needs, and subsequent planning and delivery of individualised care and support*" we do recognise that enhanced support for carers will enable them to achieve their own wellbeing outcomes.
- 3.7 After engaging with the people receiving care and support, their advocates, families and social workers, we concluded a change of domiciliary care provider would be detrimental to them. While initially it was thought costs could be reduced by a change of provider, our consultation identified significant benefits to them physically and mentally from the knowledge, experience and continuation of care provided. We also identified that where appropriate and following assessment of need, other residents at Maestrisant could be included in the service provided thus allowing the current service to maximise the value for money and potentially provide better quality services to other residents by being on site.

What do people think of our services?

- 3.8 We use surveys to measure the quality of our services and to determine what outcomes we achieve by working with people to meet their care and support needs:
- 3.9 The table below provides the results of this year's survey for Adult Services and the two previous surveys in 2016-17 and 2017-18. The survey was based on a sample of adults aged 18 and over who had a care and support plan on the day the sample was drawn. It measures things which people tell us are important to them.

Table 1: Key service quality measures, Adult Services, 2016-17 to 2018-19

	Statement	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Change this year/last (%)
1	I live in a home that supports my wellbeing	87	89	93	●
2	I can do the things that are important to me	49	50	77	●
3	I feel a part of my community	52	52	69	●
4	I am happy with support from my family, friends, neighbours	84	88	97	●

5	I feel safe	76	79	94	
6	I know who to contact about my care and support	79	79	83	
7	I have received the right information or advice when I needed it	79	75	91	
8	I have been actively involved in discussions about how my care and support was provided	73	78	90	
9	I was able to communicate in my preferred language	93	94	95	
10	I was treated with dignity and respect	92	91	97	
11	I am happy with the care and support I have received	84	84	97	
12	It was my choice to live in a residential care home	67	60	56	

Source: Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Note: Percentages based on adults who answered each question with "Yes" or "Sometimes". Figures have been rounded.




- 3.10 All but one measure shows a positive change between this year and the previous year. The exception was Q12 which relates to being in a residential care home being a person's own choice. Most respondents – 290 out of the sample of 365 – preferred not to say or did not answer the question.











"I moved to Cwm Taf with a drug problem looking for a fresh start. The project worker and counsellor from Substance Misuse Services have been fantastic and I have now been abstinent for months. I joined the service user group and now I am not so isolated and really enjoying being around positive people. For the first time ever, I am looking forward to the future" (Male, 49 years of age)

"I was an opiate user in my early twenties after a traumatic life event. I lost my job, partner, my home and was on a downward spiral. I never thought I could escape! After a lot of persuasion, I finally engaged with services and was eventually put a substitute prescribing programme. It gave me space, for the first time I wasn't dependent on my dealers. I wouldn't be in pain every day. Slowly I started to put my life together. Now I'm 15 years drug free have 2 beautiful children, and building my confidence and self-esteem with the service user group in Cwm Taf. I'm hoping to gain employment in the field because I love helping people on their recovery journey in the group" (Female, 42 year of age)

- 3.11 Table 2 provides the results of this year's survey of and the two previous surveys. The survey was based on children who had a care and support plan on the day the sample was drawn.

Table 2: Key service quality measures, Children's Services, 2016-17 to 2018-19

		(%)			
	Statement	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Change this year/last
1	I live in a home where I am happy	94	99	98	
2	I am happy with the people I live with	96	99	99	
3	I can do the things I like to do	97	100	96	

4	I feel I belong in the area where I live	92	92	92	
5	I am happy with my family, friends and neighbours	97	97	98	
6	I feel safe	97	99	96	
7	I know who to speak to about my care and support	97	94	94	
8	I have had the right information or advice when I needed it	94	92	89	
9	My views about my care and support have been listened to	96	98	93	
10	I have been able to use my everyday language	98	99	98	
11	I was treated with dignity and respect	98	98	98	
12	It am happy with the care and support I have had	96	97	96	
13	I have had advice, help and support that will prepare me for adulthood (16 and 17-year olds only)	--	86	90	

Source: Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Note: Percentages based on children who answered each question with "Yes" or "Sometimes". Figures have been rounded.

3.12 Overall, the above tables show that children looked after report exceptionally high levels of satisfaction with the Council's services and support. For all but one measure, far more than 90% of children are satisfied. While the red coloured flags denote the direction of change and apparent reduction in satisfaction compared to last year's very high levels of satisfaction, the difference is marginal in some cases (e.g. 1 percentage point). The rounding of results to the nearest whole number may also have affected some figures.

3.13 Over and above the national outcome measures, some of our individual service areas also have mechanisms for collecting feedback. For example, of the 300 people who responded after receiving help from our Support@Home (Intermediate Care and Reablement) service:

- 92% said they had discussed and agreed targets, goals and outcomes before starting to receive the service.
- 94% rated the service as "very good" or "excellent".
- 95% said they had achieved their goals.
- 97% said they had been able to maintain or improve their independence.

3.14 The Quality Assurance Framework developed for our own residential care homes has also enabled us to place greater emphasis on hearing people's views and experiences. We send questionnaires to residents and their families. Of 58 residents and 68 family members, friends or advocates who returned forms in one survey:

Residents

- 98% reported their care home showed an interest in their health and always ensures their needs are met
- 96% reported they their privacy and dignity was respected at all times
- 87% reported their religious and cultural beliefs were respected

Family members, friends and advocates

- 94% reported they felt the personal needs of their relative / friend were assessed regularly and were extremely happy that the home fully met their needs
- 91% reported they strongly agreed they were made to feel welcome when they visited the care home
- 90% reported they strongly agreed staff were readily available and approachable

- 3.15 A testimonial from one young person illustrates what our support can make and the difference it can make to people's lives.

"I am a 16-year-old male who has been in a substance misuse service for over 6 months. During this time I have worked with my caseworker to look at my substance use and how to control it, I have done work around harm reduction and triggers to help me cut down to give up, they have helped me to control my substance use to a level I was happy with. From my substance use I disengaged with many things that I enjoyed; with help I have started to engage back with that I enjoy. With support, I was able to attend the Recovery Walk up Pen y Fan and it was a great day as I had never been up there before, and I was able to meet new people. At the moment I am attending the new young people's service group and enjoying it has I get to meet new young people and look at what we can do to help others, I have successfully gained employment and am also working shifts at the local rugby club. I would like to say thank you as I am substance free for over 10 weeks and this was from help and support from services. My relationship with my family has got a lot better and I am able to speak openly with them if I have a problem, this was never the case before as I always used substance to help me. Thank you"

- 3.16 All survey results and any supporting comments from people who receive our services are used to plan developments to further improve the services we deliver. Self-assessment is also being used to identify possible improvements.

Complaints and compliments

- 3.17 We welcome and appreciate the compliments we receive. While we are disappointed to hear of occasions when a service hasn't met people's expectations, we also appreciate people who take the time to tell us. The table below summarises the number of complaints and compliments received in the last four years.

Table 3: Number of complaints and compliments received, Adult Services and Children's Services, 2015-16 to 2018-19

		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Adult Services	No. of complaints received	68	82	51	56
	No. of compliments received	156	102	102	124
Children's Services	No. of complaints received	89	106	114	32
	No. of compliments received	86	62	41	39
Total	No. of complaints received	157	188	165	88
	No. of compliments received	242	164	143	163

Source: Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

- 3.18 The last year is encouraging in that for both Adult and Children's Services, there were more compliments than complaints.

- 3.19 While we aim to prevent the need for people to complain in the first place, when a complaint is made, we consider it an opportunity to get even better at what we do and to learn from it to ensure similar issues are avoided in future. For example, in Adult Services this has led to:
- The development of an information pack for parents of adults making the transition to supported living.
 - Improvements to the timeliness of decision-making in relation to the transition process for adults with complex learning disabilities.
 - Improvements to the management of additional calls for Homecare using mobile device alerts.
- 3.20 We recognise people are themselves best placed to make judgements in relation to their own wellbeing. In its recent inspection of our services, the Care Inspectorate Wales highlighted the increasingly effective systems we have in place to support on this. It also concluded our practitioners are well-motivated and increasingly adept at ensuring people's voices are heard; ensuring it is incorporated into assessment of needs, and subsequent planning and delivery of individual care and support. It highlighted more work needs to be done for carers and we agree. We have identified this as a priority for action in the next financial year.

Welsh language

- 3.21 Nearly 28,000 people in Rhondda Cynon Taf speak Welsh (2011 Census) which is slightly more than 1 in 10 of the population (12.3%). The Welsh Language Standards apply to all local authorities. This means everyone in Wales can expect the same approach to the Welsh Language in services, ensuring it is treated the same as the English language with all Councils offering people the opportunity to receive services from us, as well as from those funded by us, in Welsh.
- 3.22 In 2018-19, we have enhanced our approach for service users who wish to communicate in Welsh. Our approach is shaped not only by the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and the Welsh Government's "Follow-on Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health and Social Services" but also by our commitment to delivering services which meet people's needs. We work closely with our colleagues in the Council's Welsh Language Service and use the Cwm Taf "More than Words" quarterly forum to ensure we are complying with statutory requirements.
- 3.23 We reviewed our progress against the Welsh Language Standards. As a result, all our correspondence and written material available to the public for Adult and Children's Services, including online information and our content on DEWIS Cymru, the national website for people who are looking for information or advice about well-being, is available bilingually. If someone corresponds with us in Welsh, we will respond in Welsh. All our staff are aware of the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and what it means for how they work. We also monitor all our external service providers to ensure each complies with the Standards.
- 3.24 Our front-line staff make an active offer of communication in Welsh if it is someone's preference. Arrangements are then made for a Welsh speaking member of our staff to have the conversation and to work with them. We record people's language preference on our system, which informs subsequent communication, and we check preferences on language when core data is checked. No complaints were received during the year about services from Adult Services or Children's Services being available in Welsh. However, we are not complacent, and we will continue to work in a way which meets people's needs.
- 3.25 We continue to encourage and support staff to learn Welsh in several ways including learning sessions, learning programmes and courses (including intensive courses), and online training modules. Our services have continued developments which enable staff to

access Welsh language support tools on their computers. We are also considering the use of an App “More than Just Words” to further support our social workers and care staff. During the year, 107 members of Adult and Children’s Services staff attended our mandatory Level 1 training and 14 received additional support from our Welsh Language tutor. The latter was provided after we identified several residents on the site of our Pentre House project speak Welsh. While it would be beneficial to have more Welsh speaking staff, we believe we currently have enough Welsh speakers to meet the demand for services delivered through the medium of Welsh.

What are our priorities for next year?

- Ensure compliance on Welsh language preference at review when the core data is checked and ensure the Welsh Community Care Information System is updated
- Work with external providers via the contract terms and conditions to ensure Welsh language requirements are met

4. Promoting and improving the wellbeing of people we help

- 4.1 One of the Council's priorities is promoting independence and positive lives for everyone in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Social Services play an important part. Helping to improve the wellbeing of people who need care and carers who need support is at the very heart of our work. We aim to make a real difference to their lives. We cannot do this alone.
- 4.2 We work closely with many other organisations to help vulnerable children, young people, adults and families. We are committed to delivering high quality services and improvements and changes to provide people with support they need when they need it.
- 4.3 In delivering our services, we continue to face big challenges - financial, population changes, and others. Only by working together with others can we respond to the challenges. One of the ways we do this is through a regional partnership. With our partners, we looked at the needs of our population and identified the action we need to take over a five-year period. The Cwm Taf Regional Plan 2018-23¹ describes what will be done and is the basis for our work.
- 4.4 This part of the report describes what we have done over the last year. It includes the priorities we set for 2019-20 after reviews undertaken the previous year. Reviews undertaken by other organisations have also informed what we will do in 2019-20. The priorities are developments we feel will help us to further improve the services and support we offer and, most importantly, the lives of those who receive them.

(a) Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

What did we plan to do last year?


- 4.5 As part of our self-evaluation, we decided on a range of priority actions to support children and adults, to be delivered during the 2018-19 year and we included these priorities in last year's Annual Report. We said we would:
- Prioritise the integration of services for: Older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia; People with learning disabilities; Carers, including young carers; Integrated Family Support Services; and Children with complex needs due to disability or illness.
 - Deliver new accommodation models to improve outcomes for those individuals who need support to live independently and continue to work jointly with Linc Cymru to deliver the Council's Extra Care Housing Development Programme.
 - Make better use of technology solutions to maintain people's independence in their home and prevent escalation of need increasing.
 - Implement the Resilient Families Service and secure the engagement of internal and external partners to deliver the Resilient Families Programme
 - Promote engagement with Children Looked After and partner agencies to ensure coproduction and that the voice of the children and young people are heard.
 - Implement the National Adoption Support Framework in the area to ensure the children are placed for adoption reach their full potential and have opportunities to achieve.
 - Ensure there is offer of a direct payment to all people with eligible care needs

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Information, Advice and Assistance Services

- 4.6 Last year, we helped 6,800 adults with information, advice and assistance. This is an increase of 4% over the previous year. The increase is significantly less than the jump of 30% between 2015-16 and 2017-18 but continues the trend of increasing demand for the service.
- 4.7 During the year, 2,990 people were assessed for care and support needs, a 10 per cent increase over the previous year. Of those, nearly 3 out of 4 assessments (72.74%) led to a care and support plan being prepared. We narrowly missed our target for the year of 70.15%, which was the same as our performance the previous year. We aim for the lower figure as this means we are getting better in helping people to find different solutions to a formal care and support plan.
- 4.8 The number of reviews of care and support plans was 7% higher than the previous year. 4,286 review were completed compared to 4,013 in 2017-18. Nearly half of the reviews (49.6%) were completed within an agreed timescale, which is a small improvement on the 46.5% the previous year.
- 4.9 We commissioned an independent review of our Community Review Team to evaluate its impact on performance and service quality. The review set out the opportunities and challenges in how we deliver and made recommendations for the authority to consider. We will use this report in 2019-20 to help us to further improve the service.
- 4.10 Given the role carers play in helping people to stay living in their home and community, meaningful and beneficial support for them is vital. We will continue to focus on doing this as a priority. Over the twelve months, 246 assessments of carers' support needs were undertaken of which 84 (34%) resulted in a support plan for the carer. This compares to 206 and 39 (19%) in the previous year.
- 4.11 We have reviewed our Carers Support Project. As a result, we have invested in the Service and its capacity with the aim of improving the take-up of carer assessments.

Table 4: Key national performance indicator - Information, Advice and Assistance Service, RCT and Wales, 2018-19


	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Percentage of adults who have received advice and assistance from the IAA Service and have not contacted the service for 6 months (Measure 23)	74.64%	80.00	

Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 4.12 As the above table shows, 4 out of 5 adults who received information, advice and assistance from our service did not contact us in the 6 months after. We exceeded our target for this year and improved on the previous year's figure of 74.62%.
- 4.13 Our Children's Services provided information, advice or assistance to 5,670 children and families. This is a marked increase (14%) over the numbers helped the previous year. There was a similar increase (11%) in the number of assessments completed during 2018-19. A total of 7,170 assessments were undertaken this year, up from 6,488 in 2017/18.

4.14 The increase in the level of assistance provided and assessments undertaken is due to improvements we have made for people to access the services of our Resilient Families Service through our Information, Advice and Assistance Service.

Table 5: Key national performance indicator - Information, Advice and Assistance Service, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Percentage of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales	98%%	97.14%	

Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

4.15 Our performance on completing assessments for children within the statutory timescales was marginally below (0.86%) our target of 98%. However, it is a notable improvement on the previous year's figure of 93.3%

Case Study - Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

Mr A contacted the Information, Advice and Assistance Team requesting support for himself and his two young children. Following a “What Matters” conversation, Mr A was able to identify that as a single parent he was isolated and felt unable to access community projects and this was impacting on the care he was providing to his children.

Mr A was referred to the Resilient Families Service. An assessment identified that the family required short term intervention to enable him to build confidence in his parenting and sustainable changes that benefitted the children. This resulted in the family engaging in community activities and no longer requiring intervention from Children’s Services.

Integrating services

4.16 We continue to work with many organisations to deliver more integrated services. Looking at alternative ways of doing things is a key part of the way we work. We do this by drawing on the results of service reviews and evaluations, our performance monitoring systems, and feedback from service users. We also take advantage of opportunities e.g. if a vacancy occurs in a team, we consider whether services improvements or economies can be made by deploying the resource in a different way. This stems not only from a need to ensure our services remain sustainable in increasingly challenging times and to make the best possible use of our limited and decreasing resources but also our desire to give people better services and support.

4.17 More information on developing more integrated services and working with our partner organisations will be seen throughout the report.

4.18 Our joint working with the housing sector in Rhondda Cynon Taf was featured in a report commissioned by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru. The study is part of work to implement “A Healthier Wales” and was supported by the Welsh Government. Our two training flats with Trivallis housing association which help individuals in care to make the transition to living independently on their own were highlighted. So too was our partnership working with Cynon Taf housing association to remodel its Pen Llew Court property into 19 one-bedroom flats for adults with learning difficulties.

Delivering new accommodation models

- 4.19 We are committed to improving residents' wellbeing by ensuring people can live and age well at home in their community. This can be seen from our ambitious strategy to modernise accommodation options for older people.
- 4.20 Extra Care housing is one of the ways we are taking this forward. The model is designed to enhance the wellbeing and independence of older people and is an alternative to institutional care home settings. It provides more choice for older residents, enabling them to live healthily and safely for as long as possible, increasing independence and reducing social isolation.
- 4.21 We have made solid progress over the year.
- The Extra Care housing on the site of the former Maesyffynnon Care Home in Aberaman is under construction and due to open in 2019. It will provide 40 modern units of accommodation plus communal facilities such as a dining room; hair salon; guest suites; lounge and laundry and an activity room. Respite accommodation will also be provided.
 - A pre-planning application consultation for 60 units of accommodation on the former Magistrates Court Site, in Pontypridd was undertaken in August 2018. The proposal is designed to ensure sustainable arrangements are in place to commission increasing levels of care for people within the scheme; including dementia care.
 - We have taken forward the planning for the former Ysbyty George Thomas hospital site in Treorchy. We have also explored the use of a site in Porth and we have identified a preferred site in Mountain Ash.
- 4.22 We have also made good progress on the Crown Avenue sheltered housing scheme in Treorchy in partnership with Trivallis. The development will create new supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities.
- 4.23 As part of our commitment to deliver new accommodation models, we have been working with Ategi to explore opportunities to increase the availability of current "Shared Lives" provision. The aim is to expand the model of care to offer support both short and long-term to a wider range of people who have an assessed need. We relaunched the Shared Lives scheme to identify and recruit additional carers. As a result, the number of short and long-term placements has increased and action to recruit more carers is ongoing.
- 4.24 We reviewed the sleep-in arrangements in our learning disabilities supported-living schemes to provide a better understanding of when support is required and to determine the optimum levels of support through the most effective combination of staff and technology. The findings from the trials will be implemented, in partnership, in early 2019.

Making better use of technology

- 4.25 We have finalised an assistive technology strategy to inform the commissioning of a new model for equipment, assistive technology, community alarms and response services. The draft model was signed off by Cabinet in March. Project development will commence as soon as confirmation of transformational funding is received from the Welsh Government.
- 4.26 Our work with the Innovate Trust has continued. We have piloted the use of assistive technology to support people with learning disabilities to live more independently in the local

community which is better for them and helps reduce the cost of services. The Trust secured additional funding from a trust fund to expand technology and purchase smart devices for all the people it supports in the locality [November 2018 – January 2019]. This means a further 54 people with learning disabilities in the area received access to smart technology². To support the project, the Trust recruited and trained two Digital Champion Volunteers with learning disabilities to act as peer mentors and to help their friends to access and use this new smart technology.

4.27 The work has been extended to develop alternative “outcome-based day opportunities” initially for Supported Living residents. We have also agreed with the Innovate Trust to increase volunteer involvement through University of South Wales student population.

4.28 We are currently supporting United Welsh Housing Association with the development of a “SMART house” in Gilfach Goch, which will be the first property of its kind in the area. It is being funded by United Welsh as a pilot project to evaluate how SMART home technology can promote the independence, wellbeing and engagement for tenants.

Resilient Families Service

4.29 We have implemented our Resilient Families Programme and made good progress with its development and operation. The service, which builds on our original “Team around the Family” arrangements, is geared to quicker response times, sharper diagnosis and assessment of need, the removal of barriers to increase resilience, and improved delivery of family support services.

4.30 Partnership with other organisations is inherent in our approach. Barnardo’s was commissioned to deliver the Families Team element of the service. The other core elements – The Assessment, Brokerage and Review Team, the Families Plus team and the Children with Additional Needs Service – are delivered by us. Working closely with other organisations, we have incorporated additional support services, including a Young Persons Homelessness Support Worker (with Llamau), Specialist Health Visitors and Community Nursery Nurses, and our new Universal Parenting and Young Persons Support frameworks.

4.31 We estimated approximately 1,200 families would be referred to our Resilient Families Services its first full year of operation. The service started in January 2018. By August 2018, the service had already engaged with over 1,000 families. Analysis of the referrals indicates that the numbers were consistent and showed no signs of slowing down. At that point it suggested a potential 60% increase over the estimated figure to around 2,000. In the event, the volume of referrals did slow down before the end of the financial year. However, the full year total number of referrals received was 1,608 which is still a significantly higher figure (34%) than anticipated. The service is helping families with physical and mental health problems, parental separation, childhood trauma, abuse or offending and drug or alcohol misuse. Importantly, only around 1 in 20 (6%) of the referrals had to be escalated to Children’s Services, which means for the vast majority were successfully managed by way of a lower level of intervention and possibly at an earlier stage.

4.32 Given the voluntary nature of the service, there is always the prospect of families refusing to engage with the support on offer. The intervention completion rate of 72% suggests that most families opt to actively engage. This represents a 22% improvement on the 2016-2017 engagement rates with the previous service. This is encouraging. However, we are committed to improving the take-up of the service where possible. Our evaluation indicates more than 9 out of 10 of the families that engaged (95%) benefited from the help and support provided.

Case Study – Resilient Families Service

A referral from Health Visitor made as a result of concerns about a child who lived with his mother, stepfather and siblings. All the children had health concerns, which the mother was trying to manage with the help of the maternal grandmother. The mother was also being investigated for health problems. The stepfather was an alcoholic who has tried on numerous occasions to stop drinking. He had to give up work due to his alcohol addiction as it involved driving. He was spending a great deal of time in bed, so the mother was carrying out all the family routines. The mother also had concerns regarding another child's behaviour; the school reported he was disruptive and did not listen.

The Resilient Families Service helped the father to attend his first "Walk in clinic" to address his struggles with alcohol. Referral was followed up by an assessment and ongoing support, including appointments with his GP to address low mood. Medication was prescribed. As a result, the father was reported to be feeling the 'fittest' he has in years. The Service made enquires for training sessions to build his confidence and to give him something to focus on with the aim of employment, and he attended Communities4Work training sessions. The school reported improvements in the child's behaviour and the parents and school are in contact to ensure the positive behaviour continues. The relationship between the parents improved and they have been reported to be participating in activities as a family.

More engagement with Children Looked After

- 4.33 In line with our priority action, we have promoted better engagement with children looked after. We have done this in several ways and have continued our efforts to provide them with the information they need. Children looked after and young people are now provided with consultation documents for each review, depending on age, as are their parents and foster carers. The comments provided in these documents are used to inform the review process and the planning for individuals. A group of young people, the "Blue Print Forum", meets regularly to capture young people's views to inform service developments, evaluation and delivery. They are members of the Corporate Parenting Board. The group also works with staff from 16+ to develop a leaving care support framework and housing strategy. As mentioned in Part 3 of this report, we also worked with children looked after to develop the "2 Sides" website
- 4.34 Since the introduction of the National Advocacy Framework, all children and young people have access to advocacy and have an 'active offer. This ensures all children and young people who become looked after or whose names are on the Child Protection Register are visited by an independent advocate. During the year, the advocacy service received 303 new referrals, undertook 171 active offers and provided 132 young people with issues-based advocacy. Children and young people were supported and represented at 84 formal meetings, including 39 Child Protection meetings and 39 Children Looked After meetings.
- 4.35 The above action responds to a recommendation in the "Your Life Your Care" report, which was based on a survey of 4 to 18-year olds in the area in early 2018. The report³, published in April 2018, emphasised the importance of working with children and young people to ensure they are informed of when and why decisions are made about their care.
- 4.36 Children's voices must be heard in making decisions which affect them, and we are committed to doing this well. We use the Quality Assurance Framework to ensure it happens by making the necessary checks against the standard. In response to the report, we are developing Life Story work. We have set up a system to ensure it continues throughout a child's care journey and we are implementing it. The Children Looked After Quality Assurance Framework for Schools sets standards to be met when children are looked after.

We have also introduced Foster Care Pioneers whose role is to help other foster carers to liaise with schools on education issues which children in their care may be experiencing.

4.37 Our plan to implement the National Adoption Support Framework has been delayed. The National Adoption Support Framework is due to be issued. While we have been unable to take specific action on the Framework, we have undertaken an audit of our current system and a provisional local framework has been put in place.

Ensuring an offer of Direct Payments

4.38 We have worked with people receiving a direct payment to explore opportunities to improve the support available to them. We did this by the recommissioning of a support contract, which was completed in March 2019.

4.39 The table below shows the progress we have made in supporting the uptake of Direct Payments over the past 3 years:


Table 6: Take-up of Direct Payments, RCT, 2016-17 to 2018-19

Children's Services		Adult Services	
2016-17	127	2016-17	339
2017-18	134	2017-18	358
2018-19	154	2018-19	373

Source: Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

4.40 We also undertook a best practice review into which high-performing local authorities promote and make the offer of direct payments with the aim of increasing the uptake in the area by targeting managed accounts.

Table 7: Key performance indicator - Percentage of clients choosing own providers through Direct Payments, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Percentage of clients choosing their own service providers through Direct Payments	15.5%	16.07%	

Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

4.41 As a result of our work over the year, our performance has improved. We exceeded our target for the year and improved on the 14.67% recorded in the previous year. Although these are slight improvements, they show our action is starting to have an impact. It provides a solid foundation for further action to improve our performance in the future.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Strengthen the participation of children and young people in service delivery by continuing to promote engagement specifically with children looked after and partner agencies to ensure coproduction and the voice of the children and young people are heard.
- Improve local access to information advice and assistance provision for children, young people and families to promote their participation and engagement.
- Strengthen systems for recognising and supporting the needs of carers. Increase the number of carers assessments completed and offers accepted of support when needed.

- Remodel the delivery of Early Years as a result of the Regional Early Years Co-construction Project.
- Continue to work to reduce the need for statutory services by ensuring that children and families have coordinated integrated family support.
- Manage the Children and Communities Grant to commission effective integrated early intervention and prevention services.
- Further develop integrated service delivery to improve early intervention and prevention support informed by Vulnerability Profiling data.
- Develop and fully implement, across all service areas, a systematic and collaborative process for capturing the views of service users and their families about the impact of our support and services.
- Continue to embed strengths-based and outcome-focused assessment, support planning and review across Adult Services

(b) Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

What did we plan to do last year?

4.42 We said in 2018-19 we would:



- Develop new community-based models of service with a focus on prevention, independence, choice and wellbeing This will include actions in relation to day services; respite, carers, direct payments; telecare; StayWell@Home; home care
- Develop the capacity and quality of specialist care home provision to ensure people with a dementia no longer able to remain in their own homes can access specialist care locally
- Continue the Valley LIFE project to develop a range of services for older people with dementia which helps to support people to stay well at home for longer.
- Continue the work between Adult's and Children's Services to improve the way we support young people transitioning into adulthood.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Delayed transfers of care

4.43 Reducing delays in people being discharged from hospital remains one of our top priorities and we work closely with Cwm Taf University Health Board. It remains a significant challenge with market capacity in home care being a specific area for action during the year.

Table 8: Key national performance indicators - Delayed transfers of care, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons for people aged 75+ per 1,000 population aged 75 or over (Measure 19)	1.3%	3.4	
Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons for people aged 18+ per 1,000 population aged 75 or over (Measure 19)	2.4%	5.1	



Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 4.44 Despite considerable effort, delays in transfer of care for social care reasons increased slightly during the year. There were 99 delayed cases for people aged 18 and over, of which 67 were for people aged 75 and over. The figures are higher than the corresponding number of cases in 2017-18 of 63 and 36 respectively.
- 4.45 We have worked hard to try and reduce delays due to the time taken to undertake assessments. However, there were 24 such delays over the whole year compared to 17 the previous year. An improvement can be reported in delays in transfer which were down to the choice of care home, which fell from 78 the previous year to 36 this year. There was also a marked improvement in delays in transfer due the availability of care homes, which fell from 47 in 2017-18 to 7 this year.
- 4.46 However, we are not complacent. We recognise there is more to do. For example, as we continue to help more people to remain in their own home rather than move into residential care, we face pressures in the supply and capacity of home care, particularly at peak times of the day.
- 4.47 We are continuing to work closely with providers to reduce delays. Our StayWell@Home service, the Brokerage Team we have developed, and our Support@Home service are all helping to minimise delays in arranging community care packages of support. We have looked to extend the Broker Service to cover residential care placements and pilot arrangements within selected teams to review effectiveness. As a result of our review, we will implement a bed booking system in 2019-20.

Reablement

- 4.48 Our reablement services provide intermediate care and rehabilitation to enable people to remain living in their home safely and independently. The support is available to anyone aged 18 and over who is a permanent resident of Rhondda Cynon Taf and is eligible to receive support.
- 4.49 A plan of support is discussed with the individual after we have worked with them to assess their needs and what they want to achieve. The service is provided free of charge for a maximum of six weeks subject to the person remaining in need of the support. If support continues for longer, charges are made in accordance with our policy on charging for non-residential social services⁴. Where necessary, specialist equipment and/or aids and adaptations for the home may also be arranged.
- 4.50 In 2018-19, our Reablement Service helped 995 people. The table below highlights our performance against key national indicators.

Table 9: Key national performance indicators - Support after reablement, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Percentage of adults who completed a period of reablement & have a reduced package of care & support 6 months later (Measure 20a)	84.95%	85.43%	
Percentage of adults who completed a period of reablement and have no package of care and support 6 months later (Measure 20b)	77.23%	73.47%	




Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 4.51 We were successful in reducing the proportion of adults who, six months after we had provided reablement assistance, were able to live with a reduced package of care and support. Our performance of 85.43% was better than our target of 84.95%. This means more than 4 out of 5 people required less care and support after receiving help from our reablement services.
- 4.52 We fared less well on the proportion of people who, six months after receiving our Reablement service, required no care or support. Our performance of 74.47% came in just below our target of 77.23%.

Residential care homes

- 4.53 The average age of adults entering residential care increased slight to just under 87 (86 years 9 months). Our target was 85 years 3 months. This is encouraging. The more that can be done where possible to prevent people from having to enter residential care by providing alternative means of support in the community the better.

Table 10: Key national performance indicators – Residential care homes, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes (Measure 21)	922.5	959.35	
Average age of adults entering residential care homes (Measure 22)	85.27 yrs	86.78 yrs	
Number of people admitted to residential or nursing care (Corporate Indicator)	400	420	

Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 4.54 In all, 420 people were admitted to residential or nursing care, 3 more than the previous year. Our performance is slightly behind where we wanted to be. On average, people aged 65 and over are being supported for slightly longer – around 37 days - than in 2017-18.

Community based services

- 4.55 Our Stay Well@Home Service continues to deliver well as an integrated response with partner agencies to reduce delayed transfer of care from hospital. The service operates at Prince Charles and the Royal Glamorgan acute hospital sites in Accident and Emergency and on wards from 8.00am to 8.00pm seven days a week.

Case Study – Stay Well @Home Service

Mrs A is 90 years old living on her own. She had friends nearby, but her son moved away and was therefore unable to visit as often. Support for her was via ad hoc arrangements with friends.

Mrs A was independent, able to undertake activities such as washing and dressing, and was mobile for short distances. She presented to Accident & Emergency at 4:00pm complaining of a headache and dizziness, which she felt were getting worse. Following investigations, Mrs A did not need to be admitted. A referral was made to the StayWell@Home hospital-based team, which responded within the hour. They started the assessment at 4:00pm, just two hours after attending hospital and held a 'what matters' conversation with Mrs A and her family. During the assessment, Mrs A's family raised concerns about her ability to manage at home and felt some formal support was required to manage activities of daily living. Initially, Mrs A was reluctant to accept she required support but wanted to go home. Following discussion about support networks and her abilities, Mrs A agreed she may benefit from someone helping her as she gets tired during the day, and she wanted her family to know she is ok.

Action taken by the StayWell@Home team included a therapy review of physical capabilities, a request for urgent key safe to be fitted the next day and arranged for a roller Zimmer frame to be provided to support her mobility. A care package was arranged to start the next day with a morning and evening calls. Meals on Wheels were also arranged to start the next day. As a result of the StayWell@Home hospital-based service, Mrs A was able to be discharged less than 3 hours after the assessment, avoiding the need to be admitted, an outcome which was in line with her wishes. A review was undertaken within the first 14 days of support, which identified Mrs A would benefit from slightly longer help with reablement. Mrs A regained independence in all personal care activities and meal preparation and as a result, the support could be ended after 3 weeks and 3 days without the need for long-term services.

This case study illustrates what is different with the new arrangements. The assessment undertaken outside of core hours using information shared across health & social care, using one record. A care/support package was established and agreed immediately, with an enabling approach used to increase level of independence and to reduce any dependence on long-term service provision.

- 4.56 Our Library Services continue to play an important part in promoting people's health and well-being and engaging people in social services developments. We have reviewed our Housebound Service. As a result, it will be re-branded as the @homelibraryservice and will be developed to protect the interests of people who have long-term illness, mobility problems or are full-time carers so that they can continue to access books without the need to attend a central location. In addition to consulting people in communities throughout the area, our libraries have also helped us engage with the public for the development of Community Hubs.

Dementia care home provision

4.57 Work is ongoing to increase the capacity and quality of specialist care home provision to ensure people with a dementia no longer able to remain in their own homes can access specialist care locally. For example, our proposal for the development on the site of the former Magistrates Court Site in Pontypridd is designed to ensure sustainable arrangements are in place to commission increasing levels of care for people over time, including dementia care.

Valley LIFE project

4.58 During 2018/19, we have worked with Cwm Taf and Linc Cymru to design the extra care housing scheme and dedicated community resources to be developed on the former Ysbyty George Thomas hospital site. We have secured additional ICF capital funding to support the development of the scheme.

In addition, we have worked with Cwm Taf to extend the specialist dementia intervention service in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This Service offers a needs led approach to understand and manage behaviours related to stress and distress that effect the wellbeing of a person with dementia. The service had previously demonstrated success providing support and education within the care home sector and the new arrangements ensures that the service can now respond to people in their own homes in the community of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

To support the extension into the community the service has been enhanced by the inclusion of a senior practitioner social worker in the team to work alongside the additional psychology, occupational therapy and nurse practitioner resources.

Transition to adulthood

4.59 We have made progress on developing new models of care and pathways to achieve better outcomes for young people transitioning into adulthood. Working with partners, regional transition principles have been prepared. Workshops were held in March to produce the new models and a development plan for implementation. A multi-agency project team is now in place to take forward the developments.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Continue to develop new models of care to achieve better outcomes for young people transitioning into adulthood by focusing on preparing them for living as independently as possible.
- Undertake more work to implement arrangements for ongoing service user and carer engagement across Adult Services and to agree a strategy for annual delivery.
- We will be developing and delivering individualised support that is strength based and focuses on what young people and their families want. We will also be ensuring that children and young people who have been cared for are returned home to their families at the earliest opportunity and that the supports offered are evidence based and are part of a reunification framework

(c) Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

What did we plan to do last year?

4.60 During 2018/19, we said we would:


- Strengthen our Quality Assurance Framework and further reduce the number of repeat episodes where children and young people are placed on the child protection register.
- Deliver the actions in the Children Looked After Quality Assurance Panel's Work Plan 2018/19 to ensure children looked-after and care leavers receive good quality placements that support them to live safe, healthy and fulfilled lives and to achieve their potential.
- Complete and deliver the Adults Quality Assurance audit schedule for 2018-19, focusing on the themes and trends that have become apparent from management information data and audits in 2017-18 and ensure this is aligned to the work of the newly formed Quality Assurance sub-group of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub..
- Deliver the training opportunities identified in the multi-agency safeguarding training plan focusing on suicide and self-harm.
- Develop the Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum model as an effective method to develop practitioner knowledge, skills and values in relation to Adult Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards with assistance from the Cwm Taf Learning & Development Centre, with the aim of delivering regular events over the year that use real case examples to explore practice.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Child protection

4.61 At 31 March 2019, 498 children in the area were on the Child Protection Register. This compares to 502 a year earlier, a small reduction (1%) but nonetheless positive. Children who were on the Register for reasons of neglect rose very slightly from 148 at March 2018 to 150 in March 2019. Those on the Register because of emotional abuse increased from 243 to 263 over the same period.

Table 11: Key national performance indicator – Children Looked After, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Percentage of re-registrations of children on a Local Authority Child Protection register	8.0%	6.72%	

Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)




4.62 The percentage of re-registration of children on our Child Protection Register was 6.72%. The figure, the lower the better, was ahead of our target of 8% and our previous year's performance of 8.1%.

- 4.63 During the year, 4 children become looked after on more than one occasion. Repeat admissions for children who became looked after on more than one occasion equates to 2.4% of all admissions.
- 4.64 Our Miskin Service helps young people who may be vulnerable, looked after, or at risk of becoming looked after. It has a preventative role e.g. preventing the inappropriate admission of young people into care and for those in care and whose placements e.g. in foster care, children's homes, are at risk of breaking down. It also help young people who are accommodated in an emergency to return home. On average, during 2018-19, the service received 50 referrals per month & accepted over 60% of these for intervention.
- 4.65 Over and above helping young people who find themselves in difficult circumstances, our Miskin project encourages learning and development. The team works with our Cultural Services to provide arts and music projects and with the Tai Education Centre providing outdoor activities. The aim is to get young people re-engaged with education through these activities and achieve recognised qualifications.

Supporting Children Looked After

- 4.66 Over the course of the year, 164 children became looked after, an increase of 5% on the previous year. A total of 837 children and young people were looked after during the year, a small reduction from 845 in 2017-18 and a continued downward trend from 884 in 2016-17.
- 4.67 Of the 837 looked after during the year, the total number being looked after at 31 March 2019 was 674, a marginal reduction from the 676 at the same point a year earlier. While the numbers in the area are still relatively high in comparison with similar authorities within Wales, we have not seen the increases experienced by some authorities. Children under 4 years of age are most of children becoming looked after (53%) followed by children less than 1 year old (32%). This is almost identical to the position for the previous year.
- 4.68 The commissioning mix of placements which favours placing children with carers in the County Borough continues to be positive. This has remained similar to last year with 70% of children looked after being placed with in-house foster carers and 30% with independent sector foster carers. Both figures are slight ahead of our target figures. The rise in the percentage of children looked after being placed with relatives has continued with 30% as at 31 March this year compared to 27% in March 2018. This is positive for the children concerned who are afforded the security and stability they need without being legally separated from their family.

Table 12: Key national performance indicators – Children Looked After, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	Our target	Our performance	Actual vs Target
Percentage of children looked after who were seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after	60%	79.2%	
Percentage of children looked after registered with a GP within 10 days of start of their placement	98%	89.3%	
Percentage of looked after children who have experienced 1 or more changes in school during a period or periods of being looked after which were not due to transitional arrangements	12.8%	12.8%	


Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 4.69 We comfortably exceeded our target for children who were seen by a dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after. Our performance of 79.2% - basically 4 out of 5 children – was considerably higher than our 2017-18 performance of 53.8%. Although a good performance, we will strive for further improvement in 2019-20 on this and on the percentage of children looked after who are registered with a GP. As the above table shows, we fell slightly short of our target this year.
- 4.70 We met our target of 12.8% in the percentage of looked after children experiencing changes in school which were not due to transitional arrangements. This was an improvement on our 2017-18 performance of 14.4%
- 4.71 During the year, 45 children were adopted, which is a marked, and very encouraging, increase from the 31 adoptions in 2017-18. Three of the children were adopted by their previous foster carers. Three were adopted by single carers, 10 by same sex carers and 32 by different sex carers. We continued our work on quality assurance with the Children Looked After Quality Assurance Panel initiative, which was introduced after an independent review. Our progress was recognised by Care Inspectorate Wales in its recent review of the Council’s statutory social services functions.
- 4.72 In partnership with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and with the support of the Welsh Government, we piloted a Fostering Well Being programme to improve wellbeing outcomes for fostered children. Foster carers, children and young people were recruited as pioneers, with foster carers running a helpline within Fostering Services for carers. In October 2018, we also launched the good practice guide the “Children Looked After School Quality Mark”.

Safeguarding

- 4.73 During the year, the Adult Safeguarding Team received 4,699 suspected adult-at-risk reports. This is 7% less than the number received the previous year (5,060). The reports resulted in further action in approximately 1 in 10 cases (9% or 418 cases)
- 4.74 Of reports received this year, 3 in 5 (60%) were Public Protection Notifications. The number of Section 126 enquiries (469), which are enquiries required by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 when an adult is deemed to be at risk, decreased by 11% when compared to the previous year.

Table 13: Key performance measure – Adult protection enquiries, RCT and Wales, 2018-19

	RCT CBC Target	RCT CBC Actual	Actual vs Target
% of adult protection enquiries completed within 7 days (Measure 18)	97%	93.57%	

Source: Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 4.75 Nearly 19 out of 20 adult protection (93.57%) enquiries were completed within 7 days. This is similar to last year’s performance (93.78%) but slightly below our goal of 97%.
- 4.76 In 2018-19, 13,137 contacts were received by the Cwm Taf Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub for Children’s Services of which 1,889, (14%) had child protection concerns. In all, 1,451 of the 1,889 child protection contacts received (77%) proceeded to investigation. This compares with 16,470 contacts from April 17 to March 18, 12% (1938) of which related to child protection concerns & 85% of these resulting in an investigation.

4.77 An extensive programme of learning and development was delivered as a result of the multi-agency safeguarding training plan. More than 2,800 people from more than thirteen different organisations and council departments attended training events. The programme covered a diverse range of important subjects. It included safeguarding practice for children and adults, child protection, working with complex families, working with children involved in sexual exploitation and human trafficking. More than 300 people also received “Ask and Ask” training as part of implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

4.78

Case Study - Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

The Information, Advice and assistance team received a referral from a local school following a disclosure by Child B alleging that he had been hit with a belt by his mother. The case was identified as a child protection concern and referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub where a strategy meeting was held. Child B was spoken to at the school and it became evident that the child had been subject to inappropriate behaviour management styles within the home. Mother was arrested and as there were no family members the child was placed with foster carers until further enquiries could be undertaken. Following assessment, it was identified that the family originated from a country that used this form of punishment and had not initially understood professional concerns. The outcome was for work to be undertaken with the family which parents fully engaged with and Child B safely returned home with no further intervention from Children’s Services.

4.79 A series of safeguarding audits were undertaken during the year:

- Four multi-agency individual Adult Safeguarding case audits
- Audit of use of the ‘Professional Concerns Protocol’
- Quality of strategy discussions & Investigation decisions
- Use of advocacy in Safeguarding Adults Procedures
- Quality of decision-making in cases where there was no further action following S128 Reports
- Quality of decision-making in cases where there was no further action to protect required following S126 enquiries
- Learning from Repeat Safeguarding Reports for the same adults at risk
- Quality of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards case prioritisation decisions
- Correlation of Relevant People funded by Continuing Health Care and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications made
- Quality of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Best Interests Assessments
- De-registration of 16/17 year olds from the Child Protection Register
- Sexually Harmful Behaviour Audit
- Sexual Abuse Referral Centre referrals in Cwm Taf
- Six individual Children Safeguarding case audits

4.80 The audits and the training programme, which involved staff from many different organisations working in the area, helps to further develop practitioner knowledge, skills and values in relation to Adult Safeguarding. It helps ensure effective operation of the multi-agency initiatives such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. We are encouraged this is recognised by others. The Care Inspectorate Wales found an effective multi-disciplinary approach assists in promoting sound safeguarding practice.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Implement the Quality Assurance Framework.
- Strengthen the participation of children and young people in services delivery by continuing to promote engagement with Children Looked After and partner agencies to ensure coproduction and that the voice of the children and young people are heard.
- Develop the pioneer Foster Carer Programme to mentor foster carers who have children with challenging behaviour placed with them.

(d) Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

What did we plan to do last year?

4.81 In 2018/19, we said we would:

- Increase the number of Community Hubs and neighbourhood networks over a three-year period. This phased roll-out of the locations of these Hubs to be based on the results of the consultations and evidence of greatest need.
- Develop new community-based models of service with a focus on early intervention and prevention, choice, control and independence

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Community Hubs

4.82 We have continued our development of Community Hubs and made good progress. Community Hubs encourage and support people to learn, develop and participate in society. They help to ensure better public services, which are joined up, cost effective and accessible. They provide a single point of contact within communities to access good quality information, advice and assistance to find support and a platform for learning, volunteering and to develop community capacity, and flexible community space for people to meet and socialise, thus helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation. As such, Community Hubs play an important part in preventing ill health and improving health and wellbeing.

4.83 The development of Community Hubs allows the Council to reconfigure its community assets and services. The facilities include a range of services provided by the public and third sector which are aligned with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. Bringing services together creates economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost-effective use of our community assets allows resources to be reinvested in new or retrofitted, fit-for-purpose buildings to make services sustainable in the longer term. This year, we have:

- Agreed the leasehold transfer of St Mair's Day Centre to Age Connects Morgannwg. The Hub being developed by Age Connects Morgannwg will have a range of services for the local community.
- Developed, in partnership with a third sector organisation Fern Partnership, a Community Hub in Ferndale at the former Ferndale Infants School. It will serve the Rhondda Fach area. The building work is nearing completion and the Hub is expected to open early summer this year.

- Developed a Community Hub at the former Mountain Ash Day Centre, which will serve the South Cynon area. It is expected open in early summer this year.
- Started to prepare plans to open a Community Hub at Porth Plaza, which is part of the regeneration of the town centre, and at the Llys Cadwyn, the former Taff Vale Precinct site which is being retained by the Council to provide a number of community-based functions.

- 4.84 Each Community Hub will support a “neighbourhood network” of community-based services. The network of Hubs will link services and communities together and help make more use of the excellent facilities provided by our local Third Sector organisations throughout the area. They make a significant contribution to people’s health and well-being with and without direct support from the Council.
- 4.85 The development of Community Hubs is helping us to modernise and reconfigure our open access community services. During the year, we consulted on the future of our four remaining open access Community Day Centres - Gilfach Goch, the Brynnar Jones Centre in Gelli, Teifi House in Maerdy, and the Nazareth Day Centre in Williamstown. There are increasing costs in running the centres, the majority of which are under-utilised, with potential significant capital investment will be required to retain them. The service model does not meet the needs of older people in the communities and is no longer sustainable.
- 4.86 We place great emphasis on community engagement on matter such as this, where decisions need to be taken on services and facilities. We engaged with people over a period of 6 weeks. We organised eight drop-in events, which were well attended by people who use the services and residents. We also ran an online survey. In total, 331 people response to the consultation. After careful consideration, the decision was made to close three centres, with Gilfach Goch being the one to remain open. We are working with Third sector organisations to explore alternative provision those affected, which includes the Community Hubs we are developing.
- 4.87 Over and above helping to support young people who find themselves in difficult circumstances, our Miskin project encourages learning and development. The team works with our Cultural Services to provide arts and music projects and with the Tai Education Centre providing outdoor activities. The aim is to get young people re-engaged with education through these activities and achieve recognised qualifications.

New community-based models of service

- 4.88 We have commenced work with the Rainbow Trust to explore opportunities to develop new day opportunities aimed to improving the employment chances of young people with a learning disability on transition from school or college
- 4.89 As part of our joint working with other, we now have 5 Community Co-ordinators covering the Cwm Taf University Health Board area. The posts are funded by the Welsh Government’s Integrated Care Fund. Three of the co-ordinators cover the Council’s area - Cynon, Taff Ely, and Rhondda – and one covers the Merthyr Tydfil Council area. The role of the fifth co-ordinator is to work specifically with primary care across the whole area. They engage with people in communities and provide information, advice and signpost to local community groups, activities and services, building strong local networks. As such, they complement our development of Community Hubs.
- 4.90 Community Zones are being developed and the implementation plan will consider how loneliness and isolation with young parents can be tackled. Loneliness and social isolation affect people of all ages. We secured a £120,000 Transformation Grant from the Welsh

Governments Museums, Archives and Libraries Division to renovate the interior of Tonypany Library. This has created a modern library with community spaces including rooms for confidential advice sessions and a new dedicated area for people of all ages to create and collaborate on projects. A new IT suite has also been created for Work Clubs such as Digital Friday and adult education classes. As part of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board's priority action, we participated in volunteering fayres in Treorchy Comprehensive School and Merthyr College with the aim of aligning the interests of young people in the work needed to meet the community challenge element of Welsh Bacalaureate and Duke of Edinburgh awards

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Develop new community-based models of service with a focus on prevention, independence, choice and wellbeing, including day services; respite, carers, direct payments, telecare, StayWell@Home and home care.
- Review the changes made to the single point of contact for service provision to realign with the development of the Community Zones.

(e) Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

What did we plan to do last year?

4.91 We said we would:

- Continue to work with Children's Services to develop a practice - led approach that improves the way we work with young people and their families throughout their life and at the critical time of transition to adulthood.
- Develop a plan to implement a Regional Fostering Service in line with the recommendations of the National Fostering Framework.
- Complete development of Learning Disability Day Opportunities Strategy and prepare an effective business case for the remodelling of current service delivery model

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Children's Services

4.92 We have continued to work with Children's Services in regards to Transition arrangements. During 2018/19 we implemented Principles of Transition which were developed on behalf of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding board and have also developed a Strategic Transition and Operational transition Group which will involve not only Children's Services but other Multi

Agency Partners to ensure that we are planning effectively for young people approaching adult hood.

These groups will drive ongoing practice development to improve the transition arrangements for young people and we continue to embed a culture of learning and development by arranging Practitioner forums to develop a consistent approach to transition and support provided to individuals and their families.

Regional Fostering Service

4.93 We aim to give children a great start in life by improving our fostering services and by recruiting more foster carers. In December 2018, our Cabinet approved a proposal to collaborate with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council BC to create a single Cwm Taf regional 'Front Door'. This reflects the priority in last year's report to develop a regional service with locally driven recruitment and marketing activity in line with the National Fostering Framework. It also brings the assessment of potential foster carers back into Council services. The new arrangements were implemented in April 2019. The Council's Contact Centre is now handling all fostering recruitment enquiries, processing applications, coordinating the marketing function and supporting potential foster carers through the process of becoming a Foster Carer for the Cwm Taf region. Whilst it is too early to establish the full impact of the change, early signs are positive with calls being responded to more efficiently and initial visits carried out promptly.

Learning Disability Day Opportunities Strategy

4.94 We progressed the development of a Learning Disability Day Opportunities Strategy and remodelling of current service delivery mode. A set of options was prepared, and the service continues to consider the redesign of services to become more outcomes focused. We delayed the draft report in light of intentions for regional commissioning and to co-produce options with the people who use services and their parents and carers. We held workshops with all stakeholders in February and March 2019 to develop the strategy and implementation plan. We have set a revised target date of July 2019 to allow further co-production with people with a learning disability and their parents /carers in order to finalise the priorities for change.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Continue to work to reduce the need for Statutory Services by ensuring that children, young people and families have coordinated integrated family support earlier.

(f) Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

What did we say we would do?

4.95 We said in 2018/19 we would:

- Complete the development and build of the modular construction for the Extra Care Housing to provide more choice for older residents to enable them to live healthily and safely for as long as possible, increasing independence and reducing social isolation.

- Conclude the review of existing residential care home (and day centre) provision for older people to support our future service needs supporting more people to live independently in their own homes rather than institutional settings
- Complete the redevelopment of specialist accommodation for people with learning disabilities
- Continue to ensure that there are appropriate levels of modern fit for purpose housing and accommodation available for vulnerable people that meets their needs and supported, where appropriate, by access to community facilities
- Implement the recommendations of the independent report: Review and Refocus of Accommodation and Placement Provision for Children Looked After and Care Leavers'
- Realign the Children Looked After Project to take account lessons learnt and ensure that children who cannot live with their own parents live in suitable accommodation within the area.
- Identify a range of placements that support Children Looked After and care leavers to achieve positive outcomes and draft a new model of service provision within our residential establishments.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Extra Care Housing

- 4.96 As reported earlier in this report, and in response to the first two priorities listed above, we have made solid progress against our plan to develop more Extra Care accommodation, an alternative to institutional care home settings, which is designed to enhance the wellbeing and independence of older people.
- 4.97 Our Extra Care accommodation on the site of the former Maesyffynnon Care Home in Aberaman is due to open in September 2019. In August last year we undertook a pre-planning application consultation to build on the site of the former Magistrates Court in Pontypridd. Construction of the accommodation on the former Ysbyty George Thomas hospital site in Treorchy is due in summer 2019.
- 4.98 We concluded our major review of existing residential care home and day centre provision for older people. The review was commissioned to help us understand the future service need within the wider strategic context of enabling more people to live independently in their own homes rather than in institutional settings. We have undertaken a 12-week consultation (January to April 2019), the outcome of which will inform future decisions.

Accommodation for people with learning disabilities and vulnerable people

- 4.99 Our partnership working with Cynon Taf housing association to develop better accommodation for people with learning disabilities by remodelling Pen Llew Court in Aberdare has now passed the tender stage. The original 34 homes flats and maisonettes are being converted into 19 one-bedroom flats. It means people will not be living in just one bedroom but will have their own front door, a living room and bedroom, kitchen, and adapted shower. Support will be available on site 24/7. The goal is for individuals to be able to live in a community not an institution. The complex will include community facilities. Completion is anticipated by the end of 2019.

- 4.100 The development sits well with the recommendations of a national report by the Wales Audit Office “Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for adults with Learning Disabilities. The report⁵ recommended local authorities continue to focus on preventing people becoming dependent on more expensive placements in care homes by providing effective support and a range of step-up accommodation.
- 4.101 In response to the Wales Audit Report regarding people with a Learning Disability, we have continued to work with Partner Agencies and the people who we provide care and support and their parents and carers to implement the Statement of Intent for Learning Disability which describes a shared commitment to deliver a new model for health and social services. Implementation of the Statement of Intent is helping us address the recommendations set out by the WAO in their report but, more importantly, co-produce our commissioning outcomes for the short and medium term. In 2018/19, we have focused on the following priority areas:
- Preventing loneliness and isolation by increasing community inclusion
 - Reducing Stigma
 - Housing
 - Further Education
 - Employment, training and lifelong learning

The agreed shared outcomes are now being used to inform our co-produce work plans for 2019/20

Accommodation and placements for Children Looked After

- 4.102 All our Children Homes received positive reports from the independent visitor. Our three residential establishments have been at full capacity for most of the year with voids being scrutinized monthly. We recognise we need to plan for future accommodation needs and are in the process of reviewing our model of residential care and the housing needs of our children looked after aged 16 and over.
- 4.103 Working with Trivallis Housing Association, we continue to provide two one-bedroom flats for young people leaving care to use on a trial basis for living independently on their own. The flats are for young people aged 17+ in residential or foster placements and staying there helps them to get to grips with everyday life such as paying bills, prioritising expenditure and ultimately facing the reality of living alone.
- 4.104 For our commitment to draft a new model of service provision within our residential establishments, we held back until the Review of models of Residential Care for Children and Young People commissioned by the Welsh Government’s Ministerial Advisory Group had been published. It was published in December 2018 and we have considered its recommendations. These have been included for implementation in a Placement Strategy.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- We will review our model of residential care and the housing needs of our children looked after aged 16 and over.

- Deliver new accommodation models to improve outcomes for those individuals who need support to live independently (This will include actions in relation to extra care/supported living)

5. How we do what we do

(a) Our workforce and how we support their professional roles

- 5.1 The delivery of high-quality services depends on us having an adequate workforce of well-trained staff with the right mix of skills, experience and approach e.g. to enhance partnership working across organisational boundaries. We have continued to press ahead with organisational and cultural change following the introduction of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act.
- 5.2 To ensure we have the workforce we need to achieve the best for our residents, we play our part in implementing the Council's five-year Workforce Plan⁶. The Plan has five aims:
- Developing a flexible and agile workforce that shares organisational knowledge
 - Recruiting and retaining the best talent to create a diverse workforce
 - Leadership and management development
 - Enabling a high performing, engaged and committed workforce
 - Supporting the health and well-being of our workforce to maximise attendance
- 5.3 We have also taken, and are continuing to take, action specific to our social care workforce internally and through the Cwm Taf Social Care Workforce Development Partnership Annual Workplan 2018/19. This is a rolling action plan to:
- Support the continued implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social (Wales) Act including the domiciliary care workforce to prepare for registration and supporting the knowledge/role of responsible individuals.
 - Support the training, development and qualification of social care managers: including Step Up to Management; Middle Manager Development Programme; Team Manager development programme; and those requiring registration as managers
 - Support the ongoing development of approaches to outcome-focussed care and support practice
 - Support for both Social Work qualifying training and post-qualifying training in Wales
 - Support front line social care workers to develop their skills overall in relation to social care, and to support introduction of the revised induction framework
 - Enable the workforce to meet regulatory requirements for qualification and/or registration
- 5.4 A training needs analysis undertaken across the region took account of the national priorities identified by Social Care Wales. The regional priorities identified are a combination of cyclical core training (i.e. required annually) and development events that will raise awareness and develop practice. The local priorities reflect the policy and service delivery of each local authority in the region.
- 5.5 During the year, we delivered planned training for senior practitioners including coaching and mentoring and strength-based practice and supervision. We also delivered training for all Care and Support staff. Subjects included motivational interviewing and collaborative communication, critical reflection and analysis, and positive risk-taking and decision-making.

5.6 In 2018-19, we took several steps to strengthen our workforce planning, our performance management and to train and develop our workforce. They include:

- Action to make effective use of the new Welsh Community Care Information System, which gives us better information to manage people's care and saves time by avoiding the need to repeat information to different agencies.
- A new Supervision Policy, which was co-produced with staff and which is aligned to the principles of strength-based practice.
- The introduction of peer-group support arrangements across Assessment and Care Co-ordination Services.
- Regular engagement with staff by managers to improve communications and to allow concerns, developments, suggestions and ideas to be discussed. This happens in different ways in different service areas.
- Where possible, more temporary and permanent posts created to increase capacity as a response to specific pressures.
- A "Leadership in Dementia Care" programme, and support for our domiciliary staff to complete their registration with Social Care Wales. We have also actively encouraged and supported our in-house direct service front-line staff to attain at least QCF level 3

5.7 In our Youth Engagement and Participation Service, we introduced "Restorative Approaches". All members of staff who manage others have been trained in the approach, which is now embedded across the whole service. The approach has been helpful in establishing the collective needs of staff, informing the redevelopment of supervision forms and sessions, and delivering day-to-day activities. Plans are in hand to introduce the approach to the Early Years and Family Support Service and Resilient Families Service.

5.8 Staff in Children's Services have been involved in several task groups to develop a more streamlined approach to service delivery. Some are also part of national working groups and the training which stems from this is included in our Annual Training Programme. The annual programme is developed with the involvement of staff.

5.9 Our safeguarding staff also continue to contribute to the well-received programme of Multi Agency Practitioner Events. The many events which were held during the year aid professional development practice by sharing learning from audits and reviews.

(b) Our financial resources and how we plan

5.10 The financial position, coupled with changing needs and demographic pressures, continues to be challenging. The Council continues to support and prioritise Adult and Children's Services and once again has demonstrated its commitment to protecting front-line services and investing in our local priorities. For 2018-19, the Council allocated £144.9 million to the Children and Community Services budget, an increase of £6.8 million (4.9%) on the budget for 2017-18.

5.11 The previous financial year (2017/18) ended with an overspend for Adult Services of £0.903 million. This was mainly due to replacement and sickness cover where necessary and the need to provide specialist accommodation placements, home care packages, and reduced occupancy of in-house residential care. We also under-achieved in bringing in income where charging was due.

5.12 This year, we ended the year with an overspend of £1.08 million. The main reasons for this were overspends on:

- Long-term care and support staffing costs
- Nursing/residential care costs
- Intermediate care and reablement, due to increased demand for services to prevent admissions to hospital or to facilitate hospital discharges
- Fairer charging, due to lower levels of income received
- Increased costs of residential care and adoption fees and allowances.

5.13 During the year we also encountered additional staffing requirements in Accommodation Services and less income was received due to lower than budgeted client numbers within Home for the Elderly establishments.

5.14 The overspends were partly offset by underspends in:

- Independent living and day services, due to vacant posts
- Fostering, due to reduced costs
- Children's Services, due to temporary staffing vacancies

5.15 During the year, we have taken a range of action to manage the financial challenges and pressures and this work is ongoing.

5.16 In order to manage ongoing budget pressures, we continue to implement robust and very challenging budget plans as part of the Council's financial management strategy and associated Medium-Term Financial Plan. We have robust processes in place to identify budget pressures and budget efficiencies, including rigorous scrutiny. Vacancies which arise are considered as part of our ongoing, broader, work to reflect on and rethink our activity with the possibility of transforming the way we deliver services. Quality assurance panels oversee commissioning decisions across Adult Services to ensure challenge and consistency in the quality of assessment outcomes along with monthly cost-of-care meetings and fortnightly specialist placements panel meetings.

5.17 We are also focusing efforts to further strengthen prevention work to reduce and/or contain demand and increasing the number of clients living independently thus reducing the cost of care. We continue to work to improve efficiency and productivity of our operations through reviews and by increased use of technology.

(c) Our partnership working, political and corporate leadership, governance and accountability

5.18 We are fortunate to have a political and corporate leadership which is committed and effective in supporting and challenging the performance of Cabinet members and officers to drive improvements in services and transformation. This was recognised by the Care Inspectorate Wales in its recent inspection. Our Cabinet Members are approachable and supportive and fully engaged in the delivery and development of services.

5.19 Partnership working to improve services and to achieve efficiencies remains an important part of our work in both Adult and Children's Services. We continue to play a significant part in the Regional Partnership Board and the delivery of the regional plan, which was produced in conjunction with, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, the Cwm Taf University Health Board and Third Sector organisations.

5.20 In June 2018, the Welsh Government announced responsibility for healthcare services in the Bridgend County Borough Council area would transfer to the Cwm Taf University Health Board from the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. As a result, the Board's boundary would extend to encompass the Bridgend County Borough Council area. The change came into effect on 1 April this year. We have worked with our original partners and new partners in the Bridgend County Borough Council area to ensure the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board is up and running and effective. We are committed to playing our part to the full to develop more integrated care and support services which benefit those who need our services and the population of the whole area.

5.21 In Adult Services, we have continued to work closely with partner organisations across the health and social care system in Rhondda Cynon Taf and regionally. For example:

- We are the regional operational lead on the Reablement and Stay Well @Home integrated services which have been developed in partnership with Cwm Taf Health Board and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.
- We have developed new service model proposals such as Stay well @Home 2 and Telecare to support a regional transformation bid, and dementia service proposals to enhance support available in the community. This follows the success of Stay Well @Home in the 2018 National NHS Awards for working seamlessly across agencies. It was also "highly commended" at the Social Care Accolades. A recent independent evaluation of the service evidenced good joint working in practice.
- We continue to work closely with regional partners for effective co-ordination on, and development of, joint investment opportunities e.g. the Integrated Care Fund. We are the regional lead with externally commissioned home care agencies to ensure the effective delivery of home care services; including recruitment and retention initiatives, zoning and outcome-based commissioning.
- The links we have developed with housing providers, commissioned care agencies and third sector organisations are delivering results. We have delivered new accommodation models (long-term and respite) for people with learning disabilities including Pen Llew Court in Aberdare; Crown Avenue in Treorchy, Oxford Street in Mountain Ash and Belle Vue in Treforest. These developments have been highlighted earlier in the report.
- We manage various partnership projects with the Third Sector including RNIB, Action for Hearing Loss, Care and Repair, Mencap, DEWIS and Age Connects Morgannwg. We reviewed each of them in 2018 to ensure arrangements are efficient and effective and outcome focused.
- The Multi Agency safeguarding Hub has continued to develop and mature with strong evidence of sound inter-agency safeguarding practice. Likewise, the work of the Safeguarding Board has delivered opportunities for improvements in practice both within and between agencies.

5.22 In addition to the above, equipment provision for Adult Services is delivered via a Partnership with Cwm Taf Health Board, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend Council Borough Councils via a pooled funds arrangement. We have, as regional lead, also established a care home pool budget and commenced a review of joint commissioning of care home provision.

5.23 Care Inspectorate Wales have also commented *that “effective operational and strategic relationships with other regional partners have facilitated the implementation of some innovative projects, such as the hospital based, multi-professional Stay Well @ Home initiative,”* reflecting a strong commitment to co-production.

5.24 Partnership working is also a fundamental part of our Children’s Services. For example:

- We are working with public and third sector organisations to embed a culture of early intervention and prevention through, for example, the Resilient Families Programme. This is part of the Integrated Family Support Framework, the purpose of which is to co-ordinate and organise the contribution of services providing support to families.
- We are leading the development of a Joint Statement of Strategic Intent for Children and Young People for the Regional Partnership Board, working with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cwm Taf University Health Board and third sector organisations
- Our Miskin project works with the Council’s Cultural Services to provide arts and music projects and with the Tai Education Centre for outdoor activities.
- We lead the Cwm Taf Reflect Project, which works with young women who have had children removed from their care, and the Regional Advocacy Service.
- We have a representative on a Welsh Government’s Ministerial Advisory Group. The same person is vice-chair for the Early Intervention Task Group. Another is chairing the Welsh Government’s task and finish group which is examining good practice guidance on neglect.
- We chair the “Together for Mental Health” Partnership Board for Children and Young people and we are working with South Wales Police on the implementation of the Early Action Programme

5.25 We have worked with our partners to establish a Regional Commissioning Team and are committed to helping it become an effective means of developing more integrated services. The team, which will work across all services, will drive the health and social care integration agenda on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. It will lead the implementation of the Regional Plan and a programme of commissioning activities, which will help to improve the quality and value for money of care services.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Development of an overarching workforce development strategy for Adult Services.
- Deliver agreed budget efficiencies and manage services within resources available in the medium-term, including action to reduce sickness absence and improve business processes.
- Embed quality assurance and performance management culture at all levels of adult services (This will include actions on management information and performance indicators).
- Maximise adult social care income and debt recovery to build on improvements in level of debt achieved in 2018-19.
- Manage the market to ensuring we have the local workforce and safe and the sustainable localised care and services that we need.

6. Accessing information and key documents

- 6.1 This report has summarised the Council's Social Services Department's performance for the 2018-19 financial year. Over and above the day-to-day delivery of services, it reports progress against our priorities for action set out in last year's report. The report helps us to be accountable to the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf and open about what we are doing.
- 6.2 The contents of the report strike a balance between volume of information and the desire to make it informative and easy to read. Whether seeking information on our performance or information on help and support in the area, there are other ways in which you can find out about our services and developments, and action we are taking in partnership with other organisations including the Cwm Taf University Health Board, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend County Borough Councils, South Wales Police, and the many third sector organisations, which play such an important role in helping people in our communities.

Other sources of information

6.3 For support in the area:

- Adult Social Services Care and Support
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/AdultsandOlderPeople/AdultSocialServicesCareandSupport/AdultSocialServicesCareandSupport.aspx>
- Children and Families
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/ChildrenandFamilies/ChildrenandFamilies.aspx>
- You can search "Dewis Cymru" for community-based services to support you and your family <https://www.dewis.wales/>

6.4 Full information on Councillors, Committees and Meetings is available on the Council's website: <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings.aspx>. Meetings of the Cabinet, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee are particularly relevant to this report. Agendas, papers and decision reports can be accessed via the following web pages:

- Cabinet:
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Committees/Cabinet.aspx>
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Committees/ChildrenandYoungPeopleScrutinyCommittee.aspx>
- Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Committees/HealthandWellbeingScrutinyCommittee.aspx>

References

¹ Cwm Taf Regional Plan 2018-23

² RCT Corporate Performance Report (2019) Innovate Trust

³ Your Life Your Care (April 2018) A survey of the views of looked after children and young people aged 4-18yrs in Rhondda Cynon Taf

⁴ Charging for Non-Residential Social Services policy

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/AdultsandOlderPeople/Helpoliveathome/RelatedDocuments/ChargingforNonResidentialSocialServices.pdf>

⁵ Wales Audit Office (May 2018) Strategic Commissioning of Accommodation Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities. Cardiff: Wales Audit Office

⁶ Workforce Plan 2017-2022, Rhondda Cynon Taf

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/WorkforcePlan/RelatedDocuments/WorkforcePlan20172022.pdf>

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18TH JULY 2019

CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL PLAN 2019/20

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON

Author: Nicola Kingham, Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Business
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to share with Cabinet the Annual Plan for 2019/20 for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (See Appendix 1).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes and endorses the content of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Plan for 2019/20.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board has a statutory responsibility to publish an Annual Plan on 31st March each year, which sets out its priorities for the coming year.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In June 2018, the Welsh Government announced that from 1st April 2019, Cwm Taf University Health Board will be responsible for healthcare services in the Bridgend County Borough Council area. This means that accompanying partnership structures in the delivery of social services across the Western Bay region will transfer to Cwm Taf, with the creation of a new Regional Safeguarding Board for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area.

- 4.2 The area of Cwm Taf Morgannwg covers the local authority areas of Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf with a total population of almost 440,000.
- 4.3 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (CTMSB) is a statutory partnership made up of the agencies that are responsible for safeguarding children and adults at risk in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area. The Board ensures that people of all ages, living in the region, are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. This also involves preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm from happening.
- 4.4 The two key safeguarding objectives around protection and prevention underpin the work of the Safeguarding Board and inform the priorities that we have agreed in this Annual Plan for 2019/2020.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

5.1 In addition to carrying out its core statutory safeguarding functions, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board has agreed a number of key priorities for improvement for the coming year. These are specific areas that will enhance and support the Board in achieving its objectives and are as follows:

- Safeguard children, young people and adults at risk from the impact of domestic abuse
- Improve the way in which we communicate, engage and promote participation with our communities and partner agencies
- Ensure that the transition to the new regional footprint for safeguarding is managed effectively

5.2 A detailed work plan for the Board and its sub groups will sit underneath the Annual Plan. The work plan will include the actions required to achieve the improvements required, who is responsible, timescales and measures of success. The progress of the work plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis and will form the basis of the Annual Report for 2019/2020.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Annual Plan has been approved by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board and shared with the Welsh Government, the National Independent Safeguarding Board and the five other Regional Safeguarding Boards.
- 7.2 A copy of the report has been published on the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board website www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board uses the national funding formula to assess and identify annual financial contributions from statutory partner agencies.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the responsibilities and the functions of the Regional Safeguarding Boards.

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 10.1 The Board contributes to elements of the work of the Public Service Board by reporting on safeguarding activity.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON

CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

Background Papers:

None

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Appendix 1



Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board

Annual Plan 2019/20

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SAFEGUARDING IN CWM TAF MORGANNWG

In June 2018, the Welsh Government announced that from 1 April 2019, Cwm Taf University Health Board will be responsible for healthcare services in the Bridgend County Borough Council area. This means that accompanying partnership structures in the delivery of social services across the Western Bay region will transfer to Cwm Taf, with the creation of a new Regional Safeguarding Board for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area.

This is the first Annual Plan for the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.

The area of Cwm Taf Morgannwg covers the local authority areas of Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf with a total population of almost 440,000.

The **Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (CTMSB)** is a statutory partnership made up of the agencies that are responsible for safeguarding children and adults at risk in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area. The Board ensures that people of all ages, living in the region, are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. This also involves preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm from happening.

Keeping children and adults who may have needs for care and support safe is everyone's responsibility. This means feeling safe and being safe within their home or in their community, school, work place or anywhere else they go.

The two key **safeguarding** objectives around **protection** and **prevention** underpin the work of the Safeguarding Board and inform the priorities that we have agreed in this Annual Plan for 2019/2020.

The **Cwm Taf Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** sits within the structure of the Board and covers the areas of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf. The purpose of the MASH is to act as the single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns. This has significantly improved the sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse.

The **Bridgend Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** provides safeguarding services from both the local authority in Bridgend and its partners through co-location and virtual links. MASH provides the opportunity for a higher standard of safeguarding by providing all professionals with more information on which to make better, more informed decisions. The MASH enables earlier, higher-quality information sharing, collective risk analysis and streamlined decision-making, whilst ensuring the appropriate actions take place at the appropriate time. It also allows an opportunity for early intervention and prevention of repeat referrals.

What is Abuse and Neglect?

- Abuse means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.
- Neglect means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being.

Safeguarding for All

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board carries out its objectives in line with the national statutory guidance as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. Our aim is to improve safeguarding arrangements for everyone. Collaboration between children and adults safeguarding arrangements in the area has resulted in a number of joint functions, including a joint Safeguarding Board. The Board continues to take every opportunity to collaborate across children and adults safeguarding to support joint working and the sharing of information and learning.

Who are the Members of the Safeguarding Board?

The Lead Partner for the Board is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the membership complies with the statutory guidance issued under Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014. A list of members is attached as Appendix 1.

What are the Core Functions of the Safeguarding Board?

Every Regional Safeguarding Board has a statutory responsibility to carry out core functions in relation to multi-agency safeguarding. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board carries out these day to day functions via specific committees and sub groups (see Appendix 2). These include:

- Contributing to the development, implementation and monitoring of protocols and procedures that support the protection of adults and children and to prevent abuse
- Raising awareness of the Board's objectives to protect and prevent adults and children from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect and other forms of harm, and to provide information about how this might be achieved

- Reviewing the efficacy of measures taken by agencies to implement the objectives of the Board and to make and monitor recommendations
- Undertaking child practice reviews, adult practice reviews, audits, investigations and other reviews as are required in pursuance of its objectives and to disseminate learning and information arising from these reviews
- Reviewing the performance of the Board and its partners and bodies represented on the Board in carrying out its objectives
- Facilitating research into protection from, and prevention of, abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm
- Review the training needs of practitioners working in the area of the Board in order to identify training to assist in the protection and prevention of abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES THAT WE PROPOSE TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR?

In addition to carrying out the core statutory safeguarding functions, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board has agreed a number of key priorities for improvement for the coming year. These are specific areas that will enhance and support the Board in achieving its objectives and are as follows:

- 1 Safeguard children, young people and adults at risk from the impact of domestic abuse**
- 2 Improve the way in which we communicate, engage and promote participation with our communities and partner agencies**
- 3 Ensure that the transition to the new regional footprint for safeguarding is managed effectively**

A detailed work plan for the Board and its sub groups will sit underneath this strategic Annual Plan. The work plan will include the actions required to achieve the improvements required, who is responsible, timescales and measures of success. The progress of the work plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis and will form the basis of the Annual Report for 2019/2020.

An overview of what the Board intends to do to achieve its priorities for the coming year is detailed below.

Strategic Priority 1: Safeguard children, young people and adults at risk from the impact of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse involves any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between partners or family members, regardless of age, gender or sexuality.

All forms of domestic abuse have a profound effect on those who experience it. The impact that domestic abuse can have on children and young people is devastating and can lead to problems in adulthood and have a detrimental impact on their mental health and wellbeing. This is a similar case for older people, but often the domestic abuse may not be as visible or they may not be aware of the support that is available to them. Some people will be more vulnerable to domestic abuse, such as disabled people who may not have the ability to defend themselves and/or be less able to access support.

In Cwm Taf, between January and December 2018, there were 980 high risk domestic abuse cases referred in to the MARAC¹ process.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 sets out the requirements for an improved collective public sector response to the way these issues are addressed, to support victims and to prevent abuse from happening. There are Steering Groups that sits under the Cwm Taf and Bridgend Community Safety Partnerships to deliver regional strategies for VAWDASV.

The Safeguarding Board will therefore deliver this strategic priority in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership to achieve the best outcomes possible for victims and their families.

¹ Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

Priority Area	What do we need to do?	Outcome Indicators
<p>Preventing Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>To PREVENT abuse we will:</p> <p>Raise awareness amongst professionals and the public on how to recognise and respond to domestic abuse (see Strategic Priority 2)</p> <p>Raise awareness amongst care providers and the third sector working with groups at increased risk of domestic abuse</p> <p>Ensure that all professional groups are well represented on multi-agency safeguarding training programmes covering domestic abuse, including the VAWDASV Ask and Act training</p> <p>Promote the work of those providing healthy relationships education in schools to break the cycle that children and young people who grow up living with domestic abuse themselves become involved either as victims or perpetrators in adult life</p> <p>Make links with the colleges and the University in the region to support the work of the Board in safeguarding people from domestic abuse</p> <p>Ensure there are training opportunities for all agencies in order to raise awareness of the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) upon young people and adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training evaluations evidence an increased awareness of domestic abuse ▪ Training evaluations evidence an increased awareness of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) ▪ Practice deficits identified in CPRs and audits are addressed and improved practice outcomes evidenced ▪ An increase in domestic abuse referrals from the third sector ▪ Professionals reporting and evidencing that the learning and development they receive in respect of Domestic Abuse has improved their practice and outcomes for the children and families they work with
<p>Protecting and Supporting Children who have been affected by Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>We will PROTECT and SUPPORT children by:</p> <p>Ensuring that the impact and the risks posed by domestic abuse inform professional assessments and plans</p> <p>Being assured that the voice of the child is sought and heard in all Board activities aimed at protecting children and young people from domestic abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child protection plans result in objective, tangible improvements in the wellbeing and safety of children and their families ▪ Children and parents identify positive improvements in their safety and wellbeing as a result

	<p>Recognising domestic abuse, where the perpetrator is an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) and responding appropriately</p> <p>Seeking assurances that work is being undertaken with perpetrators to address their offending behaviour and take an active interest in the same</p> <p>Explore the merits of expanding the model already adopted in Bridgend of informing schools in advance of the next school day, of domestic abuse incidents involving their pupils, enabling schools to respond appropriately</p>	<p>of the work arising from Child Protection Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic violence reduces/ceases in those families where it was identified as a risk factor ▪ A reduction in the number of Police Protection Notices for domestic abuse ▪ An increased number of perpetrators engaged on perpetrator programmes
<p>Protecting and Supporting Adults at Risk who have been affected by Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>We will PROTECT and SUPPORT adults at risk by:</p> <p>Seeking assurances that strategy discussions are held on a multi-agency basis where there are indications that domestic abuse is involved</p> <p>Making the connections between adult safeguarding and domestic abuse to understand the barriers to reporting experienced by older people</p> <p>Targeting support for the most vulnerable groups who are at a high risk of being subject to domestic abuse e.g. pregnancy, learning disability, LGBT, mental health</p> <p>Being satisfied that the provision of an independent mental capacity advocate is considered in all cases where a person lacks capacity to make decisions about keeping themselves safe from domestic abuse</p> <p>Establishing improved reporting arrangements for care providers where a crime has been committed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased MARAC referrals by adult social care professionals ▪ Adults at risk identify positive improvements in their safety and wellbeing as a result of the work arising from their Care & Support Plans ▪ Domestic violence reduces/ceases for adults at risk where it was identified as a risk factor ▪ A reduction in the number of Police Protection Notices for domestic abuse

<p>Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews</p>	<p>We will work in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership to:</p> <p>Complete Domestic Homicide Reviews that meet the Home Office criteria and produce timely learning</p> <p>Ensure that the learning from published Domestic Homicide Reviews is shared appropriately and has a positive impact on practice</p> <p>Carry out a pilot project in conjunction with Gwent Safeguarding Board to carry out a Domestic Homicide Review, using the Adult Practice Review process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An improvement in the number of Domestic Homicide Reviews meeting Home Office timescales and quality standards ▪ An increased number of practitioners receiving information on learning from reviews ▪ An improvement in practice following actions generated from learning from reviews
<p>The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference process</p>	<p>Learning from and building on the model already established in Bridgend we will improve the MARAC process by:</p> <p>Continuing to integrate the work of the MARAC into the day to day functions of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs</p> <p>Completing the development of a quality assurance and performance framework for the MARAC process and agreeing reporting mechanisms</p> <p>Developing a framework and criteria for the MARAC process to ensure that the focus is on risk and agreed actions including methods of working more effectively with those who do not engage with service provisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A reduction in repeat victims of domestic abuse ▪ We will receive update and performance reports from the Community Safety Partnership / VAWDASV Board on MARAC developments regionally ▪ A reduction in the number of cases being referred to our main MARAC

Strategic Priority 2: Improve the way in which we communicate, engage and promote participation with our communities and partner agencies

The Safeguarding Board is required to raise awareness with the public of the need to protect and prevent children, young people and adults from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect and other forms of harm, and provide information about how this can be achieved. As part of developing a positive culture of learning the Board also needs to ensure that information is widely disseminated within the workforce to inform them about best practice and learning arising from reviews, audits and other Board activities.

It is also necessary for us to provide children, young people and adults with an opportunity to participate in our work. We want to do this creatively to raise the profile of safeguarding in the region. This year we aim to increase the amount of engagement with the public, improving links with local forums and activity groups to ensure the voices of the people we support are thoroughly embedded into our work.

We also want to ensure that all feedback provided as a result of these activities is recorded and evaluated.

The Board has an established Group whose aim is to ensure that there are clear processes in place for the identification of engagement and participation needs and to capture the activities of partner agencies in meeting these needs. To enhance this function, the statutory partner agencies of the Board committed additional resources in 2019 to secure a dedicated post to support this work.

Priority Area	What do we need to do?	Outcome Indicators
<p>Information and awareness raising of the work of the Board and the need to safeguard children and adults at risk</p>	<p>We will improve our COMMUNICATIONS by:</p> <p>Reviewing and revising the existing Communication and Participation Strategy, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How we will inform people of the work of the Board; and ▪ How we will raise awareness of the need to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk <p>Sharing the learning from Child Practice Reviews, Adult Practice Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews and audits to support improvements in multi-agency safeguarding practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increased number of safeguarding events and awareness raising activities being delivered ▪ Positive feedback received as a result of these activities ▪ Increased awareness within communities of safeguarding and the work of the Board

	<p>Capturing the safeguarding communications activities undertaken by our partner agencies to measure how well we are doing across the region</p> <p>Improve the CTM website so that it is a more user-friendly and useful resource for professionals and public alike</p> <p>We will improve our ENGAGEMENT with people by:</p> <p>Holding events for professionals and communities within the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region to raise awareness of safeguarding</p> <p>Using National Safeguarding Week as a platform to engage with our communities and professionals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An improved website is in place ▪ An increased number of hits to the CTMSB website ▪ An increase in the reporting and awareness of activities undertaken by partner agencies
Participation	<p>We will provide people with an opportunity to PARTICIPATE in the work of the Board by:</p> <p>Carrying out a mapping exercise across the region to identify what participation work is currently being undertaken by agencies</p> <p>Ensuring that the people that we are safeguarding have a voice, including maximising the use of advocacy services to ensure the voice of children and adults at risk are heard throughout the work of the Board</p> <p>Building on existing links with youth forums/groups across the region to provide opportunities for them to be involved in the work of the Board.</p> <p>Building upon existing links with adult forums/groups to provide opportunities for them to be involved in the work of the Board</p> <p>Develop a Participation Ladder for the Board to demonstrate how effectively we are engaging with children, young people and adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increased number of children and adults being offered/accessing advocacy support ▪ An increased number of children, young people and adults participating in the work of the Board ▪ The development of a Junior Safeguarding Board ▪ Development of a Board Participation Ladder
Targeting People who are at most risk	<p>We will raise awareness of and promote safeguarding activities in relation to emerging themes and those people who are most at risk including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will receive update and performance reports from the Community Safety Partnership / VAWDASV

<p>of abuse and/or neglect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic Abuse (including Coercive Control) - develop a public information campaign and raise awareness amongst professionals to enable them to recognise and respond to the signs of domestic abuse with special reference to adults at risk, such as older people, people with learning disability, mental health and substance misuse issues ▪ County Lines - ensure that staff/partners access training on County Lines and that information is shared appropriately to enhance understanding across the partnership ▪ Radicalisation - complete a Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum in relation to a high profile case and disseminate findings to staff/partner agencies ▪ Quality of Care for Older People – awareness raising to promote high standards of care and improved outcomes for individuals 	<p>Board on those areas of activity that are of a safeguarding interest to the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increased awareness of the factors that contribute to County Lines and its potential impact in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region ▪ An increase in PREVENT referrals ▪ An increased awareness within partner agencies of the factors that contribute to the radicalisation of vulnerable young people and adults
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Strategic Priority 3: Ensure that the transition to the new regional footprint for safeguarding is managed effectively

From 1 April 2019, the Board will be responsible for safeguarding in Rhondda Cynon Taf, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil and agreement has been provided to the Welsh Government that this new Board will be called the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board. The Welsh Government statutory guidance under Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 is currently being revised to reflect the changes to the regional footprint for the Safeguarding Board.

This process of transition requires effective planning and management to ensure that the Board and its partner agencies can continue to carry out core safeguarding functions during this time of change. Following a joint development day, the management of the transition process has been agreed as one of our strategic priorities this year.

Priority Area	What do we need to do?	Outcome Indicators
Governance	<p>To achieve effective governance arrangements for the new Regional Safeguarding Board we will:</p> <p>Review the membership and terms of reference for the Board and all Sub Groups sitting under the Board to ensure that all relevant partners are represented</p> <p>Agree the required resources to manage the business of the Board, including the financial contributions of our statutory partner agencies</p> <p>Develop a joint work programme for the Board, which will provide the detailed actions, timescales and responsibilities to implement the Annual Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear governance arrangements established across the region ▪ An agreed resource and budget arrangement in place across the region
Protocols and Procedures	<p>We will ensure that the new Regional Safeguarding Board has a suite of protocols and procedures to support the delivery of its safeguarding functions by:</p> <p>Identifying the documents that are common to both Cwm Taf (Merthyr and RCT) and Bridgend and developing new joint protocols and procedures</p> <p>Identifying the documents that are specific to each area and agreeing on those that will be adopted for the new Regional Safeguarding Board</p> <p>Wherever possible, developing joint forms and templates to support our safeguarding processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The number of documents reviewed and adopted across the new region ▪ Positive evaluations from professionals following the implementation of revised protocols and procedures
Training and Learning	<p>We will seek opportunities to align the safeguarding training and learning activities across the region by:</p> <p>Reviewing the remit of the existing Training and Learning Sub Group to ensure that it meets the needs of the region</p> <p>Seeking opportunities to collaborate on safeguarding training activities across the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increased number of joint training activities delivered across the CTM region

	Agreeing processes to identify and share learning from safeguarding audits and reviews with practitioners	
Child and Adult Practice Reviews	<p>To carry out the statutory functions in relation to completing child and adult practice reviews we will:</p> <p>Review the terms of reference of the existing review groups to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted across the region</p> <p>Agree a referral process for child and adult practice reviews</p> <p>Identify a pool of suitably skilled reviewers to carry out child and adult practice reviews</p> <p>Agree the processes for approving, disseminating and monitoring the outcomes of review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear terms of reference for the child/adult review group(s) are in place ▪ A common process is in place across the CTM region to refer cases, carry out reviews and share learning
Quality Assurance and Performance	<p>There is a need to develop and agree a consistent approach to measuring the quality of safeguarding activities and reviewing performance by:</p> <p>Designing a regional approach to quality assurance, including audit programmes, tools and processes to support improvements to multi-agency practice</p> <p>Agreeing a suite of performance measures to satisfy the Board that safeguarding activities carried out by its partner agencies are effective and are achieving positive outcomes for people</p> <p>Developing a Partner Agency Audit Tool to support our work in measuring the impact of the work that the Board undertakes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The establishment of a clear QA and performance framework across the CTM region, covering both children and adult safeguarding ▪ Thematic audits are carried out on a CTM regional basis which focus on identified Board priorities
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs	We will establish links between the Cwm Taf (Merthyr and RCT) and Bridgend MASH and identify opportunities to share good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links between the Cwm Taf and Bridgend MASH are established and any actions agreed

Regional Partnerships	We will establish the regional links with other partnerships in order to support and promote safeguarding and public protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links between the Safeguarding Board and other partnerships are established and any actions agreed
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WHO DO WE INTEND TO COLLABORATE WITH TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

Working in partnership with other agencies is integral to the work of the Board. This not only applies to agencies within the region but may also involve wider collaboration with other Boards and agency across the UK e.g. when undertaking child and adult practice reviews.

There may also be occasions when the Board will need to engage with other organisations to carry out its functions more effectively. This may be on an ad-hoc basis or as part of a more permanent arrangement via Board or Sub Group membership.

These collaborative activities will often occur during the year as situations arise and these are reported in our Annual Report (published on 31 July each year).

Planned collaborative activities for the forthcoming year have been identified as follows:

Who will we collaborate with?	Areas to collaborate?
Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Out of county placements for Children Looked After – this has been an area that we have identified as requiring more work to be undertaken on a national basis ▪ Child Sexual Exploitation/Child Sexual Abuse National Action Plan – awaiting receipt of the same Summer 2019, with an expectation that we will need to report on this in early 2020

Community Safety Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic Abuse, Domestic Homicide Reviews - see Priority 1 for more details ▪ Radicalisation (PREVENT) and Criminal Exploitation (County Lines) – see Priority 2 for more details
Gwent Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adult Domestic Homicide Review pilot on a Rhondda Cynon Taf case – to be completed in the coming year
Cardiff & The Vale Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New All Wales Safeguarding Procedures – Cardiff and the Vale are leading on this piece of work to update the All Wales Procedures to protect children, young people and adults at risk from abuse and neglect.
Serious Organised Crime Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Modern Slavery – prevalence in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region
Care Inspectorate Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To implement the new RISCA Inspection Framework for adult safeguarding
Third Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engagement in the functions of the Regional Safeguarding Board, links to communities, delivery of training and awareness raising and provision of services
Parc Prison, Bridgend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To understand the safeguarding role of the prison and its links to the Regional Safeguarding Board

OUR BUDGET FOR 2019/20

The Board is in the process of agreeing a budget for the year which will be resourced by financial contributions from the statutory partner agencies. The budget set will enable the Board to delivery its priority outcomes as set out in this Annual Plan and it is proposed that it will be allocated as follows:

Business Management Unit Staff Costs and Accommodation:	£187,355
Advertising and Translation:	£4,000
General Expenditure:	£5,600

Are You Concerned About Someone?

If you suspect that a **child or young person** is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed then you have a duty to report it immediately. All calls concerning worries about children are treated seriously. Contact your local Safeguarding Team on the numbers provided below:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425006
 In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000
 In Bridgend: 01656 642320

Opening Hours:
 Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm
 Friday - 8.30am - 4.30pm

If you suspect that an **adult** is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed then you have a duty to report it immediately. All calls concerning worries about vulnerable adults at risk are treated seriously. Contact your local Safeguarding Team on the numbers provided below:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425003
 In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000
 In Bridgend: 01656 642477

Opening Hours:
 Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm
 Friday - 8.30am - 4.30pm

To contact Children or Adults Services outside office hours, at weekends and bank holidays, ring the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Emergency Duty Team on 01443 743665.

If you suspect that a child, young person or an adult is at immediate risk of harm call 999 and speak to the Police.

If you would like to report a non-urgent incident, or have a problem or general query, you can call 101, the 24 hour non-emergency number for the police. **Use 101 when the incident is less urgent than 999.**

Remember - safeguarding is everybody's business!

For more information and advice visit: www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org *

*new CTM website in development

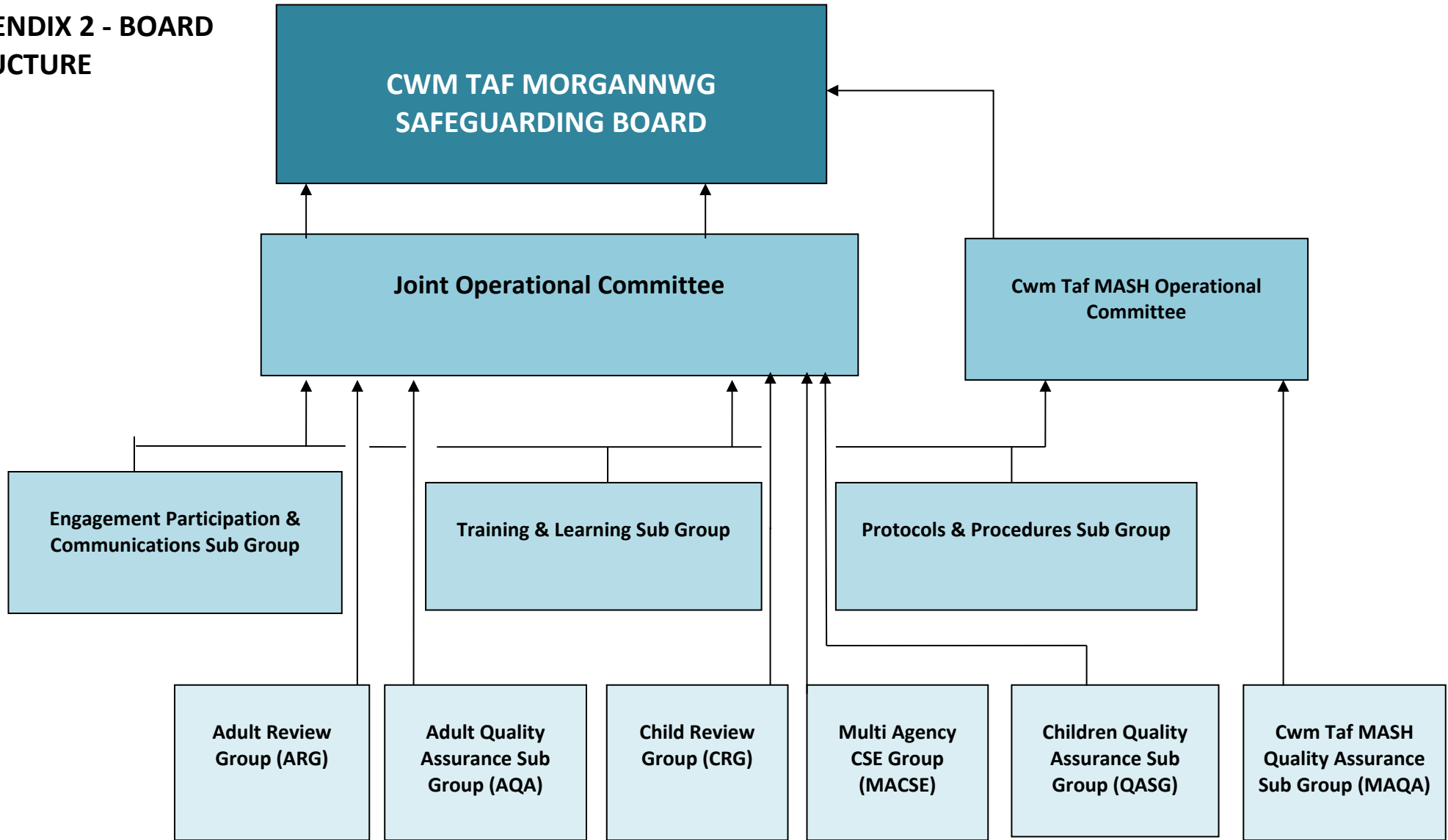
APPENDIX 1 - BOARD MEMBERSHIP

NAME	TITLE	AGENCY
Giovanni Isingrini	Director of Community and Children's Services (Co-Chair)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Louise Davies	Head of Public Protection	
Jackie Neale	Adult Safeguarding Service Manager	
Neil Elliot	Service Director, Adult Services	
Julie Clark	Head of Safeguarding and Support (Children)	
Gaynor Davies	Director of Education and Lifelong Learning	
Ann Batley	Service Director, Children Services	
Cara Miles	Head of Legal - Community Care and Children	
Lisa Curtis-Jones	Chief Officer, Social Services (Co-Chair)	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Jon Eyre	Safeguarding Principal Manager	
Alyn Owen	Chief Officer, Community Regeneration	
Susan Walker	Chief Officer, Education	
Annabel Lloyd	Head of Children Services	
Angela Edevane	Head of Adult Services	
Carys Kennedy	Head of Legal and Governance	

Susan Cooper Laura Kinsey Jacqueline Davies	Director of Social Services (Co-Chair) Head of Children's Social Care Head of Adult Social Care Further members to be identified	Bridgend County Borough Council
Angela Hopkins Louise Mann	Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Patient Services Head of Safeguarding	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Karen Thomas Claire Evans Beth Aynsley/Sue Hurley	Superintendent, Northern BCU Superintendent, Central BCU Independent Protecting Vulnerable Person Manager	South Wales Police
Eirian Evans	Assistant Chief Officer	National Probation Service
David Bebb	Assistant Chief Executive	Wales Community Rehabilitation Company
Jason Evans Ian Coles	Head of Young Person's Unit Interim Deputy Director	Her Majesty's Prison and Young Offenders Institute, Parc
Heidi Bennett	Director	Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations
Ian Davy	Chief Officer	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil

Maria James	Third Sector Representative	Interlink
Lyndon Lewis	Head of Service	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
Lorna Price	Designated Doctor (National Safeguarding Team)	Public Health Wales
Nikki Harvey	Assistant Director for Quality, Safety and Patient Experience	Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust

**APPENDIX 2 - BOARD
STRUCTURE**



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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

CWM TAF CARERS ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLOR G HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR C LEYSHON.

Author: Rhian Webber, Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager, (Cwm Taf Morgannwg University UHB)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve for submission to Welsh Government the Annual Report for 2018/19 in relation to Carers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet

- 2.1. Notes the contents of this report and that the Annual report is also being submitted for approval by the Cabinet in Merthyr Tydfil and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.
- 2.2 Notes the Annual Report was due in Welsh Government at the end of May 2019. However, in line with previous practice which has been acceptable to Welsh Government, as the timeline of Cabinets in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councils and UHB Board meetings did not neatly fit, a draft report will be submitted, with the final version sent to Welsh Government following approval by all three partners.
- 2.3 Approves the Annual Report attached as Appendix 1 for submission to Welsh Government.
- 2.4 Notes that work relating to Carers is being taken forward as part of the Regional Plan for the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, specifically through implementation of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016-19 approved by partners in July 2016.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Prior to the implementation of the SSWB Act, UHBs were given a lead role under the Welsh Government's Carers Measure to work with partners including Local Authorities, Third Sector and importantly, Carers themselves. We were required to submit an Annual Report to Welsh Government to provide an overview of the activities undertaken as part of the implementation of the Carers Measure. Although the Carers Measure has been repealed, the requirement for an Annual report has been continued for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 as part of the conditions of transitional funding from WG in place until March 2020.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As part of the Regional Work programme of the Cwm Taf Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board, a new Cwm Taf Carers Strategy was developed in 2016 to replace the separate plans of partner organisations. Working with partners across Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil, including Carers themselves, the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016-2019 covers Carers of all ages.
- 4.2 Having reviewed our current services, building on the progress made implementing the Carers Measure from 2012-2015 and taking into account the requirements of the SSWB Act as well as the views expressed during engagement and consultation with Carers and staff, we developed the following Vision:

Carers of all ages in Cwm Taf will be recognised and valued as being fundamental to supportive and resilient families and communities. They will not have to care alone and will be able to access information, advice and support to help meet their needs, empowering them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, balancing their caring role and their life outside caring.

- 4.3 A Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group has been established with Member and senior officer representatives from across Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and the Third Sector. The Carers Partnership Group will monitor the implementation of the Strategy and promote the integration of services for Carers, as required by Part 9 of the SSWB Act.
- 4.4 Throughout 2018/19, Cwm Taf UHB, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council have built upon the success of the previous year and continued to work

collaboratively together and with other partners in improving recognition of Carers and providing appropriate information and support. The Annual Report provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made to date and looks ahead to the challenges and opportunities we will face in 2019/20.

4.5 Key areas of work have included:

- The provision of Carer Aware training (both via e learning and face to face) to further expand the knowledge of both Carers Champions and staff throughout the Cwm Taf region;
- The sharing of best practice at an annual Carers Champion conference held in April 2018 with a focus on Young Carers and Young Adult carers;
- Working with partners to deliver the annual Action Plan;
- Continued with the Cwm Taf Partnership Group to oversee implementation of the Strategy, reporting to the SSWB Partnership Board.

4.6 In 2017/18, a piece of research on 'The development of a Cwm Taf Regional Integrated Service Model for Carers' was carried out by exploring the national and local context, good practice from across the UK, interviewing key stakeholders and reviewing the commissioning needs of the Cwm Taf region. The Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care was appointed to assist the Partnership to:

- Review the existing model of services for Carers.
- Identify the most effective options for a regional integrated service model for Carers.
- Complete a detailed option appraisal with clear recommendations for the consideration of the Partnership Board. Reference should specifically be made to Young Carers, Adult Carers and Respite services.
- Support the development of an outline implementation plan to pursue the agreed service option for the region.

The findings from the Review are reported to TLG and the Regional Partnership Board. Actions are being taken forward through the Regional Plan.

4.7 The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy has identified priority areas for investment going forward under the following 5 aims. A detailed Action Plan was developed for 2017/18 and the plan for 2019/20 is being finalised.

4.8 The Aims for the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy are:

- *Aim 1:* Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions
- *Aim 2:* Providing up to date, relevant and timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages
- *Aim 3:* Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages
- *Aim 4:* Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives
- *Aim 5:* Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages

4.9 Welsh Government has 3 National Priorities for 2019/20 that we also have to implement alongside the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy:

- Supporting life alongside caring – all Carers must have reasonable breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their capacity to care, and to have a life beyond caring
- Identifying and recognising Carers – fundamental to the success of delivering improved outcomes for Carers is the need to improve Carer's recognition of their role and to ensure they can access the necessary support
- Providing information, advice and assistance – it is important that Carers receive the appropriate information and advice where and when they need it

4.10 Funding was previously available from Welsh Government to deliver the Carers Measure - whilst the funding came to the UHB (because under the Measure Health Boards were given the lead for implementation) the funding was used in partnership.

4.11 Welsh Government is providing transitional funding of £1million per annum for Wales in 2018/19 (£111K for Cwm Taf) to protect and build on progress to date and to support the expansion of Carers rights on the implementation of the SSWB Act. Funding will be provided on the understanding that we work in partnership to implement the Act by:

- Strengthening the partnership approach at a local level;
- Creating opportunities to enable third sector to fully participate in the delivery;
- Setting out how we intend to plan and deliver the increased responsibilities for health and the new responsibilities for local authorities;

- Ensuring this transitional funding is used as the means to embed the practice of mainstreaming Carers' needs, so it is common practice.

4.12 Welsh Government has stipulated, with regards to the Carers allocation for 2019/20:

- In relation to Identification and Recognition:

It is expected that you work with partners to implement a scheme which supports GP practices to develop their Carer awareness and ways of working to support Carers.

In Cwm Taf, we are implementing an accreditation scheme with Agored Cymru in GP practices. Work will continue with Carers champions in primary care to roll out this programme.

- In relation to Information, Advice and Assistance:

4.13 Discharge from hospital has been identified as an area where support for Carers needs to be improved. There is a need to improve IAA provided to all Carers following discharge from hospital of someone who is cared for. This includes involving Carers in developing any discharge plans.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no foreseen equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 The multi agency Cwm Taf Carers Partnership has led the implementation and monitoring of the Carers Strategy. It has representatives from the Health Board, both Local Authorities, Third Sector and Carers. The work also involves a range of other partners including Department of Work and Pensions and Job Centre Plus.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. The Cwm Taf Carers Partnership oversees the use of the Welsh Government transitional funding, reporting to the SSWB Transformation Leadership Group and the SSWB Partnership Board.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 and is intended to transform the way services are delivered. It repeals the majority of community care legislation including the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010.
- 8.2 The new Act provides a definition of a carer as “a person who provides or intends to provide care for an adult or disabled child” and removes the requirement that carers must be providing a “substantial amount of care on a regular basis.” The Act includes new rights for carers and new duties on local authorities.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN & OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 9.1 The work to implement the Carers Strategy has complemented the Council's priorities to Promote independence and positive lives for everyone including Carers of all ages.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

- Children and young people Scrutiny Committee
- Health and wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18TH JULY 2019

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR C LEYSHON.

CWM TAF CARERS ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

Background Papers:

Cwm Taf Carers Strategy

Officer to contact: Sian Nowell, Head of Service, Long Term and Direct Services (Adults)

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**Cwm Taf Carers
Strategy
Annual Report
2018 - 2019**

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Cwm Taf Carers Annual Report 2018 – 2019

Foreword

The Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership Board have committed to a range of strategic intentions across the region in line with the Social Services and Well-being Act 2016 (Wales). This has included the development of a Cwm Taf Carers Strategy and the establishment of a Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group.

This report provides an overview of the work undertaken by partners working with Carers in 2018/19 to help us achieve the Vision we have set out for Cwm Taf.

Carers of all ages in Cwm Taf will be recognised and valued as being fundamental to supportive and resilient families and communities. They will not have to care alone and will be able to access information, advice and support to help meet their needs, empowering them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, balancing their caring role and their life outside caring.

Greg Dix
Director of Nursing, Midwifery and
Patient Services
Cwm Taf University Health Board

Lisa Curtis-Jones
Chief Officer Social Services
Merthyr Tydfil County
Borough Council

Giovanni Isingrini
Group Director of Community &
Children Services
Rhondda Cynon Taf County
Borough Council

1. Cwm Taf Carers: An Overview

We recognise that there is no typical Carer. Carers of all ages, whether Young Carers, Sibling Carers, Young Adult Carers, Parent Carers of children with a disability, working age or older Carers, look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide can be physical, emotional or social. Carers are individuals who may not see themselves as Carers, but consider themselves above all a parent, wife, husband, partner, son, daughter, friend or neighbour.

People living in Cwm Taf have lower life expectancy and live with a higher burden of ill health for longer than elsewhere in Wales. There are areas of significant deprivation which also impacts on health and well-being. By 2039, the population in Cwm Taf is expected to rise from 295,865 to 304,543 but within this figure the numbers aged over 65 years and over will grow significantly, with the biggest increase being seen in those aged 85 years and over. We are likely to see a rise in the number of people living with a range of chronic conditions such as heart and respiratory disease, as well as cancer and dementia. Over 40% of people aged 75 and over in Cwm Taf live alone.

All of these things will have an impact on the need people have for care of some kind, much of which will be provided by informal Carers who may be family, friends or neighbours.

The 2011 Census provides information about Carers but must be treated with some caution as it is based on people “self-reporting” that they are Carers and answering the census questions accordingly. From our engagement, people do not always recognise themselves as Carers and the true level of informal caring is probably higher. Census data for Cwm Taf tells us that:

- Nearly 13% of the population in Cwm Taf (29,640 Carers in RCT and 7,427 in Merthyr Tydfil) were providing care to a family member, friend or neighbour; This is slightly higher than the all Wales figure of 12% and higher than the England and Wales figure of 10%;
- 57% of Carers in Cwm Taf are female and 43% are male;
- The majority of Carers locally are over the age of 50, with the largest group of people (34%) aged 50-64;
- The number of Carers over the age of 65 is increasing more rapidly than the general Carer population. There has been a 32% increase since 2001. With an ageing population, this is likely to increase further over the coming years;
- There were 3263 young and young adult Carers under the age of 25, an increase of 19% since 2001;

- 11,752 Carers in Cwm Taf (32%) provide over 50 hours of care per week. This has increased from the 2001 Census. This highlights that Cwm Taf Carers are providing substantial levels of care, which is frequently not recognised or valued and which can often impact on the health of the Carer themselves.
- Census data in 2011 for Cwm Taf Carers showed that 35% of Carers rated their health as fair, bad or very bad.

Carers' circumstances vary enormously, as can the type and amount of support they give. Caring can be a gradual process as over time someone becomes more frail and needs more support or it can happen suddenly, for example if someone has an accident or a health problem like a stroke. Young Carers often have adult caring responsibilities while having the legal status of children. Whilst it is also rewarding, caring can be both physically tiring and emotionally stressful. Carers often feel isolated, unsupported and alone, with poorer health, less financial security and fewer opportunities to participate in day to day life outside caring. This information reinforces the importance of supporting Carers in their caring role.

DRAFT

2. Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

During 2016 – 2017, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB) came into force with an emphasis on wellbeing. Key principles embedded within the Act included:

- Ensuring adults and children who need care and support and Carers (including young Carers) have a voice, more control over their lives and are at the heart of decision making;
- Working in partnership, including the integration of services across health and social care with a focus on the delivery of preventative approaches, based on building strengths and promoting independence and;
- The provision of appropriate advice, information and assistance, strengths based and person centred assessment, inclusive of young people and Carers.

Under this Act, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil Local Authorities and Cwm Taf University Health Board have carried out and published a Population Assessment. The population assessment covers the following groups of people:

- Carers;
- Children and young people;
- Learning disability;
- Mental health;
- Older people;
- Physical disability and sensory impairment and;
- Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Population Assessment Briefing Documents can be accessed by the link below.

<http://www.ourcwmtaf.wales/cwm-taf-population-assessment>

Population Assessment

Undertaking this assessment has given an opportunity to revisit and build on what we know about Carers, both in terms of data and the things that Carers say are important to them, as summarised in the box below. It has reaffirmed and refined the key areas to focus on, to meet Carers' needs for care and support. The headlines from the assessment:

- The higher levels in Cwm Taf of poor physical and mental health, chronic illnesses and disabilities, together with an ageing population, have an impact on the need for informal care and the number of Carers locally.
- Carers need to be recognised and valued for their caring role. Carers want to be listened to and have more control over their lives but “one size does not fit all.”

- Carers must be able to find the information and support they need easily and quickly to help them sustain their caring role.
- Carers want to participate in and stay connected to a life alongside caring.
- Carers and service providers must work together with more effective communication and coordination between services, seeing the person and not the problem.

The findings from the Population Assessment also link to other common themes. The things which affect Carers do not stand in isolation. As individuals, they may also be service users in their own right (for example, as an older person, someone with a sensory impairment or a mental health issue) and their needs will have been the focus of other sections in the Population Assessment.

Similarly, the care and support issues facing the person they are caring for will be addressed in other sections of the Assessment under the specific themes. As the headlines have illustrated, it is really important to recognise the overlaps and see people “in the round”, taking a holistic approach to what both Carers and the cared for person need, avoiding working in silos and ensuring our responses and plans are joined up.

Some of the key issues faced by those covered by the other themes of the Population Assessment as well as Carers are:

- Information and advice;
- Being listened to and understood;
- Preventative services;
- Community connectedness and resilience and;
- Co-ordination and working together.

A common message from Carers and other population groups is that services must work together more effectively, both within individual organisations and across agencies, particularly where people have multiple or complex needs. This is important not just for health and social care but also other areas like housing, leisure and transport if needs are going to be met fully.

The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy and its associated Action Plan highlights what we need to do to address the findings of the Population Assessment for Carers. The Social Services & Wellbeing Partnership Board must also produce an Area Plan in response to the Population Assessment as a whole. This was published in April 2018 and can be found here.

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Partnerships/Workingwithothers/Relatedocs/CwmTafSSWBREGIONALPLANMarch27th2018.pdf>

It is called the Cwm Taf SSWB Regional Plan 2018 – 2023 and contains a section on Carers.

3. Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group

The Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group which was established in 2016 and overseen the implementation of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016-19 across Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf, including the development and delivery of an annual Action Plan.

The Group has met quarterly throughout 2018/19.

Principles

The following principles have been used by the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group to inform its work:

- We will promote and support effective communication across the partnership;
- We will make sure that users of our services, particularly Carers, are able to influence the work of the partnership;
- We will focus on what matters to the people and communities of Cwm Taf;
- We will promote and develop solutions towards preventing problems occurring or getting worse for people in Cwm Taf;
- We will promote and support collaboration and integration;
- We will make sure that we strike a balance between short term needs and longer term goals;
- We will listen to, understand and respect individual organisational views and the views of other parties;
- We will conduct business with transparency and openness and;
- We will fully utilise the wide range of skills, knowledge and experience which are available to the Group.

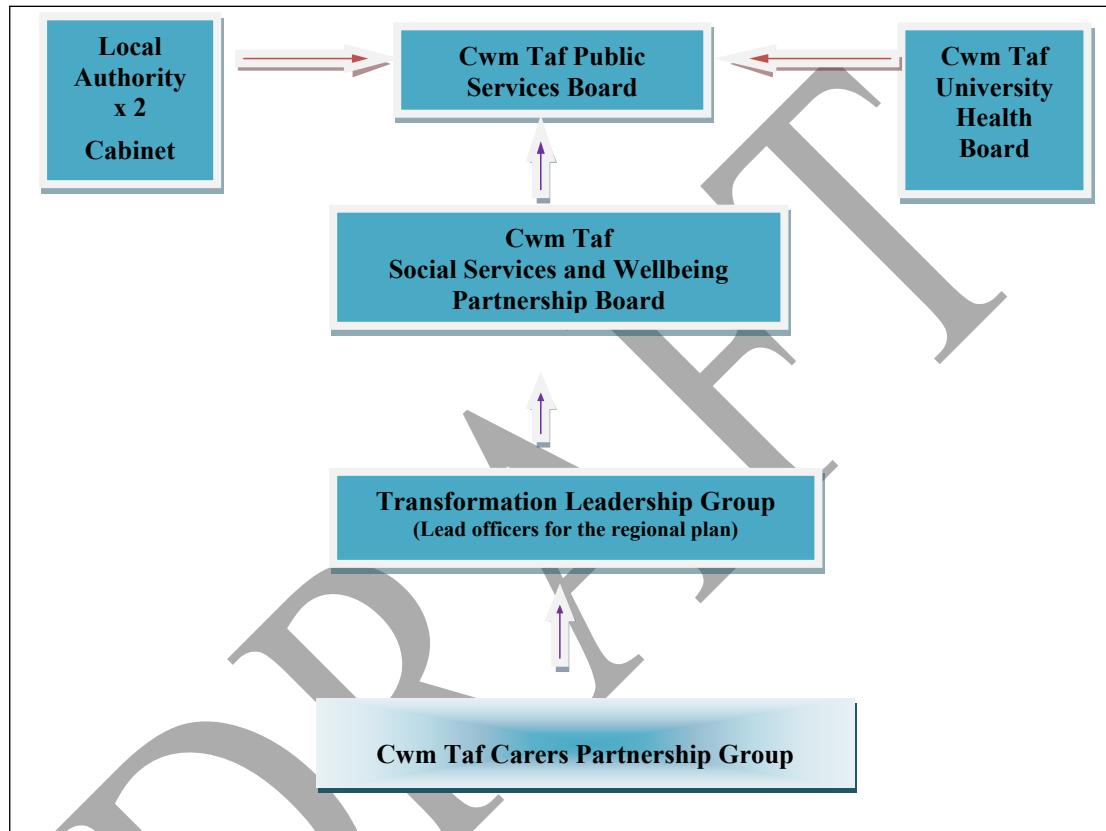
Objectives

- To develop and oversee delivery of an annual Action Plan for the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016–19 to ensure its effective implementation.
- To ensure delivery of the Action Plan and Strategy are monitored and reviewed against agreed and understood outcomes and performance indicators.
- To actively engage Carers, young Carers and Carers organisations in the planning of services so that their needs are met across Cwm Taf
- To ensure that Carers are consulted on the commissioning and delivery of local services that affect Carers or the person cared for.
- To ensure appropriate use of funding allocated by Welsh Government to support delivery of services for Carers.
- To report regularly to the SSWB Partnership Board on progress, key issues and exceptions, escalating any barriers to progress for resolution

- To produce an annual report on progress for the SSWB Partnership Board and as required by Welsh Government
- To appoint task and finish groups as needed to undertake any specific pieces of work.
- To review and action as appropriate any requirements from the refreshed Welsh Government Carers Strategy.

REPORTING

The following reporting and governance arrangements are in place:



In effect the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group will report through the Transformation Leadership Group to the Cwm Taf SSWB Partnership Board. Individual organisations will also report into their appropriate governing bodies, providing information and updates on progress and gaining endorsement where this is required.

Membership

The Group membership includes Carer Representatives as well as Senior Representation of Officers and members from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cwm Taf Health Board, Education, Jobcentre Plus, Voluntary and Private Sectors.

Other representatives may be invited or co-opted to the Group to express their views, contribute to particular agenda items or provide an advisory role. Membership will be reviewed annually.

4. Key areas of work in 2018/19

Throughout 2018-19, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Cwm Taf University Health Board have built upon the success of the previous year and continued to work collaboratively in improving support, information and recognition of Carers.

During 2018/19, current services for Carers in Cwm Taf are provided by a range of organisations in the statutory and Third Sector. As well as accessing general services like GPs in primary care available to everyone, there are also specific services to support Carers, including young Carers and young adult Carers. These include:

- In RCT, a Carers Support Project run by the Local Authority.
- Services commissioned from the Third Sector including Action for Children, Barnardos and Age Connects Morgannwg.
- A network of Carers Champions in settings across the health sector.
- In Merthyr, services to support Carers were commissioned from third sector organisations.

Again, we have faced a number of challenges throughout the year, particularly in relation to staff capacity in both the UHB and the two local Authorities as a result of vacant staff posts.

Unfortunately, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council are not in the position to reappoint to their Carers Co-ordinator post. However, it is anticipated that this will be completed in 2019.

Nevertheless, as this Annual report demonstrates, we have continued to address the needs of Carers locally and to improve outcomes for them and their families.

4.1. Cwm Taf Regional Integrated Model for Carers Review

In 2017/18, in light of the SSWB Act, the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership Board commissioned consultants from the Welsh Institute of Health and Social Care (WIHSC) to carry out a review of a Cwm Taf Regional Integrated Model for Carers.

By exploring the National and local context best/good practice from across the UK, interviewing key stakeholders and reviewing the commissioning needs of the Region, WIHSC:

- Identified the most effective commissioning options including the development of an integrated commissioning service;
- Completed a detailed option appraisal with clear recommendations for the consideration of the Partnership Board;
- Supported the development of an outline implementation plan to pursue the agreed commissioning service option for the region.

Core messages from the Review were:

- There is good practice across Cwm Taf and some superb staff. Services are probably at least punching their weight when measured against the resources available. However, services do not consistently meet the desired standards in terms of quantity, quality and equity across the region.
- Carers are regarded as “everyone’s business” which is encouraging in terms of commitment but this can also mean “nobody’s business” when tested against clarity of accountability for improvement. Carers’ services lack clear and visible leadership.
- There are examples of collaborative partnership working and strategies and plans display a good understanding of Carers’ needs and priorities. However, this is not universally embedded in everyday practice and words and intentions are not matched by actions.
- Carers do not have a central point of accessing services and find it difficult to navigate the system. Establishing clearer pathways for Carers would be a major shift in their profile and enable statutory responsibilities to be fully met.
- Short term funding has had a negative effect on commissioning effective services and has stifled innovation and continuity of service. Third sector services can cease to exist at short notice leaving Carers unsupported.

Specific areas were highlighted within a “blueprint offer”:

1. Identifying Carers;
2. Giving good advice and assistance;
3. Assessing Carers’ needs;
4. Seeing people as resources;
5. Providing respite and breaks;
6. Enabling Carers to play a full part in society;
7. Working in partnership and collaboration.

The findings from the Review were reported to the Partnership Board. An Action Plan has been devised as part of the implementation of the Regional Plan.

2018/19 has seen slow progress with both Local Authorities using this opportunity to redesign their structures.

4.2. Cwm Taf Carers Strategy

The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016 – 2019 was officially launched in 2016. The development of a Cwm Taf wide Carers Strategy replaced the existing previous plans:

- RCT Carers Strategy 2012-2014
- RCT Young Carers Strategy 2010-2013
- Merthyr Tydfil Carers Strategy 2012-2017
- Cwm Taf Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2012-2015.

Cwm Taf recognises the importance of Carers getting their voices heard and that both Carers and service users are engaged and consulted to ensure that their needs are being met. It is essential that Carers are recognised as key partners in care and that their invaluable perspective is taken into account when developing future services.

Our Vision Statement is:

Carers of all ages in Cwm Taf will be recognised and valued as being fundamental to supportive and resilient families and communities. They will not have to care alone and will be able to access information, advice and support to help meet their needs, empowering them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, balancing their caring role and their life outside caring.

We continue to underpin our Vision, with the identified principles and approach to service delivery which reflect what Carers say is important to them and which are also consistent with the approach taken in other relevant Cwm Taf plans, for example, the Joint Commissioning Statement for Older People and the Statement of Intent for Learning Disabilities:

- ***Recognition and Respect***

Carers tell us that too often there is a lack of recognition and value of how much they do. Professionals and people in wider society do not always understand and appreciate the in-depth knowledge Carers have of the needs of the person they are caring for, the relationship they have with them and how difficult it can sometimes be juggling a range of demands.

- ***Working together***

One of the main messages from Carers was that we need to listen to their views and experiences and include them effectively in decision making. Proactive, two way communication and involvement is vital.

- ***Integration of services***

There needs to be better coordination at every level between the Carer and all the organisations they come into contact with. Services need to be joined up and targeted more appropriately so they deliver the best possible outcomes for the Carer, the person they care for and also make best use of our resources.

- ***Accessibility***

Factors such as the timeliness of a response and access/ transport to services will be a key consideration in the way we commission and provide services.

- ***Tackling isolation***

A greater focus is needed on tackling the isolation and social exclusion that can sometimes be felt as a result of caring commitments. The effects of limited

choice, freedom and opportunity or the lack of understanding and discrimination faced by Carers may be different depending on their age and therefore specific needs, for example, Young Carers will need to balance caring with their need to access activities with their peers outside of their caring role, they will also require support and understanding of their caring role inside of school in order that they have maximum opportunities to achieve their potential and aspirations. A range of support is needed to enable all Carers to balance caring with activities outside their caring role.

- **Focus on actions and outcomes**

We must ensure that there are direct and positive benefits for Carers as a result of the new Strategy. We must deliver change and improved outcomes in the areas they have identified as important to them.

Implementation and Delivery

To achieve the Vision set out in the Strategy requires a multi-agency and partnership approach. A cross section of agencies are committed to the delivery of the Strategy. Each has a role to play enabling Carers and the cared for to live as independently as possible and maintain a good quality of life.

Annual Action Plans

The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy is not a fixed and final plan but a framework which sets out what will be taken forward over the next three years. Annual Action plans are developed which detail key actions, lead responsibilities, timescales, resource implications and performance measures, which will focus on the outcomes we want to achieve.

Outcomes we want to achieve and monitoring progress

The success of this Strategy and the benefits it delivers will be reviewed regularly. It will be a partnership plan and a variety of staff within a wide range of sectors will be responsible for working in collaboration to implement it effectively.

An annual report on progress will be reported to the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership Board, as well as the individual organisations i.e. the two Local Authorities, the Health Board and Welsh Government.

Copies of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy, an easy read version and welsh translated documents will be available on partner websites and the link is:

<http://cwmtaf.wales/how-we-work/plans-and-reports/cwm-taf-carers-strategy-2016-2019/>

Impact made

- Collaborative working helps to secure support for Carers, whilst making best use of a wide range of knowledge, expertise and support services.

Next steps?

- Implementation of appropriate actions from the Carers Review.
- Action plan for 2019-20 will direct our future work, strengthening the partnership approach across the Cwm Taf Region, whilst also addressing priorities from WG.
- The implementation of the SSWB Act plan, as it relates to Carers, ensuring Carers needs are recognised and mainstreamed.

It should be noted links have been made with ABMU Health Board and Bridgend County Borough Council in preparation for the merger from 1st April 2019 to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.

The following sections look at progress made under each aim of the Strategy.

4.2.1 Aim 1. Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions

Raising Awareness of Carers

Carers information has featured on a page of the 50+ Information Calendar, which is widely distributed across Cwm Taf.

Local Carers Projects raise awareness of Carers through various means and staff attended local community events regularly to raise awareness of Carers throughout the Cwm Taf region. For example, the Big Bite (Wellbeing Zone) a 2 day event with over 13,000 members of the general public attending, Community First events, Housing Association Tenant events and third sector information events.

Also attending the Mental Health week events as well as the 'It Makes Sense' Event celebrating sensory awareness month in Cwm Taf. This was a partnership event between Health Services, third Sector and people that have or support others with sensory loss.

Carers Champions were encouraged to sign up to Carers Wales/UK campaigns in supporting Carers Week and Carers Rights Day Events. Information was disseminated across GP surgeries and Carers Champions.

Both RCT Carers Project and Merthyr Tydfil's Carers Strategy Network have continued to develop close links with the Third Sector Integrated Care Fund Community Coordinators across the region. Referrals to Carers services have been received from the Coordinators and the Coordinators information resource has been utilised to support Carers across the region.

RCT Carers Support Project has been working with RCT Councils Equality and Diversity Team in the development of a Staff Disability and Carers Forum. The aim of the Forum is to bring together staff with disabilities and those who are Carers in sharing experience, highlighting and addressing the barriers they may face at work and supporting them in their working role. The Forum has met and is now established.

The Cwm Taf University Health Board's Carers Co-ordinator has staff several information stalls across the hospital settings to raise the profile of Carers with patients and staff. Also, highlighting the Carers policy for Staff Carers.

The Annual Carers Champion Conference

Following the success of the previous Carers Champion conferences, the fifth annual conference took place in April 2018 with over 80 people attending. The conference acts as a platform for celebrating the success of the Carers Champions, along with highlighting some key achievements gained through 2017-18.

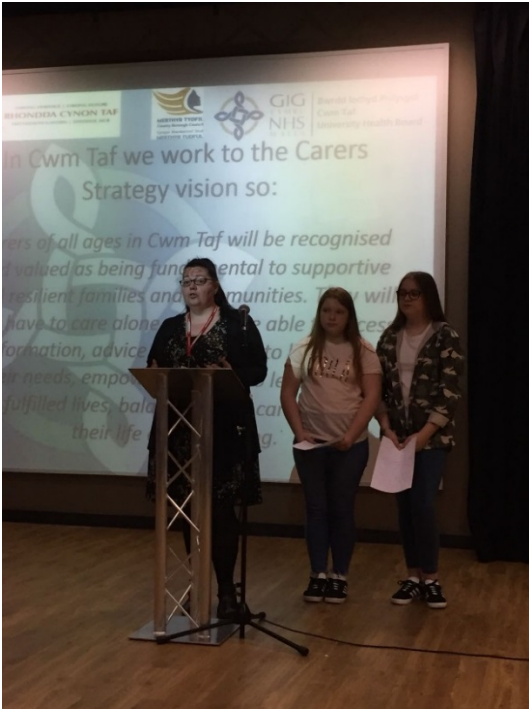
The Carers Champions conference enables the sharing of information with staff attending through a range of information stands, networking and presentations. Information is then cascaded to other staff through the Champion networks.

The theme was Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, so the conference was held in Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw Campus. Two Young Carers and a Young Adult Carer spoke about their own life experience which set the scene for the conference. There were a range of speakers highlighting the work and good practice from across Cwm Taf. This included presentations from Professor Vanessa Webb on the impact of caring has on a young person's education the Director of Community Services in RCT, Claire Williams, RCTCBC on services available and Alison Lagier from Cwm Taf University Health Board on the impact GP Support Officers are providing for Carers in GP surgeries in Merthyr Tydfil. Coleg y Cymoedd have a Carers Champion who also spoke about the support they offer their students who are Carers.

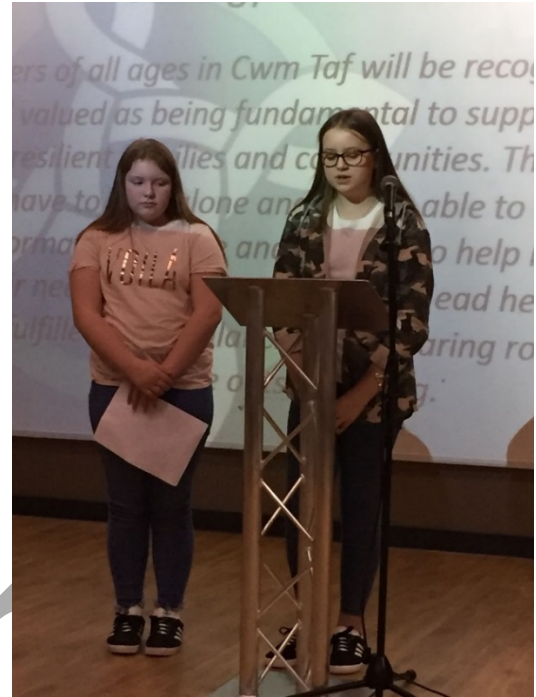
Photographs of the Conference



Councillor Geraint Hopkins opening the Carers Champion Conference



Trudy Fisher and Young Carers from Action for Children



Keira Phillips and Caitlyn Homer-Hughes



Lucy Childs, Young Adult Carer



Laura Wilson, Coleg y Cymoedd Carers Champion

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive through the evaluation forms received. Attendees felt motivated to raise awareness of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers within their own organisation/service areas. Many felt motivated to become Carers Champions and engage further with Carers services offered across Cwm Taf.

21 information stalls attended the conference – they were situated in the heart of the college to engage with students as well as conference attendees. Stall holders were overwhelmed with the interest from the students. The stands from the various organisations reported excellent take up of information and resources. The conference offered many networking and joint working opportunities, for example with Communities for Work, Department of Work and Pensions and the College themselves.

The Conference is still commented on – from people being visibly moved by the young Carers testimonies and the impact caring has on a young person. The feelings expressed and comments provided described people as being inspired, informed and motivated.

Cwm Taf Carers Co-ordinator

Cwm Taf University Health Board was successful in appointing a Cwm Taf Carers Co-ordinator on a 6 month contract with the focus of engaging GP practices to undertake Agored Supporting Carers Unit and ensuring a Carers Champion is appointed to each GP practice along with engaging Health Board staff in raising awareness of Carers. The Carers Co-ordinator has achieved excellent results in a short period of time.

The Carers Co-ordinator has designed and distributed Carer booklets to GP Practices which has a registration form enabling a Carer to complete and hand to their Carer Champion. This has encouraged Carers to self-identify and engage with their GP surgery.

One GP surgery in Pontyclun had 57 Carers registered in their system in September 2018. Following the Carers Co-ordinator involvement, they now have 147 Carers registered.

In addition to the work plan, the Carers Co-ordinator has also attended public events (50+ Forum Information Event, Health & Wellbeing Month, Information Stalls), produced promotional materials and merchandise and attended Senior Nurse meetings to discuss the role of a Carer and will be organising the annual conference. The Carers Co-ordinator has also attended Nurse Induction sessions for all new nurses joining Cwm Taf University Health Board.

There is a dedicated Carer page on the Cwm Taf University Health Board intranet for staff to keep upto date with information.

With confirmation of funding for 2019/20 from Welsh Government, this post has been extended to the 31st March 2020.

AGORED Supporting Carers Training Unit

Since we appointed the Carers Co-ordinator in September 2018, 46 people have expressed interest in undertaking the Agored Supporting Carers Unit which now includes staff from the Wards including Health Care Support Workers. Other organisations, such as DWP, have also expressed an interest

in taking part. 2 people have already completed the Agored Supporting Carers Unit with 23 in progress. 6 people are confirmed to start in January/February 2019. These numbers will increase as when Carer Champions are identified they are given the option of completing the Agored unit.

An example of promotional material for the Carer Aware training is given here:

Carer Aware Training Course

A Carer is someone of any age, who provides unpaid support to family, friends or neighbour who would not be able to manage without this help. This could be caring for someone who is ill, frail, disabled or has a mental health or substance misuse illness.



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf
University Health Board

To support the delivery of enhanced rights to Carers under the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, Welsh Government, in partnership with stakeholders' established three national priorities;

- Supporting life alongside caring
- Identifying and recognising Carers
- Providing information, advice and assistance to Carers

The Carer Awareness Agored training course is a tool which staff can access to develop their awareness of Carers and how they can be supported within the community.

By identifying Carers in the community you are able to signpost Carers for information, support and refer to local Carer information services should the Carer wish.

The Carer Awareness Agored course is available to all Cwm Taf UHB staff

The course is fully funded and support will be given at every stage

If you would like to enrol on the course please contact me on 01443 744824 or email cerys.gamble@wales.nhs.uk



Hospital Discharge Service

We have worked with RCTCBC, MTCBC, Interlink and VAMT to enable a Carers Hospital Discharge Project to be piloted in Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Prince Charles Hospital, Ysbyty Cwm Cynon and Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda. Citizen's Advice Merthyr Tydfil and Hafal will offer a service to Carers – staff, patient or visitor – to give the right information at the right time to support them in their caring role.

This new service is to commence March 2019.

Improved Identification and recognition of Carers

The recruiting of Carers Champions, and the variety of Carer Aware training available, has helped to improve the identification and recognition of Carers amongst UHB staff and with partner organisations. DWP, Citizens Advice, Drink Wise Age Well and Communities for Work, all putting staff forward to become Carers Champions.

The Cwm Taf Carers Co-ordinator has worked to reinvigorate and recruit Carers Champions on the Wards.



Carer Champion

A Carer Champion is a volunteer member of staff who acts as a key contact for Carer information in the department where they work. The Carer Champions are a network of staff members located around Cwm Taf UHB who are leaders on Carer issues. Many teams have a designated Carer Champion, who is the link to gather Carer information to cascade to their team and to also share with Carers.

If you are interested or can nominate a Carer champion or require further information please contact Cerys Gamble 01443 744847
Cerys.gamble@wales.nhs.uk



GP Surgeries continue recording Carers on information systems, which can assist them in ensuring the Carer is supported appropriately. Along with this, local Carers services continue to receive referrals from Primary care.

The Carers Co-ordinator has designed a poster for each GP surgery to use to inform patients who their Carers Champion is.



RCT Young Carers Service

In RCT, since 2015, the RCT Young Carers Service has been working with Secondary Schools in the Borough to implement the Young Carers School Award. The award was developed by the service after young carers told staff that they didn't feel that teachers in their school understood their issues, so the award ensures that school staff are aware of how to identify young carers, they learn about the difficulties that they face, consider how to provide additional support to young carers in their school and publicise the support that is available to young carers outside of the school environment.

The award consists of 3 levels; Bronze, Silver and Gold, with each level consisting of a set of standards which progressively increase the support and guidance that young carers are offered in school. We are currently working with Carers Trust to ensure that all our schools are also recognised through their Young Carers in Schools Wales Programme.

To give an idea of the Bronze award, the following is expected to be addressed:

- Posters and leaflets displayed around the school giving information on the support available to young Carers internally as well as information on external support such as RCT Young Carers Service phone number and email;
- All staff within the school should be made aware that a child is a Carer. This does not mean that specific information on their caring role is shared – just

that the teacher may need to offer flexibility with attendance and homework submissions;

- All staff within the school will have had some guidance and training on how to recognise young Carers and the role that a young Carer might have to take on at home;
- Carers Rights Day, Young Carers Awareness Day etc are all Carers events that you can expect to see advertised and celebrated in the school and;
- Young Carers are encouraged to 'get together' in school to discuss any concerns or issues they are having or just to have a chat with others who may be experiencing the same sort of issues as themselves.

The driving force behind implementing the award is the Carers Champion at each school. All 17 Secondary schools in RCT now have Carers Champions in place who are actively offering support to young carers. These Carers Champions held Young Carer Awareness Day event which focused on mental health. The aim was to continue identifying young Carers and raising awareness of the vital role that they play in supporting their ill and disabled family members.

Following the success of the work in Secondary Schools, the Young Carers Service have created a unit of work which is designed to raise awareness within primary schools of young Carers issues. This was piloted with a select group of primary schools and is now being rolled out to all primary schools within RCT.

11 primary schools have now successfully completed the award and several more have agreed to participate in the scheme before the end of the academic year.

This network participated in Young Carers Day on the 21st January 2019 by putting on information stalls, assemblies etc to raise awareness. The Young Carers Project publicised this on their social media channels.

Funding was allocated for Schools Awards Packs and for a Carers Project officer to attend PSE lessons in schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

2018 saw a 30% increase in referrals from schools and college campuses during the first 3 quarters which is a result of how successful the rollout of the Schools Award has been. The Award has been highlighted as good practice among Local Authorities and has received positive feedback from Estyn.

RCT Carers Support Project (CSP) has had 628 new adult Carers registering with the Project during 2018/19 this is an increase of 16% compared to the previous year. The CSP are currently supporting just under 1,500 adult Carers in RCT. The young Carers Service has continued to see an increase in the number of referrals received for an assessment – 103 received during 2018/19. In addition 30 sibling referrals have been received into the service.

RCT Carers Support Project (CSP) continues to work with a variety of Council Teams/departments and third sector organisation in promoting the recognition and support available to Carers.

GP Support Officers (GPSO)

In Merthyr Tydfil Primary Care Cluster they have GPSO's who engage, signpost, offer advice and work with patients to influence cultural and behavioural change for service users within a Primary Care setting. They advise/assess service users and address social issues and offer support in correlation with the social services and wellbeing act. They promote independence and enable service users to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. GPSO's support the reduction of attendance within general practice for non-medical intervention.

GPSO's, during consultations, have often identified Carers who have not identified themselves as a Carers (they are a family member that feel it is their duty to look after their relatives). This cohort of service users were not claiming carers allowance or receiving any support from any groups, such as Alzheimer's or Stroke Society.

GPSO's have been able to support these Carers by identifying what is causing stress and putting some extra support and ensuring the correct financial assistance are put in place. They also ensure links with the relevant agencies and particularly ensuring the required adaptations are made at home.

Responsive training for Carers as identified through engagement with Carers

RCT Carers Support Project has provided a total of 145 training sessions, workshops and events to adult Carers, which resulted in 2383 Carer attendances. This equates to a 17% increase in the number of events provided compared to the previous year.

Sessions can include the Carers and the cared for, in some instances.

RCT Carers Support Project

From the 1st March 2019, the RCT Carers Support Project became an all age service. Young Carers assessments will be undertaken within the new Information, Advice and Assistance Team with a dedicated assessment worker for young Carers and siblings.

The Carers Support Workers within the RCT Carers Support Project will maintain a responsibility for the rollout of the Schools Award as well as engaging with other services and the Action for Children Service will be co-located within the project to facilitate closer, more responsive working.

The changes and the focus given to Carer's Services will go a long way to improving the sustainability of support to Carers of all ages.

Impact made

- Cwm Taf UHB participated in Carers Week, which further raises awareness of Carers amongst health professionals and members of the public in contact with Health services.
- Health professionals through awareness raising have developed knowledge regarding support services available to Carers. They are now able to signpost appropriately, which enables a more efficient access to services.
- Raising awareness of Carers has also helped to increase Carer recognition and enable individuals to recognise themselves as Carers and therefore receive appropriate information, advice and support.
- Working Carers feel supported in their employment, with their employers better understanding their needs.
- Developing links with the third sector has encouraged more appropriate signposting, where relevant, to Carers across Cwm Taf allowing them to gain the support and information needed to support them in their caring roles.
- The Carers Champion Conference recognises the valuable work carried out by Carers Champions, increases awareness of the rights of Carers and provides a platform for networking and sharing knowledge, experience and best practice across sectors.
- Carers are recognised as partners in care and recorded on appropriate systems.
- Carers are now increasingly recognised and supported more effectively by Primary Care Services.
- Consistent Carer referrals has resulted in more Carers been made aware of their rights and support available.
- There has been an increase in the provision of workshops, training and events for Carer, further supporting them in their caring role
- There are clearly identified Carers Champions, acting as a single point of access for GPs and other Primary Care staff.
- Taking part in raising awareness events with Job Centre Plus.

Next Steps?

- Continue to provide training to all CTUHB staff, to cascade information and to network with other champions.
- Continued support for key Carer events, for example, during Carers Week and Carers Rights Day.
- Ongoing attendance at partnership events to raise awareness and profile of Carers.
- Continued promotion of Carers and support services available, should help encourage further referrals ensuring the needs of Carers of met.
- Continued work with Carers in identifying the types of support needed and the facilitating of workshops, training and events to meet those needs identified.
- Continued identification of Champions across Health.
- Sustained support for identified Champions in order to ensure they are kept up to date with Carer information and are able to support Carers appropriately.
- Continuation of the RCT Disability and Carers Staff Forum.
- An Annual Carers Champion Conference.

- Carers in their own right are now a beneficiary group for the Integrated Care Fund to enable projects specifically for Carers.
- The continued provision of training to Carers Champions and Health and Social Care staff to ensure their continued professional development.
- Carers of all ages will continue to be identified across the region to ensure they are supported in an effective and timely manner.
- Ways of identifying and supporting Carers of all ages are mainstreamed as part of everyday practice.
- Roll out of Agored Accreditation for Carers Champions in GP Practices and consideration of other staff groups to take part.

4.2.2. Aim 2. Providing up to date, relevant and timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages

Relevant, timely and up to date information to Carers

Carers information is consistently reviewed in order to ensure it is relevant and up to date. The newly reviewed Cwm Taf Carers A-Z Guide (which is also available in Welsh) continues to be distributed widely across Cwm Taf. Through partnership, Interlink RCT updated this valuable resource for dissemination across Cwm Taf.

Both the UHB and Local Authority websites are continually updated to ensure accuracy and accessibility of information provided to Carers. Carers literature is reviewed consistently and any updated information made available to Carers across Cwm Taf.

In 2018/19, RCT CSP provided Carers Packs to 639 *new* Carers, an increase of 13% of Carers packs sent compared to 2017/18.

Within RCT and MT, Carers email distribution lists are utilised to target information and to keep Carers up to date with changes and news topics that may be of interest to them. Carers Newsletters in both MT and RCT Carers Services are sent to registered Carers, Carers Champions and distributed widely across Cwm Taf. Social media is also utilised to target a varying demographic of Carer.

As part of the implementation of the SSWB Act, both LA's have established Information, Advice and Assistance services together with the use of an online resource DEWIS. Both Local Authorities and the UHB have contributed to the production of the Carers section on Dewis Cymru. This ensures quality information is available from a network of social care, health and third sector organisations across Wales, supplemented by local information relevant to Cwm Taf.

Following on from the success of the leaflet promoting the Carers Champions in GP surgeries and Health Promotion Champions in local Pharmacies, the Cwm Taf Carers Co-ordinator has designed a leaflet to raise awareness of what

a Carer is. The aim of this leaflet is for information purposes and to start a conversation with people who might be unaware they are a Carer.

**Do you look after someone?
Then you could be a Carer**

A Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid (except for carers allowance), for their partner, family member or friend who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. A Carer can be anyone of any age. If you support someone who would not be able to manage without your help, you are a Carer, even if you don't think of yourself that way.

To find out more about the support that could be available to you please call:
Rhondda Cynon Taf Carers Support Project 01443 281463
Or Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council 01685 724500
(ask for Adult Duty)
Or Cwm Taf University Health Board 01443 744825

Get in touch...

GIG NHS | Bannell Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf University Health Board
Cynon Bwrdeistref Iard MERTHYR TYDFIL County Borough Council
RHONDDA CYNON TAF

All partners continue to raise awareness of the Advocacy support available in Cwm Taf to alleviate stress and impact on Carers.

The Carers Information & Support Programme (CrISP)

CrISP is run by the Alzheimer's Society working in partnership with RCT Carers Support Project. The sessions, which generally run twice per year, are designed to educate and support Carers and families of people with Dementia about how to cope with day to day life and how to plan for the future. Sessions were held in October 2018 and March 2019.

They aim to provide information in a group environment where Carers are able to share their experiences and find out more about:

- What is dementia
- Supporting a person with dementia
- Local services
- Legal and Financial affairs
- Looking after yourself

Carers Project RCT

The Carers Project RCT has continued to provide:

- Timely information for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers;
- Young Carer Assessments;
- A dedicated Parent Carers worker supporting Parent who have children aged 0-25 with additional needs;
- Max Card is available to Parent Carers of children with additional needs under the age of 19;
- Pause and play coffee mornings (parent Carers) meet monthly to share knowledge, idea's and expertise with other parent Carers or just come along for a hot drink and good conversation;
- CSP Counselling Service;
- Chatterbox, a monthly meeting for Carers to come together share experiences and gain information and advice;
- Cares Cwtch is an informal friendly group for individuals who care for a family member, friend or neighbour. Their monthly evening meeting is an opportunity for a classic 'night in' with other Carers with plenty of films and games, as well as a different takeaway each month;
- 'Recharge' is a new project which provides a 40 minute holistic therapy session on a one to one basis with a qualified therapist to a Carer who is registered with the Carers Project;
- Carers Mental Health Forum targeted to those Carers caring for someone with a mental illness;
- Carers Emergency Card Support Service;
- Carers News;
- Carers Connects is a therapeutic peer support group facilitated by the Projects Counsellor on a monthly basis. It , allows Carers to share experiences and provide guidance and support. Carers can discuss their concerns or just listen to other Carers;
- Diabetes Workshop to give Carers an opportunity to develop information provided by Diabetes Support;
- The RCT Past Carers Group is an informal group offering companionship and friendship to individuals whose caring roles have ended. The group meets once a month and arranges a number of gatherings throughout the month. The groups offers support, laughter and a great way to meet new friends;
- Partnership Working with Safeguarding;
- Carers Legal Clinics are provided for Carers in RCT;
- An up to date website provision or Carers and;
- A dedicated CSP Facebook and Twitter page.

Upper Rhondda, Taf, Cynon and Merthyr Tydfil Dementia Support Groups

Replicating the good practice of Carers and the cared for coming together, additional Dementia Groups have now been set up in Rhydyfelin and Pontypridd Library. Some of the groups have extra activities helpful to provide

more meaningful activities for Carers attending their sessions. Activity sessions see Carers interacting with each other and stimulate discussion.

Upper Rhondda run various sessions, for example a Knit and Knatter group in Ysbyty George Thomas to engage the community including Carers.

A cognitive stimulation therapy group has also been set up for Carers to attend in the Taf area.

Rhondda and Taf have set up a short term loan service for memory aids/telecare for Carers to use through the Dementia Team. This new project is very exciting and will benefit Carers who will not have to make a purchase until they have used that equipment and know that it will aid the cared for.

In March 2019, two memory café's for the patients and Carers were set up in Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon. The Dementia Advisors have worked extensively with all of their patients and Carers, which totals as over 250 people and also putting out posters in the local area. They will meet once a month and will give the Carers respite from their role in a supported environment and give them that peer support which has proven to be invaluable. The patient's and Carers have been heavily involved in what they would like the outcome to be and in the first session to find out what they would like from the group. Activities have been purchased for both the Carers and patient's to be part of the sessions. Dementia Advisors have linked with other agencies to provide relevant information to give to people and advice.

Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon have also set up two new Carer groups in March where twenty to thirty people are invited to each session.

Impact made

- Carers are more informed as a result of the increase in information provision, which helps them to find out easily about how to access support available to them in their caring role.
- Staff and the general public are more informed of Carers and their rights.
- The A-Z benefits Carer and professionals in attaining information quickly.
- Dewis Cymru allows Carers and professionals to have up to date access to information at the appropriate time. Dewis Cymru acts as a support resource for both professionals and Carers accessing information.
- Staff are kept up to date with the latest Carer developments.
- Staff are able to signpost Carers to appropriate support services.
- CrISP enables Carers a safe environment to discuss issues and receive support, whilst increasing Carers knowledge around dementia and providing support following diagnosis
- RCT CSP counselling service provides one to one bespoke support to Carers
- Carers Groups like Chatterbox, the Carers Mental Health Forum and the Peer Support Group provide a support network for Carers across RCT

- Schemes such as the Max Card and discounted access to leisure Services help support the Carer maintain a life outside their caring role, whilst support their wellbeing
- The Carers News and Facebook page provided an invaluable information resource for Carers, informing them of their rights and support available to them

What next?

- Disseminate the newly reviewed A-Z guide, particularly in relation to the new Information, Advice and Assistance services in RCT and Merthyr Tydfil as part of the SSWB Act.
- Ongoing promotion of RCT's Carers Support Project and Merthyr Tydfil's Carers Network to encourage increased referrals and information provision.
- Ongoing provision of training and incorporation of Carer Awareness in general staff training.
- Regarding Advocacy, CTUHB, RCTCBC and MTCBC are working together to explore options of rolling out a Service Level Agreement to a Cwm Taf wide provision entitled the 'Independent Advocacy Service for Adults & Carers 50 years of age and over'.
- CrISP to continue in 2017/18
- Ongoing provision of up to date and timely information via various channels including, Carers News, Facebook, websites and attendance at community events
- Ongoing provision of Carers Groups across RCT
- Develop an evening support group for Carers, ensuring working Carers needs are accounted for
- Maintaining and developing new initiatives for Carers across RCT

4.2.3. Aim 3. Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages

Flexible working policies for employees

RCT Council continues to work towards Carer Friendly Guidance for its staff. The development of the Disability and Carers Network will help support and direct this work.

Respite Care

As a result of the Respite Audit carried out in May 2017, both Local Authorities are looking to develop and commission a wider range of preventative services to promote health and wellbeing, early intervention and minimise the escalation of crises.

Promote help available within the community – combating loneliness and isolation including befriending

Strong links continue to be made with the ICF Community Co-ordinators. There are new posts in the form of 6 General Practice Support Officers (GPSO) who are based in Merthyr Tydfil across 9 GP Practices and a Community Co-ordinator based in the Rhondda Cluster:

- based in the local area;
- provide information, advice and signpost to local community groups, activities and services;
- build strong relationships with communities, agencies and services (specifically for those over 65);
- support people to live their own lives within their communities and;
- raise community and statutory awareness of voluntary sector services.

Community Capacity Grant

The Grant Scheme is an opportunity to test out pilot projects and is for one financial year only. It is an opportunity for innovative ideas for new projects which can be introduced across Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. Applications will need to comply with the following criteria:

- Combat the impact of loneliness and isolation
- Prevent unnecessary access to statutory services
- Support hospital discharge
- Support beneficiary groups to maintain their health, wellbeing and independence.

£10,000 has been allocated to the Young Carers Group in RCT through the Community Capacity Grant.

A digital story will be produced to document how the Young Carers benefited from some of their projects.

Merthyr Tydfil Young Carers Residential

Merthyr Tydfil Young Carers in May 2018 had the opportunity to engage in a residential stay. This was delivered via PGL Travel Ltd which is the UK's leading outdoor education provider, delivering inspirational learning through adventure. This was significant for those that attended as many young carers do not have the same opportunities as their peers to have a 'holiday'. They engaged in a number of activities including archery, raft racing and abseiling; all of which are designed to build young people's resilience and confidence.

Twenty seven young carers participated in the residential. On the final day those who attended gave feedback on their experience of attending the residential, these are some of the many positive comments shared:

- I have got to learn more about other people.
- I have enjoyed everything, it was my first time away from home.
- It was my first time away from home, never even had a sleepover. Raft building was amazing.

- Its stopped me being afraid of heights. It's helped me feel more confident leaving my nan alone.
- I have made new friends.
- I feel more confident.

RCT CSP Adult Carer Residential 'Weekend on the Wye'

Following the success of the 'Spring Awakening' Residential for adult Carers during March 2018 another Carers residential was held on the 8th-10th March 2019.

The residential was attended by 12 adult Carers, ranging from 26 to 64 years of age. All of the Carers who attended had extensive caring roles, ranging from caring for their children, to their parents, parent-in-laws and partners. The residential provided an inclusive environment for all Carers regardless of their age, caring role or physical ability.

Carers reported that the main reasons they decided to join the residential was to relax, get more time for themselves and above all to socialise, spend time with other Carers and make new friends. A quarter of the group hadn't spent a night away from the person they care for in more than 5 years.

The Carers who attended were given a pre and post evaluation to complete.

Aims for the residential:

- To support life alongside caring, ensuring that carers have reasonable breaks from their caring role, enabling them to maintain their capacity to care;
- To limit the isolation and social exclusion that can sometimes be felt as a result of caring commitments;
- To provide Carers with the opportunity to meet other Carers and share experiences;
- To reduce the stress and anxiety of Carers;
- To provide Carers with skills transferable to their daily lives;
- To support Carers to have a life beyond their caring role and;
- To provide Carers with 'me time' to relax and take time away from their caring role

Activities provided:

Country Walks
Spa Day
Canoeing
Social Opportunities

The Activity Overview:

Country Walks

Some of the Carers participated in River walks where they shared their stories, experiences and had some fun along the way.

"I had a brilliant time. Amazing. Thank you"

Spa Day

This is something that was specifically requested by many Carers at the 2018 residential. The spa day provided Carers with some 'me time'. It supported them to relax, get to know each other and above all prioritise their own health and wellbeing.

"I loved it and made a lot of new friends"

Canoeing

Canoeing proved to be a new experience for most of the Carers present. Canoeing provides an inclusive experience, with low impact exercise and suited Carers of all ages and abilities. Carers were buddied up in two man canoes, which encouraged bonding and teamwork. Recognised benefits of canoeing include offering the opportunity to increase social opportunities and make friends, whilst providing a good aerobic work-out and helping to increase fitness.

"I have had the most wonderful time and it was fantastic. Thank you sooo much :-)"

Social Opportunities

Feedback from the previous residential had requested more time to socialise. This residential provided lots of opportunities for Carers to relax, talk with other Carers, have some 'me time' and generally relax away from the pressures and demands of their everyday life.

The World Shrinks: Carer Loneliness, a research report by Carers UK as part of the Jo Cox Loneliness Commission showed that more than 8 in 10 (81%) surveyed unpaid carers described themselves as "lonely or socially isolated" due to their caring responsibilities. Carers who had felt lonely or isolated were almost twice as likely to report worsened mental (77%) and physical (67%) health.

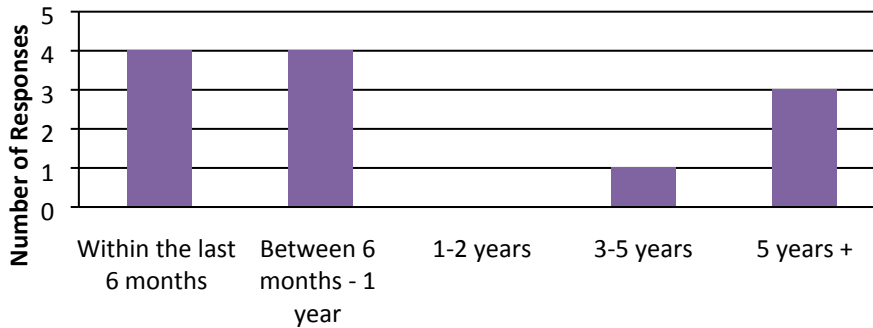


"Had a wonderful time, met some lovely people, learned new things to help at home, had some fun and was lovely to

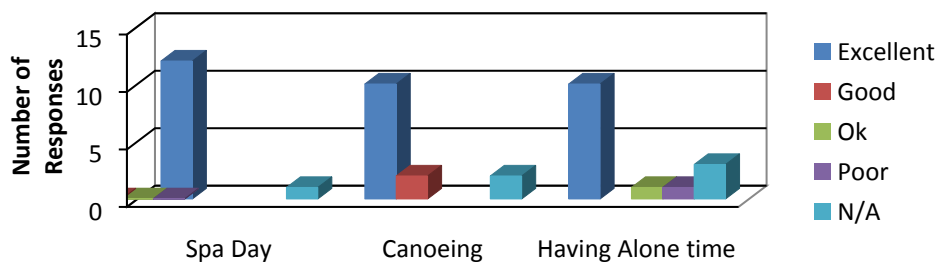
Adult Carers Residential Evaluation Feedback



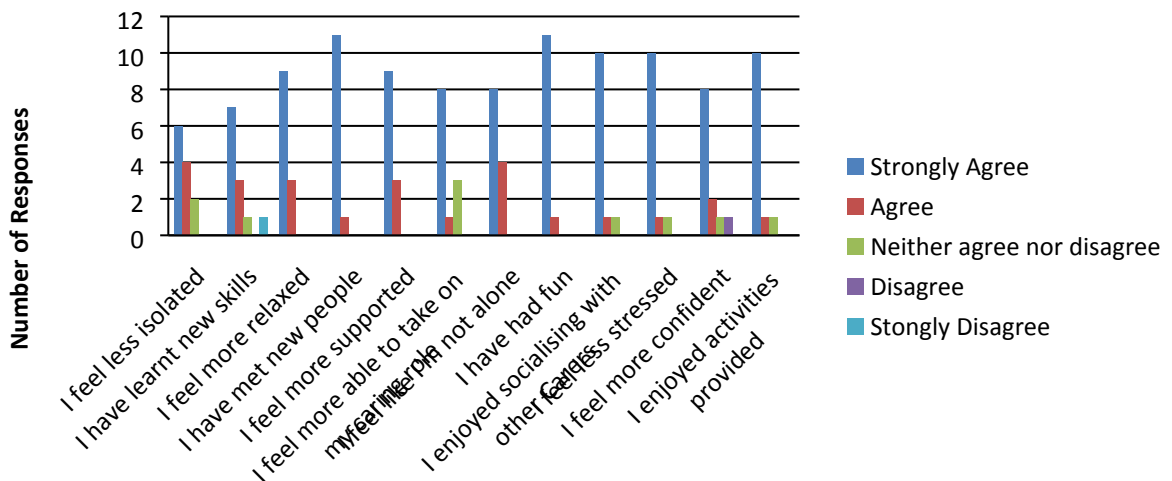
When was the last time you were able to spend the night away, without the person you care for?

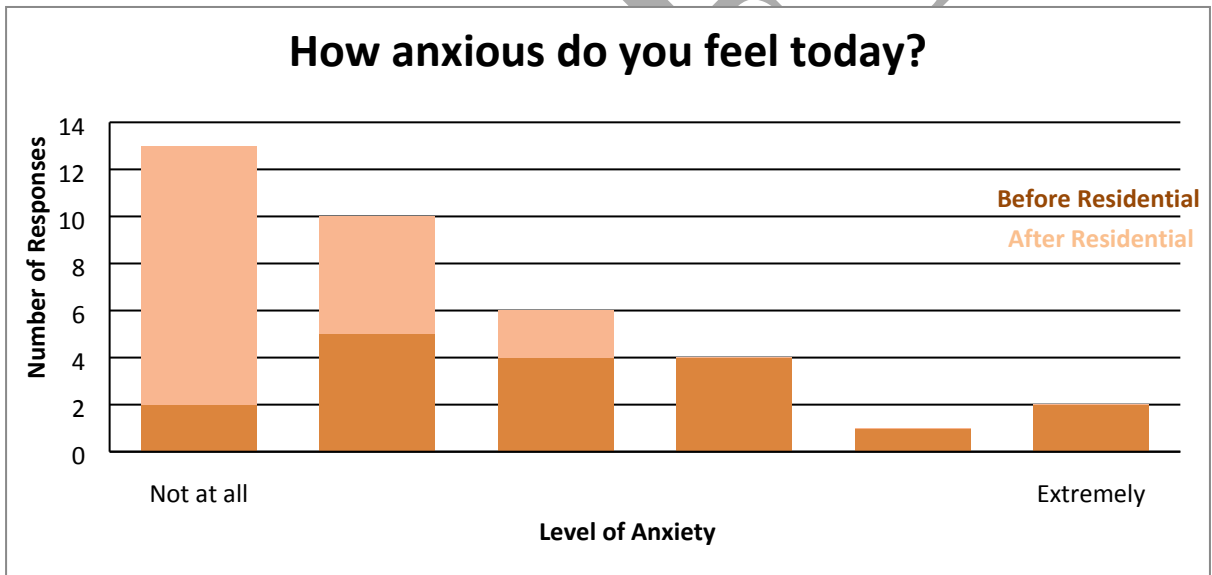
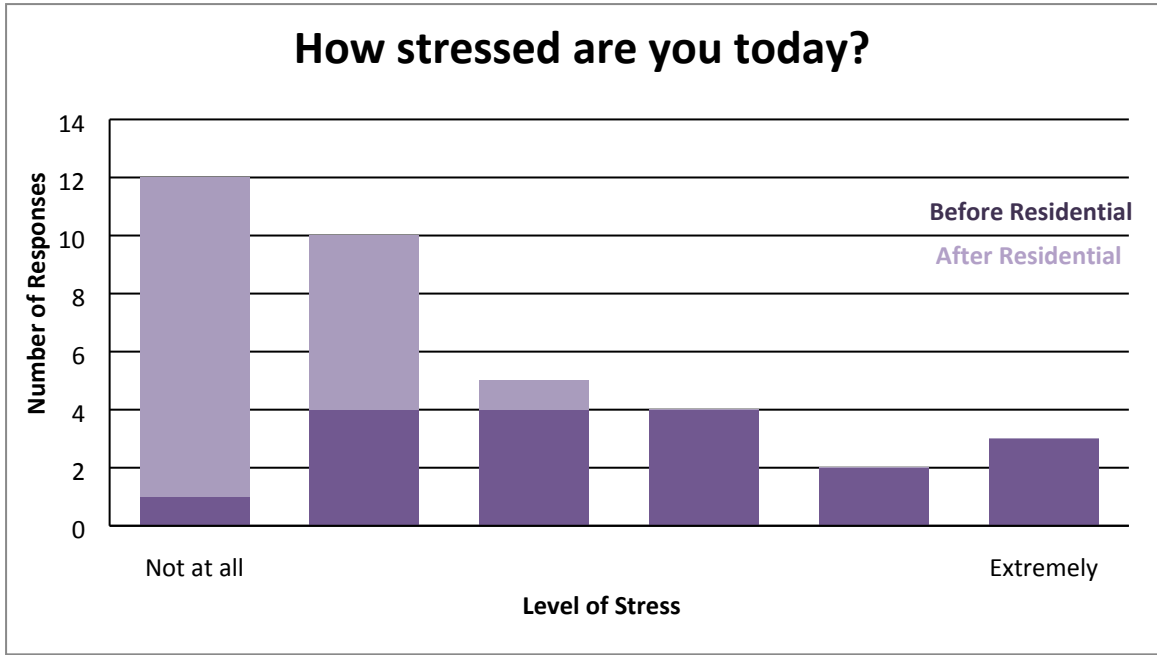


Please rate the activities provided

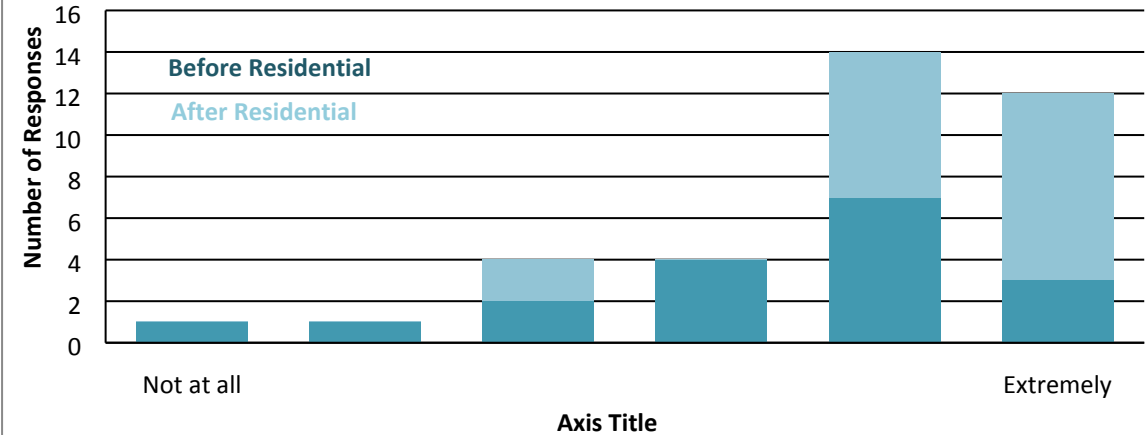


How much do you agree with the statement below?

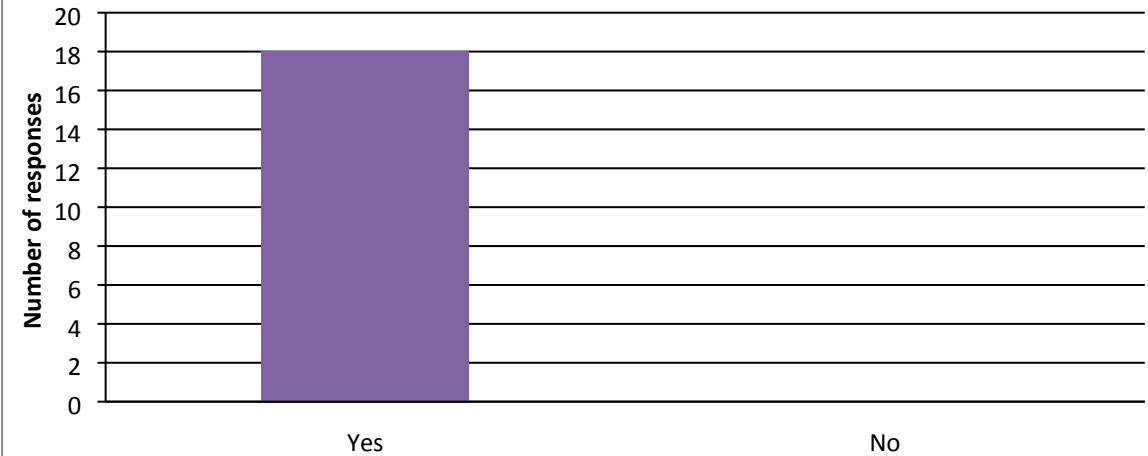




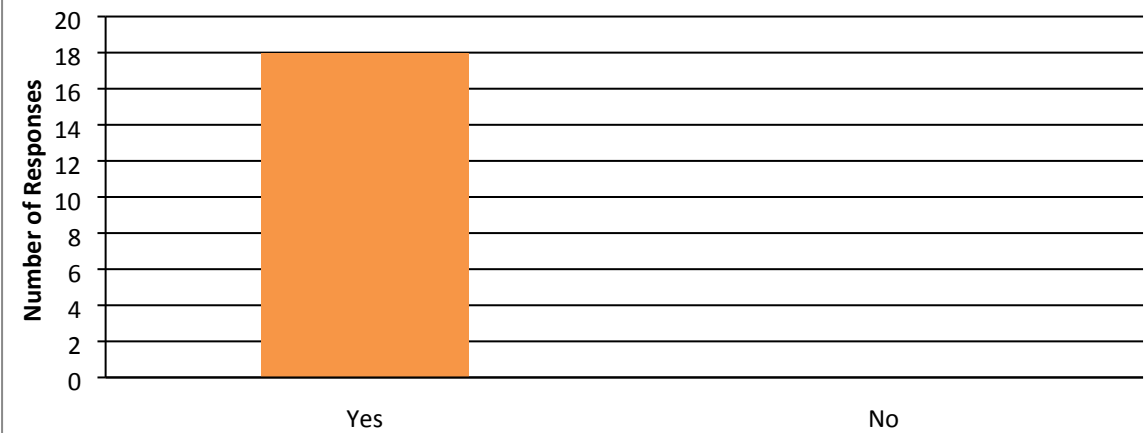
How happy are you today?



Would you like to attend another residential?



Would you recommend residentials like this to other Carers?





“Started as strangers, ended as friends”

Stroke Group for Carers

Relatives/carers of stroke survivors report increased levels of depression. They can also experience high levels of carer burden, anxiety and loneliness. Assistant Psychologist and Consultant Clinical Psychologist have continued to run a Carers Stroke Group for Carers to come together who are looking after someone who has had a stroke.

This 6 week programme brings Carers together for a half day session and a speaker to inform of them of what to expect, for example speech and language therapist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist. This enables:

- Families are supported by therapists to understand the person’s needs and difficulties and how best to support them;
- Families are provided with education around the nature of the person’s stroke and how best to support them;

- They are able to access psychology services in order to help with adjustment and emotional needs associated with the stroke;
- Signposting to other services to support with any other needs e.g. financial, social and to maintain physical and mental wellbeing.
- An opportunity for carers to chat and share experiences with each other.

These sessions are facilitated by a Clinical Psychologist and an Assistant Psychologist.

The structure of group was for 6 weeks, two hour sessions per week were held. Each session focused on sharing emotional experiences and developing strategies to improve physical and mental well-being. As well as providing advice and support around from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Future prospects:

- In future we hope to expand the programme and recruit further people to the group. The method of recruitment has been changed to an 'opt-in' system whereby individuals will be provided with information about the programme. The opt in letter provides information on how to contact the team to register a place should they wish to attend. It is hoped that this will maximise attendance at each group; ideally groups will run once sufficient numbers have been recruited, this will be more cost effective in terms of venue hire and staff costs.
- We also hope to run the programme in several different locations within the Health Board (north and south of Health Board) to provide an equitable service and to support those who are limited due to travelling.

Impact made

- The Dementia Support Groups are building in members include people living with Dementia, Carers and family members. There are between 16 - 28 members and growing. Dedication of the volunteers that attend the Group;
- Past Carers also attend the Dementia Support Group where they used to attend with their loved one;
- Group members have taken ownership of the Group. The Group is informal and flexible.
- Continued provision of schemes to support Carers such as the Carers Emergency Card, Discounted access to leisure services, Carers legal clinic, Carers Counselling Service and Peer Support Groups
- Research around peer-support and psychoeducational groups, as in the Stroke Group for Carers shows:
 - Research shows that peer support can:
 - Improve or maintain psychological, physical well-being.
 - Increase confidence, empowerment, acceptance of condition
 - Reduce loneliness.
 - Peer support can lead to improvements in mental health by promoting belief in recovery, increased self-esteem and social inclusion.

- The Stroke Group has received positive feedback from families and carers. Carers say that the group is often the only chance they have to do something alone and it's helpful to chat with other people who are experiencing similar things.
- They also report that the information they receive is helpful, and it eases their anxieties knowing that they can come and chat with a therapist every week if needed. Signposting other services has also been helpful to them, particularly as they come to the end of their programme.

Next Steps?

- Community Co-ordinators continue to map groups and Carers are able to be sign posted to groups within their own area where they live.
- Community Co-ordinators provide information at events where Carers attend.
- In addition, in 2018/19 the Community Capacity Grant included Cares specifically. This is addition to the ICF remit (Which expanded in 2017/18 to support additional beneficiary groups) and/or their families and Carers. They are:
 - Older people (aged 50+)
 - People with learning disabilities
 - Children with complex needs
 - Carers
- Continued provision and development of schemes which support Carers in their caring role and that help them to maintain a life outside caring.
- To provide safe and welcoming groups for people living with dementia and their loved ones across Cwm Taf. Supported by the Community, Peers and the Memory Service.
- To increase awareness and understanding of Dementia within communities by utilising the expertise and resources within that community.
- We have continued to fund the Stroke Group to develop the service for Carers further. They will incorporate mindfulness, relaxation, yoga etc. into the sessions each week.
- RCT will review their current Carers Support Project and provision to Carers.

4.2.4 Aim 4. Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives

Ensuring Carers have a voice

Carer representatives are members of the Carers Partnership Group. They are involved in the implementation of the Carers Strategy.

RCT CSP has been working with RCT Councils Equality and Diversity Team in the development of a Staff Disability and Carers Network. It is hoped as the Network grows members can have a voice and be engaged with in the

development and reviewing of staff policies that affect individuals with a disability and those who are Carers.

RCT CSP works with Carers in ensuring they are of grants available to assist them in their caring role. In particular, several Carers were supported with the Carers Trust grant applications. Continuous work by local Young Carers Project is carried out, ensuring Young Carers have a voice in service delivery and the designing of services to meet their needs.

The Cwm Taf Social Services & Wellbeing Citizen Panel has Carer representation which will be renewed every 2 years.

John's Campaign

Cwm Taf University Health Board has signed up to 'John's Campaign'. This campaign is about the right of people with dementia to be supported by their family Carers when they stay in hospital.

The campaign believes that Carers should not just be allowed but should be welcomed, and that a collaboration between the patients and all connected with them is crucial to their health and their well-being.

John's Campaign applies to all hospital settings: acute, community, mental health and its principles could extend to all other caring institutions where people are living away from those closest to them.

Promotional materials for staff, patients and relatives in relation to John's Campaign within the hospital have been designed.

Impact made

- Carers have shared their knowledge and experiences whilst being members of the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group and have provided direction for the implementation of the Action Plan.

Next Steps?

- The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Statement of Intent for Carers will be written in partnership with RCTCBC, MTCBC, CTMUHB and Bridgend County Borough Council, following the end of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy.
- 2019/20 will involve new partnerships to continue the excellent work with Carers seen across the new region.
- An Annual Carers Champion Conference will continue with input from Carers.
- Carers will continue to be involved in the delivery of Carers Champion training.
- Carers will be consulted regarding local Carers support delivery where appropriate.

4.2.5.Aim 5. Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages

Collaboration

Details of the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group are referenced in section 3, but this work builds on a strong history of collaboration and regional working across the statutory and non statutory sector in RCT and MT.

With Carer and third sector representation on the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership group, this strengthens our partnership approach at a local level.

COLIN

Cwm Taf continues to be represented at the COLIN meetings with a representative from RCTCBC and/or CTUHB attending. RCT's Carers Support Project Coordinator is a member of the 'Alternative Approaches to Carer breaks' sub group, whose aim is to produce a short guidance paper to share with the COLIN on alternative and innovative approaches to Carers breaks.

Carers Officers Network

RCT Carers Support Project Coordinator attends the Carers Officers Network hosted by Carers Wales. This provides a forum to share best practice, discuss new WG legislation and the sharing of information and new initiatives for Carers.

Carers Provider Network

Interlink and VAMT were commissioned to organise 4 meetings of the Carers Provider Network. The launch meeting was a great success with Carers and third sector organisations attending.

Carers Rights Day

The Carers Co-ordinator staffed an information stand in Prince Charles Hospital and distributed Carers Rights Day posters to all GP practices across Cwm Taf. An example of the poster follows:



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf
University Health Board

Carers Rights Day

30th November 2018

**Do you look after someone?
Then you could be a Carer**

A Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid (except for Carers allowance), for their partner, family member or friend who due to illness, disability, mental health or addiction cannot cope without their support. A Carer can be anyone of any age. If you support someone who would not be able to manage without your help, **you are a Carer**, even if you don't think of yourself that way.

To find out more about support that could be available to you please ask for the Carer champion at your GP surgery



Job Centres

RCT CSP has developed close working links with Job Centres in RCT. The Project has attended a number of information days organised by the Job Centre to promote the identification and recognition of Carers. Carers Clinics are being piloted in Llantrisant, Porth and Tonypany Job Centres.

All Wales Parent and Carer Forum

RCT CSP has worked with the All Wales Parent and Carer Forum in providing two way support and referrals to the Project. The Forum provided a session on how the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act will affect Parent Carers, along with Direct Payment and Carers Rights Workshops.

Valleys Steps

RCT CSP has continues to strengthen its relationship with Valleys Steps. The CSP has included their information and course dates in their Carers News. Valleys Steps also attended Chatterbox (CSP Coffee Morning) and have provide bespoke stress control and mindfulness courses for Carers.

CARERS TRUST

We widely distributed the 700 copies of the Carers Trust excellent publication 'A Carers Guide to Dementia for unpaid Carers of all ages'. Senior Nurses across all hospital sites, including the Dementia Advisors in Cwm Taf. The link to this publication that has been extensively used across Cwm Taf is:

https://carers.org/sites/default/files/media/a_carers_guide_to_dementia_english_language_version.pdf

Impact made

- The Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group will oversee the implementation of the Action Plan for the Carers Strategy.
- Attendance at local and National Carers Forums, such as the COLIN, to enable best practice to be shared and successful initiatives across Wales to be discussed.
- Attendance to the Health Board roundtable hosted by Carers Trust has proven to be invaluable.
- Linking in with community organisations help strengthen provision available to Carers as well as promoting the needs of Carers and Carers Services
- Work with the Job Centres has resulted in the identification and subsequent support to Carers who may not have otherwise received the support available

Next Steps?

- The Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group will continue to meet for the duration of the Carers Strategy.

- Continued partnership working to utilise community provision and expand support services available for Carers and other partners.
- Further expand links with Job Centres to identify and provide bespoke support to Carers across Cwm Taf.

5. Performance Monitoring

Under the SSWB Act there are specific Performance Indicators for Carers which RCTCBC and MTCBC are required to report on annually. Information currently available is presented below:

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Adult Carer Related Data-2018/19

Number of assessments of need for support for carers undertaken during the year	246
Of those, the number that led to a support plan	84
Number of carer assessments that were refused by carers during the year	706
Number of care and support plans and support plans that were reviewed during the year	4,286
Of those, the number of plans that were reviewed within agreed timescales	2,128
Number of requests for review of care and support plans and support plans for carers before agreed timescales made by an adult during the year	1180
Of those, the number of reviews undertaken	1170

Young Carer Related Data-2018/19

Number of assessments of need for support for young carers undertaken during the year	71
Of those, the number that led to a support plan	43
Number of care and support plans and support plans that were reviewed during the year	4,038
Of those, the number of plans that were reviewed within agreed timescales	3,435
Number of requests for repeat assessment of need for care & support and need for support made by a child, young carer or person with parental responsibility during the year	45
Of those, the number of repeat assessments undertaken	36
Of those, the number of repeat assessments that led to a care & support plan or support plan	2

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Number of assessments of need for support for young carers undertaken during the year	24
Of those, the number of assessments that led to a support plan	24
Number of care and support plans and support plans for young carers that were reviewed during the year	156
Of those, the number of plans that were reviewed within agreed timescales	156

6. Looking Forward

Throughout 2018-19, Merthyr Tydfil CBC, RCT CBC and Cwm Taf UHB have sustained the success of the previous year and continued to work collaboratively in improving support, information and recognition of Carers. This Annual Report has highlighted the key areas of work and provided examples of the progress made.

The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy will continue the work already achieved under the Carers Measure and improve services further as we implement the requirements of the SSWB Act.

The transitional funding to support Carers provided by Welsh Government for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 to support the implementation of the SSWB Act is very welcome as there had been concerns regarding the loss of momentum and the lack of resources available to achieve identified actions. Merthyr CBC has had no Carers Coordinator in post since March 2017 and RCT has recently restructured the Carers Support Project. Cwm Taf University Health has appointed a Carers Coordinator on secondment.

It is essential to prevent any negative impact on Carers services and support and ensure the continued development and raising awareness of Carers throughout the region, meeting the increased responsibilities for partners under the SSWB Act.

We look forward in 2019/20 to working in new partnerships as Cwm Taf Morgannwg.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18TH JULY 2019

A4119 ELY VALLEY ROAD DUALLING – LLANTRISANT BUSINESS PARK TO COED ELY ROUNDABOUTS.

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLIEEN SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LEADER

Author(s): Andrew Griffiths, Service Director Highways and Transportation

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to;

- Update Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major transportation project: A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts from Cabinet Report of 21st June 2018.
- Obtain authority from Cabinet for the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to submit a planning application on behalf of the Council for the creation of a new access to the South Wales Fire Brigade Headquarters adjacent to the A4119.
- To clarify the powers delegated to the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to progress a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and Side Roads Order (SRO), if required to the extended area (see Appendix A).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 Note the progress made and endorse the next steps and in particular to the:
- 2.1.2 Removal of the South Wales Fire Service roundabout access.
- 2.1.3 Provision of widening to Coed Ely road bridge structure to accommodate standard merge.
- 2.1.4 Provision of a subway south of Coed Ely roundabout to accommodate pedestrian movements.

- 2.1.5 Give authority to the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to submit a planning application on behalf of the Council for the new access to the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters adjacent to the A4119.
- 2.1.6 Give authority to the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services, as more particularly detailed in the cabinet report dated 21/6/18 paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3, to acquire the land necessary to deliver the additional works to the scheme outlined in this report.

3 BACKGROUND AND UPDATED POSITION

- 3.1 Ecology surveys have been completed on site and have identified that a protected species ie the Lesser Horseshoe bat is present, which has necessitated further surveys and ongoing discussions with Natural Resources Wales regarding mitigation measures.
- 3.2 As part of the transportation assessment, a Transport User Benefit Appraisal (TUBA) was undertaken on the project including the option of removal of the Fire Service Headquarters roundabout compared to non removal (both with dual carriageway scenarios). From the TUBA assessment it was found that the removal of the South Wales Fire Service roundabout resulted in a 50% increase in the monetised benefits ie Present Value of Benefit. This would bring a reduction in journey times and a reduction in congestion whilst offering better value for money. The initial value for money of a scheme is identified based upon the Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of the scheme, using monetised impacts as to the WelTAG guidance. The BCR of the option not removing the roundabout at the Fire Service headquarters is 3.2 whilst removing the roundabout is given as 4.0. These are extremely high BCR scores , with 4.0 and above recognise as being Very High.
- 3.3 The removal of the South Wales Fire Service roundabout, which only serves the Fire Service Headquarters, will require the Council to purchase third party land or acquire the land via a CPO, obtain planning permission for the new access and obtain the approval of the South Wales Fire Service Board to the proposed works.
- 3.4 Discussions have been held with the South Wales Fire Service who support in principle the removal of their existing access with a new access supplied off the Llantrisant Business Park roundabout via Sterling Drive, subject to agreement on the detailed design and South Wales Fire Service Board approval. Currently there has been consultations with the Fire Service on the use of their land, access and design. RCT officers have presented detailed proposals to the Fire Service Operations Team during May 2019 and subject to resolution of a number of practical issues

(e.g. the new access requires a retaining wall within Fire Service land which has maintenance implications), the proposal will be recommended to the South Wales Fire Service Board for approval.

- 3.5 It would be the intention to complete the new Fire Service access ahead of the dualling works in order to minimise disruption to the emergency service.
- 3.6 There is a pedestrian desire line just south of the Coed Ely roundabout with pedestrians and cyclists traversing from Coed Ely to the existing Community Route (west of the A4119) and vice versa. There is the potential for further pedestrian / cyclist activity as a result of the inclusion of a proposed new shared route alongside the dualling and the development of the Coed Ely plateau for employment purposes by the Welsh Government /RCT joint venture.
- 3.7 In order to facilitate the pedestrian / cyclist movement three options have been investigated to maintain this desire line, namely an at-grade split toucan crossing across the dualling, provision of a subway or provision of a bridge to accommodate shared use. The provision of a toucan crossing will be the least expensive, estimated at £100k, however a Road Safety Audit Stage 1 has indicated that there are safety concerns in respect of this option. The subway would be designed to accommodate shared use and compliant ramps, this option is estimated at £800k and would require additional third party land for its implementation. The option of a shared use bridge crossing with compliant ramps and steps is estimated at over £2.0m and would require additional land to implement, in excess of the subway option. Based on the preliminary investigations the subway option is recommended for inclusion in the project.
- 3.8 Discussions have commenced with Welsh Government in respect of potential contributions to the option of a pedestrian / cyclist link based on the subway option which will also aid their development.
- 3.9 North of the Coed Ely roundabout it is single carriageway and at present there are no plans to dual this section of the A4119. However there will be the need to provide a merge north of the roundabout to take traffic from two lanes down to one. Two options have been considered, namely a Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) compliant merge solution which will require extension to the existing river bridge structure and is estimated at £900k. The second option is a solution which will fully future proof for dualling of the next section of the A4119 northwards, will require a significant additional structure and is estimated at £1.8m. The estimated cost of dualling the next section of carriageway north of this project is estimated at £25-30m. Based on the costs and priority of future major transportation infrastructure proposed by the Council, the first option is recommended ie a compliant merge solution.

- 3.10 Negotiation with third party landowners has commenced in respect of land purchase with no plots to date acquired by the Council.
- 3.11 It has been confirmed that a planning application for the main dualling works is not required as the works constitute permitted development, by virtue of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, Schedule 2, Part 13, Class A but planning permission will be required to construct the new access to the Fire Service Headquarters.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required. The A4119 Ely Valley Road dualling Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts will enhance existing movement along the strategic highway network and hence between communities.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation has commenced and will continue with the stakeholders and parties affected by the A4119 Ely Valley Road dualling Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely roundabouts proposals and these include the Council's departments, statutory bodies, statutory undertakers and third parties whose land is required for the proposals.
- 5.2 On Monday 4th February in Ynysmaerdy and Friday 8th February in Coed Ely, public exhibitions were held presenting the A4119 Dualling between Llantrisant Business Park Roundabout to Coed Ely. A website was also live the week of the exhibition with a comments box to allow feedback on the consultation information.
- 5.3 Over 140 people attended the two exhibitions, with the vast majority expressing support verbally. There were 59 formal responses from the public via the exhibition and website. 35 of the formal responses were in favour and 7 did not indicate a preference. The remaining 17 were opposed for various reasons ranging from creating more congestion, speeding and pedestrian safety. It should be noted that the detailed design will consider the response and where appropriate and reasonable, mitigation measures will be incorporated.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 6.1 The preliminary design has been completed for the project and has indicated that the estimated overall cost of the project is approximately

£14m which is inclusive of risk (£3m), construction, fees, land, etc. This figure is greater than the estimated cost identified in the 21/6/18 report (£9.6m) due to the inclusion of the Fire Station Service access, additional ecology mitigation works, subway and merge works north of Coed Ely roundabout. As the project progresses through the detailed design stage, the estimated costs will be further refined.

- 6.2 A total of £534k funding has been received from the Welsh Government between 2017/18 and 2018/19 via the Local Transport Network Fund for the project.
- 6.3 A total of £4.150m funding to date has been committed by the Council via its investment programme.
- 6.4 On 25th January 2018 the Cabinet agreed in principle to a £300m investment programme over the next 5 years and included in that was a sum of £65M for Highways and Transportation Infrastructure projects and A4119 dualling project specifically.
- 6.5 The Council has also secured £0.1M from Welsh Government Local Transport Funding for 2019/20 for a major economic infrastructure package (4 number projects) which includes the A4119 dualling. Further bids will be submitted in due course.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The legal implications are considered in the body of the report of the 24th July 2018. The Council has the power to make the CPO and SRO under the provisions of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and Sections 14,125, 239,240,246,250 and 260 of the Highways Act.

8 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 8.1 The A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts supports a number of the authorities' own plans, policies and strategies that relate not only to transport, but the wider local agenda:

8.1.1 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The A4119 Ely Valley Road dualling will help achieve the well-being goals and objectives of the Act. Measures along this transport corridor to reduce journey times and improve reliability will help to improve access to key employment sites in the southern part of the corridor. Increasing the proportion of employed residents will support economic growth in the area, help raise household income levels, tackle inequality

and generate greater prosperity for communities. A reduction in traffic congestion at the key pinch points along the A4119 corridor will deliver wider environmental benefits including potential reductions in traffic related carbon emissions, possible improvements to local air quality and a more attractive public realm. Investment in the A4119 corridor together with the bus operators plans to invest in further new buses, will encourage greater passenger usage on bus services and help to maintain its commercial viability. This, in turn, will ensure that the bus service continues to play an important connectivity role, linking those communities with high levels of deprivation and low car ownership (in the northern part of this corridor) with areas of buoyant economic activity and a wide range of jobs, services and facilities (in the southern part of this corridor).

8.1.2 Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan

Replaces the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) and a number of different partnership plans that were previously produced, including the Community Strategy, Children and Young Peoples Plan, Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy, Community Safety Plan and Local Housing Strategy. The Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan has been produced by an overarching partnership of organisations in the public and voluntary sectors. The aim is to promote thriving communities, healthy people and a strong economy. These are closely aligned to the Welsh Government's 'Programme for Government Priority Areas'.

8.1.3 Local Development Plan (LDP)

The LDP provides the framework for the development and use of land within Rhondda Cynon Taf. It sets out the objectives and priorities relating to the development and use of land and the policies and proposals for implementing them.

Core Policy CS8 – Transportation, includes specific reference to the A4119/A473 corridor. It is recognised that the corridor is a strategic transport corridor and this corridor area is subject to high demands for economic and housing developments. This policy safeguards the provision improvements to this corridor via a strategic transport corridor management system.

Policy SSA14.1 Employment Locations - Coed Ely, Tonyrefail (14.32ha of B1 and B2 use) directly links to the A4119 at this location is a strategic development which is supported by the Welsh Government.

Policy SSA10.2-10.10 Housing Allocations – 1280 housing units would benefit and be served by the A4119.

8.1.4 The South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan (January 2015)

This plan identifies the issues and opportunities for transport in the South East Wales Valleys area. The A4119 Ely Valley Road dualling will

complement proposals set out in the plan's short term programme for improvements to the A4119 bus corridor.

8.1.5 Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOA's)

The current context of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the Valleys Taskforce means that it is more important than ever to identify where there are key strategic opportunities to work with partners to deliver economic growth in Rhondda Cynon Taf. As such, RCT has identified key strategic opportunity areas to maximise the benefit of economic regeneration and ensure RCT is successful in the global competition for investment. SOA's are geographical areas where resources are focused to provide opportunities for the private sector to invest and create new jobs. Each SOA aims to provide a comprehensive and focused package to encourage investment and enterprise. On 21st September 2017, the Council approved five Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs) and in particular the "A4119 Corridor: Regional Rhondda Gateway." In doing so, the Council has committed to developing and delivering projects that will achieve the primary aspirations of this Strategy, namely enabling significant economic growth and jobs. Part of this Strategy identifies Coed Ely and the A4119 as a Development Opportunity, recognising the major impact of developing approximately 14.32 hectares of reclaimed employment land at the Coed Ely former colliery site coupled with the dualling of the A4119.

- 8.2 The proposals to construct the A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts will make a significant contribution towards the Corporate Priorities "Building a Strong Economy" and "Improving our Communities". The proposal has a significant impact on improving accessibility and connectivity which is recognised as a fundamental factor in linking the labour market with employment opportunities and supporting economic activity.
- 8.3 The project directly addresses the Corporate Plan commitment to invest in highways infrastructure and to improve the transport network.
- 8.4 On 21st September 2017 Council approved the Strategic Opportunity Areas and in particular the A4419 Corridor: Regional Rhondda Gateway.
- 8.5 The dualling of the A4119 Ely Valley Road – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts will help support the delivery of a Wales of cohesive communities, a prosperous Wales and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The benefits of the provision of the dualling to this strategic highway has been highlighted in the previous Cabinet Report of 21st June 2018.
- 9.2 The public consultation on the proposed dualling of the A4119 together with alternative access for the South Wales Fire Service was positive.
- 9.3 The removal of the South Wales Fire Service access roundabout and provision of an alternative access via Sterling Drive will improve the capacity and reduce congestion on the highway.
- 9.4 The provision of pedestrian / cyclist facilities via a subway south of Coed Ely roundabout and merge facilities for traffic north of Coed Ely roundabout will enhance the project. This will ensure that the pedestrian / cyclist desire line is maintained safely and traffic will be able to merge in a safe manner when the dual carriageway reverts back to single carriageway
- 9.5 In order to commence the process it is recommended that authority be granted to the Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to submit a planning application on behalf of the Council in respect of the new access for the South Wales Fire Service relating to the project; and obtain sufficient funding for each stage of the project: to negotiate the purchase of any land in third party ownership (as shown in Appendix A) as required for the whole project and initiate all procedures relating to making, confirming and implementation of a CPO and SRO including but not limited to the following steps:
 - 9.5.1 Seeking confirmation of the CPO and SRO by the Welsh Ministers (or, if permitted, by the Council pursuant to Section 14A Acquisition of Land Act 1981), including the preparation and presentation of the Council's case for any Written Representations, Hearing or Public Inquiry which may be necessary;
 - 9.5.2 Publication and service of notices of confirmation of the CPO and SRO and thereafter to execute and serve any General Vesting Declarations and/or Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry;
 - 9.5.3 To acquire the necessary interests in the land; and
 - 9.5.4 Referral and conduct of disputes, relating to compulsory purchase compensation, to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

Item: A4119 ELY VALLEY ROAD DUALLING – LLANTRISANT BUSINESS PARK TO COED ELY ROUNDABOUTS.

Background Papers

Cabinet – 21.06.2018.

Officer to contact:

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

18th JULY 2019

STANDARD ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J ROSSER

Author: Bernard Whittingham, Head of School Achievement (Secondary) - 01443
744014

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information to Members on the Council's statutory duties to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).
- 1.2 To update Members on the constitution of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE (Appendix A).
- 1.3 To inform Members that the Annual Report of the RCT SACRE for the academic year 2017-2018 is available (Appendix B).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the content of the Annual Report 2017-2018.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that Members are reassured that our statutory obligations are met.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Every Local Authority (LA) has a statutory duty to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), to advise on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education (RE) and collective worship (Education Reform Act 1988).
- 4.2 The main function of SACRE is 'to advise the authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the Council or as the Council may see fit'.

4.3 The broad role of a SACRE is to support the effective provision of RE and collective worship in schools. Each LA should work with its SACRE to identify whether any changes need to be made in the agreed syllabus or in the support offered which might be taken to improve provision.

4.4 Each SACRE must publish an annual report on its work.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 No consultation exercise has been required.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial considerations

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The local authority has statutory duties under Section 11 Education Reform Act 1988.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

9.1 Educational performance has a clear link to the Council's priority of Building a Strong Economy. Improved educational performance will have a positive impact on this priority.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Changes in the way support for schools is organised and delivered have resulted in a demise of the traditional subject led advisory service to a more school to school self-supporting system. Such changes in working practices has had an impact on the ability of SACRE to fulfil its role and functions with schools.

10.2 Co-ordination of the role and functions of the RCT SACRE is now commissioned through the Central South Consortium.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee-

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers-

None

CONSTITUTION OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF SACRE

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the LA on matters connected with collective worship in county schools.
2. To advise the LA on matters connected with religious education which is given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
3. To decide when, within the five year statutory time scale, the LA should review its agreed syllabus.
4. To consider with the LA and the Agreed Syllabus Conference any changes required to the agreed syllabus.
5. To consider with the LA the support offered to religious education in its schools, with particular regard to methods of teaching, the choice of teaching materials and the provision of training for teachers.
6. To offer advice on any other matters related to its function as it sees fit.
7. To publish an annual report on its work, which must:
 - specify any matters on which it has advised the LA;
 - broadly describe the nature of the advice;
 - set out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the LA;

The report should also follow the current guidance from Welsh Government on its structure and information that should be included in the report.

8. To participate in the LA's statutory complaints procedures in those instances where the complaints relate to religious education and/or collective worship.
9. To receive and make determinations in respect of applications from headteachers of county schools for the lifting or modifying of the requirements that collective worship in such schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Composition and Membership

10. The Council shall comprise persons appointed by the local authority to represent respectively:
 - a. Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.
 - b. Such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the LA, ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area.

c. The LA.

The Council may also include co-opted members.

In order to qualify for membership of RCT SACRE, all members must either reside within Rhondda Cynon Taf or be employed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council.

Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE has agreed the following membership:

Representatives from religious traditions and denominations

To optimise the efficiency of the SACRE, membership is sought from a wide range of religious traditions.

14 places from a range of religions and denominations which could include but is not restricted to:

- The Church in Wales
- The Roman Catholic Church
- Free Churches
- Bahâ'í Faith
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism.

Teacher representatives

The relevant statutory provision gives discretion to the authority to determine which associations are to represent teachers and will therefore include:

- 10 places from a range of teacher associations.

The LA

- 6 members representing the local authority.

Co-opt members (with no voting rights)

- Up to 4 members who have an interest in religious education and collective worship and can assist the committee in its functions.
11. Membership of the Council shall be for a period of four years. Any outgoing members may be re-appointed.
 12. Membership of the Council is subject to the condition that the LA has taken all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed are representative, as the case may be, of the denominations or associations in question.

13. Members representing associations of teachers must include teachers of religious education.
14. Individuals may be removed from the Council if they cease to be representative of the denomination, association or of the Authority they were appointed to represent.
15. Any member of the Council may at any time resign his or her office.

Procedure

16. The Council shall meet not less than once in each school term.
17. Meetings are open to members of the public unless confidential information is to be disclosed.
18. RCT SACRE is a member of WASACRE (the Welsh Association of SACREs). It shall nominate up to four members, including the RE Consultant, to represent the SACRE at WASACRE meetings.
19. The Council shall elect from its membership a chairperson and vice chairperson at the first meeting in each academic year. The chairperson and vice chairperson in any one year shall not be drawn from the same representative group. An outgoing chairperson may be re-appointed.
20. On any question to be decided by the Council only the representative groups on the Council shall be entitled to vote, and each group shall have a single vote. Before a formal vote is taken opportunity shall be given to each representative group to determine how its vote is to be cast. Resolutions shall be passed to the education department as appropriate.
21. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.
22. The agenda for each meeting shall be determined by the chairperson and vice chairperson in consultation with the clerk to SACRE, Director of Education Representative and Professional Officer. Any voting member of SACRE shall be entitled to propose items for an agenda.
23. In the case of any member not being able to attend a Council meeting, a substitute may be nominated by the body which that person represents, provided that the substitute meets the eligibility criteria and the Education Directorate of the LA and the Clerk to SACRE is notified in advance of the meeting.
24. A meeting of the Council will be deemed to be quorate if at least one member of each of the three representative groups is present. The validity of proceedings of the Council shall not be affected by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council.
25. The representative groups on the Council, other than that representing the Local Authority, may call, at any time, for a review of the agreed syllabus current in the

Authority. At such time an Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be constituted and convened.

26. The Council shall consider its annual report at the first meeting to be held in each academic year. Upon the Council's ratification of the report it shall proceed to publication.
27. The clerk to the SACRE shall arrange for copies of the annual report to be sent to all County schools within the Authority, to DfES, the National Library and to such other individuals and institutions as the LA sees fit.

Rhondda Cynon Taf
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report
for the Academic Year 2017-2018



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SECTION ONE

INFORMATION ABOUT SACRE

1.1 **Duty to establish SACRE**

All local authorities (LAs) are required to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) within their local area.

1.2 **Composition of SACRE**

Representation on SACRE is required as follows:

- such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- associations representing teachers; and
- the LA.

It is the duty of the LA to ensure that members of the groups are appointed and that they are representative.

1.3 **Membership of SACRE**

The list of members of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE is set out in Appendix 1.

1.4 **Functions of SACRE**

The main function of a SACRE is to:

- advise the LA on worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, including methods of teaching, advice on materials and the provision of training for teachers;
- consider whether to recommend to the LA that its current agreed syllabus should be reviewed by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference;
- consider applications from schools for determinations (to be exempt from the requirement that worship be “Christian”);
- report to the LA and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) on its activities on an annual basis.

1.5 **SACRE meetings**

Three meetings of SACRE were held during the 2017–2018 academic year:

- 6th November 2017
- 7th March 2018
- 18th June 2018.

A record of the main agenda items discussed during the meetings is to be found in Appendix 2.

1.6 **Circulation of report**

Copies of this report have been circulated to the organisations/establishments listed in Appendix 3.

SECTION TWO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF THE ADVICE GIVEN TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY BY SACRE

2.1 Religious Education

A brief summary of the advice that SACRE has given to the Local Authority follows:

Aim: To monitor provision and standards in religious education.

Action:

- SACRE considers and analyses school inspection reports. If there are any issues regarding religious education, such as the non- fulfilment of statutory requirements, the Local Authority follows this up. During the academic year 2017–2018 no such follow up action was necessary.
- Following discussion during previous meetings, it was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education.
- SACRE analyses examination results over a three year period and identifies trends in performance benchmarked against All Wales data. Schools are informed of the outcomes of this analysis and any issues raised by SACRE.
- The LA and its SACRE gather and analyses data via the Consortium regarding key stage 3 teacher assessment in religious education. This information is presented to SACRE and sent to all secondary schools in the LA.
- In 2016-17 SACRE wrote to all schools in the local authority reminding them that coverage of the programmes of study of the locally agreed syllabus remains a statutory requirement whilst the curriculum is under review. It also wrote to secondary schools drawing specific attention to delivery of RE at KS4 and informing them that coverage of the Global Citizenship unit alone would not be sufficient to cover all aspects of the agreed syllabus KS4 programme of study. It asked all schools to confirm that they understood the requirements of the agreed syllabus and that they are meeting these statutory requirements in their schools.

2.2 Agreed Syllabus

Aim: To fulfil the legal requirement to review the agreed syllabus for religious education on a five year basis and to monitor its implementation.

Action:

- In 2008 Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September 2008. All schools received a programme of Inset in summer 2008 and received a package of support materials to exemplify the new syllabus. Comprehensive support materials, including schemes of work and electronic *Progress in Learning* files for secondary schools, have already been issued to schools.

- In June 2013 the Agreed Syllabus Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed syllabus for religious education with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review.
- During 2013 – 2014 SACRE members received updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review.
- In 2014 – 2015 SACRE considered the Successful Futures Report on the review of the curriculum in Wales. It was noted that there would be implications for RE and the Agreed Syllabus and that NAPfRE (the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education) would meet to discuss the issues on 15th April 2015. The Committee resolved to respond to the review as a SACRE before the 8th May 2015 deadline. It was agreed to hold a special meeting in order for members to more fully discuss the review however, this meeting was subsequently cancelled. All members were invited to submit their views to the RE Consultant by email. The RE Consultant subsequently formulated a response to the review on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE and this was submitted as part of the Great Debate consultation process. SACRE will continue to monitor and respond to developments in this area.
- In its spring 2015 meeting, SACRE began to consider the value of retaining the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus given the move towards a more flexible curriculum. A letter was written to all schools seeking their views on this matter.
- An Agreed Syllabus Conference was held on 8th June, 2017 to consider a) whether to remove the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus and b) whether to strengthen the statement regarding the need to allocate sufficient time to RE. It was resolved that due to insufficient responses from schools a decision could not be made. It was agreed to resend the request for a response relating to the core units. It was agreed that a statement regarding time allocation would be drafted and schools would be consulted. The Agreed Syllabus Conference would be reconvened in the autumn term 2016. The Agreed Syllabus Conference in the Autumn Term was not quorate and the Agreed Syllabus Conference has not reconvened.
- In 2017-2018 SACRE has received termly updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review. SACRE are awaiting further details from Welsh Government on the shape of RE in the curriculum, and advice from WASACRE, before beginning any RE agreed syllabus review. A Welsh Government consultation with SACREs is expected to take place in the Autumn Term 2018.

2.3 Teaching materials

Aim: To ensure that schools are informed of suitable teaching resources.

Action:

The following resources and information was provided to schools during 2017-2018:

- All schools were informed of the 2018 Holocaust Memorial Day theme and that Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk

- Schools were advised that the formerly published RE News was now available to view on line at the following address: www.religious-education-wales.org
- Managing the Right of Withdrawal from RE published by WASACRE.
- SACRE RE News Bulletin: A termly SACRE RE News Bulletin was distributed to all schools and interested parties this included information on the New Curriculum, the Estyn Thematic Review, WJEC updates, Interfaith Week and places of worship as well as articles submitted by teachers and SACRE members from a number of Local Authorities.
- Schools were notified of the Farmington Scholarships available to teachers of RE.
- Inter Faith News Bulletins were shared with schools <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-e-bulletin>
- Information was shared on Visit My Mosque
- Information on visits and visitors in South Wales was distributed to schools.
- The CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN was shared with schools.
- The Newsletter of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales.
- Diversity of Religion and Belief: A guidance resource pack for primary schools in England and Wales published by Cardiff University School of Social Science.

2.4 **Training for Teachers**

Aim: To ensure that teachers are able to access appropriate continuing professional development.

Action:

- Due to the lack of take up of advertised courses and the subsequent need for cancellation, no RE courses were offered by the local authority via Central South Consortium this year.

2.5 **Collective Worship**

Aim: To ensure that schools fulfil statutory requirements for collective worship and provide a worthwhile experience for pupils.

Action:

- SACRE monitors the sections of inspection reports that are concerned with collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If there are any issues such as the non-fulfilment of statutory requirements the LA follows this up. During the academic year 2017–2018 no such follow up action was necessary. The provision for collective worship had positive comments stating that schools were promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- In 2015-2016 SACRE resolved not to request self-evaluation from schools as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor statutory requirements, provision and quality of collective worship.

2.6 **Other Issues**

Aim: To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues.

WASACRE - SACRE has maintained its membership of WASACRE and receives termly feedback from meetings of the association by its representatives.

National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE) - The RE Consultant to SACRE is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf

Holocaust Education - Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE was informed of the 2018 Holocaust Memorial Day theme 'The Power of Words' and resources to be found at www.hmd.org.uk.

Curriculum Review - SACRE has received regular updates on the development of the new curriculum and the implications for religious education.

GCSE and GCE Examination Specifications - SACRE were updated on the progress being made with regards to the new A Level and GCSE Specifications for RS.

ESTYN Thematic Review and Updates - SACRE received feedback on the Estyn Thematic Report in the Summer Term of 2018. This will provide the opportunity for discussion and inform a SACRE Development Plan.

SACRE Training - The consultant to SACRE gave a presentation and training on The Role and Responsibility of a SACRE and on developments in the New Curriculum for Wales and the place of RE within this.

Commission on Religious Education in England - The Consultant presented the WASACRE paper "The CoRE and its relevance to Wales: A paper for discussion.'

Humanist representation on SACRE - It was agreed in the Summer 2018 meeting to invite a Humanist representative to sit as a Group A representative on Rhonddha Cynon Taf SACRE.

SECTION THREE

Summary of advice to the local authority on Religious Education

3.1 The Locally Agreed Syllabus

During the spring term 2008 Standing Conference endorsed and adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September

2008. The agreed syllabus closely relates to *The National Exemplar Framework for RE*. Comprehensive support materials, including schemes of work and electronic *Progress in Learning* files for secondary schools, have already been issued to schools.

During the 2012–2013 academic year SACRE were made aware of the announcement by the Minister of Education and Skills of a pending review of assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales. This review would involve the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the identification of revisions to the current assessment and curriculum arrangements. In June 2013 Standing Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed syllabus, with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review.

During the summer term meeting of 2014 SACRE expressed concern that teacher representatives reported that the teaching of religious education appeared to be suffering at the hands of certain curricular initiatives. SACRE resolved to send a letter to all Headteachers, and copied to the Chairs of Governing Bodies, reminding them of the statutory nature of religious education and the requirements to adhere to the agreed syllabus.

In spring 2015 SACRE considered the Donaldson Successful Futures Report on the review of the curriculum in Wales. It was noted that there would be implications for RE and the Agreed Syllabus. The Committee resolved to respond to the review as a SACRE before the 8th May 2015 deadline and in order to assist its own discussions would consider the report from NAPfRE (the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education) which met on 15th April to discuss the issues.

It was agreed to hold a special meeting in order for members to more fully discuss the review however, this meeting was subsequently cancelled. All members were invited to submit their views to the RE Consultant by email. The RE Consultant subsequently formulated a response to the review on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE and this was submitted as part of the Great Debate consultation process

In its spring 2015 meeting, SACRE began to consider the value of retaining the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus given the move towards a more flexible curriculum.

An Agreed Syllabus Conference was held on 8th June 2016 to consider

- a. whether to remove the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus; and
- b. whether to strengthen the statement regarding the need to allocate sufficient time to RE.

It was resolved that due to insufficient responses from schools a decision could not be made. It was agreed to resend the request for a response relating to the core units. It was agreed that a statement regarding time allocation would be drafted and schools would be consulted. The Agreed Syllabus Conference would be

reconvened in the autumn term 2016. The Agreed Syllabus Conference in the Autumn Term was not quorate and the Agreed Syllabus Conference has not reconvened.

SACRE has received termly updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review. SACRE are awaiting further details from Welsh Government on the shape of RE in the curriculum, and advice from WASACRE, before beginning any RE agreed syllabus review. A Welsh Government consultation with SACREs is expected to take place in the Autumn Term 2018.

3.2 **Standards in Religious Education**

Examination Results

- SACRE considered examination performance in the secondary schools for 2018. The examination results for Rhondda Cynon Taf are compared with the Local Consortium, the All – Wales figures and with the results of the previous years. SACRE members are also informed of the percentage of the year 11 cohort being entered for the religious studies GCSE examinations. The examination results are sent to all secondary schools within the Local Authority.

Details are published in Appendix 4 along with results for 2016 and 2017.

GCSE Religious Studies

- There was an increase in entries for the GCSE Religious Studies course in 2017 with 999 candidates from 16 schools. In 2016 there were 872 candidates from 14 schools. 2017 entries are almost in line with those of 2015 when there were 1030 candidates from 16 schools. There was also an increase in the All – Wales figure with 12401 candidates compared to 11051 candidates in 2016 and 11,341 in 2015. The cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 38.8% which is an increase on the 2016 entry which was 33% and 38.5% in 2015.
- The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 97.9% which was higher than 96.9 % in 2016 and comparable to 97.2% in 2015 and with previous performance. The Consortium performance is the fractionally higher at 98.5%. The All Wales figure of 97.5% is fractionally lower.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 66.2% which is fractionally lower than the figures of 67.2% in 2016 and 67.1% in 2015. Performance at A* - C of 66.2% in RCT is below the Consortium figure of 71.5% and the All Wales figure of 68.3%.
- In 2017 the overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 20.0% which is a decrease from the 2016 figure of 24.4% and 24% in 2015. It remains below the Consortium performance of 27.8% and below the All Wales figure of 24.7%.

GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

- In 2017 there was a noticeably significant decrease in the number of students sitting the GCSE Religious Studies short course at 868 students from 16 schools in comparison to 1792 students from 15 schools in 2016. In 2015 entries were at 1889 students. Across Wales there was also a significant drop in numbers of candidates entered at 9343 students in comparison to 11,666 students in 2016. In 2015 entries throughout Wales were 10,098.
- In 2017 schools used selective entry, whereas in 2016 some schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf entered almost a full cohort. The average cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 33.7% in comparison to 60.8% in 2016 and 70.7% in 2015.
- The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 decreased to 87.1% from 91.6% in 2016 and the previous year when it was 92.7%. It is, however, slightly higher than the Consortium figure of 86.9% but is below the All-Wales performance of 90.2%.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 28.9%. This is a significant decrease from 2016 performance which was 52.5%. In 2015 performance was also significantly higher at 52.1%. The Consortium figures and those across Wales have also significantly decreased this year. The % figure of 28.9% remains below the Consortium performance of 34.3% and the All Wales figure of 39.6%.
- The overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 is 2.4%. This is a significant decrease from the 2016 figure of 17.4% and the performances in 2015 at 15.1%. The 2017 performance is below the Consortium performance of 7.5% and the All Wales figure of 9.8%.

AS level Religious Studies

- SACRE first analysed results of AS Level Religious Studies in 2016.
- The new WJEC GCE A Level specification was introduced in September 2016 with these first examination results in 2017 for AS Level.
- There is a significant decrease in the number of students who sat the AS Level examination compared to 2016.
- The overall % of A - E grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 67.6% which is significantly lower than in 2016 at 93.5%. Performance is lower than the Consortium figure of 76.4%.

- The overall % of A - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 35.3% which is significantly below the figure of 63.6% in 2016. Performance at A-C is below the Consortium figure of 40.2%
- The overall % of A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 0.0% compared to 12.9% in 2016. Performance at A grade in the Consortium figure of 7.1%

A level Religious Studies

- 2017 saw a drop in entries for A Level Religious Studies at 145 students from 14 schools compared to 179 candidates from 16 schools in 2016. This is comparable to 151 entries in 2015. The number of candidates who sat the examination across Wales is marginally lower at 1305 students in comparison to 1446 in 2016 and 1,441 in 2015.
- The 2017 % pass rate for grades A* – E increased significantly to 97.9% from 90.5% 2016. This is comparable to performance in 2015 when it was 98%. Performance is higher than the Consortium figure of 95.7 % but lower than the All Wales figure of 99.8%.
- The % pass rate for grades A* – C saw an increase to 73.1% from 67% in 2016 and 71.5% in 2015. Performance at A*-C is below the Consortium figure of 75.2% and the All Wales figure of 78.1%.
- 9.7% of students achieved A*-A grades in 2017. This is a decrease from 12.3% in 2016 and significantly below the performance in 2015 when 19.2% of students achieved A* - A grade. However, it remains higher than the performance of 2014 at 9.29%. Performance at A*-A is significantly below the Consortium performance of 18.9% and the All Wales figure of 18.2%.

Key Stage 3 Data

- Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE also consider the levels awarded by teachers to pupils at the end of key stage 3. Comparisons are made with previous performance in religious education. The data is sent to all secondary schools within the Local Authority.

End of key stage 3 levels are published in Appendix 5.

School Inspection Reports

- SACRE, with the LA's agreement and co-operation, receives reports from professional officers on standards and provision and reviews summary reports of inspection findings as well as Estyn surveys as they occur.
- During June 2017- May 2018 seven primary schools, one special school and one secondary school were inspected in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements.
- Whilst there were few direct references to religious education in the reports it was noted that one primary school promotes respect and tolerance and celebrates diversity successfully through whole school topics, such as Divali. Pupils develop a broad understanding of world religions through an appropriate range of planned activities. The school's link with a multi-faith ashram in west Wales is beginning to strengthen the pupils' appreciation and understanding of the wider world. In another school many pupils in key stage 2 engage well in enterprise projects such as designing and selling Christmas cards and bookmarks. Most pupils have a developing understanding of their global responsibilities, and sense of fairness and equality through their links with a school in Uganda. Another school helps pupils to recognise their global responsibility for making the world a better place through the study of different countries, cultures and faiths.

Letters were sent to each of the schools from SACRE acknowledging the respective good practice.

School Self-Evaluation

- SACRE had resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. During 2013–2014 two SACRE representatives agreed to share their self-evaluation with members. Members were supportive of this method of reporting schools' self-evaluation and expressed a wish that it continues to be shared with SACRE. However, during 2014–2015 the decision to request self-evaluation reports was being reviewed by the School Improvement Officers to determine if this was the LA's preferred method of monitoring. It was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not continue to use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of monitoring provision and standards in religious education.

3.3 Methods of Teaching, Choice of Teaching Materials, Teacher Training

Teaching Materials

- A wide range of teaching materials have been made know to schools by SACRE. Example of which are as follows:
 - **SACRE News Bulletins**
During 2017-2018 SACRE received a News Bulletin with articles and information relevant to the teaching of Religious Education in South East Wales. The News Bulletin has been produced by the consultant to SACRE, Paula Webber and Gill Vaisey who is an independent Religious Education Consultant and Vice Chairperson of WASACRE. SACRE encourages schools to submit articles exemplifying good practice to RE News.

➤ **Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 Resources**

All schools were informed of the 2017 Holocaust Memorial Day theme of “The Power of Words”. Schools were informed by SACRE that further information about the theme and free educational Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk – these include lesson plans, film clips, case studies, collective worship/assembly material and worksheets suitable for primary to post 16 students.

➤ **RE News**

Schools were advised that the formerly published RE News was now available to view on line at the following address: www.religious-education-wales.org

➤ **Guidance on the Withdrawal Clause**

SACRE distributed the WASACRE document Managing the Right to Withdrawal from Religious Education to all schools and SACRE

➤ **Farmington Scholarships**

Scholars are free to study any aspect of Religious Education they wish but preference will be given to applicants whose work can be seen to be of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools. The Scholarship will cover the cost of tuition, board and lodging where appropriate, essential local travel and, by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale.

School/home-based Scholarships may be taken in the form of day release, for instance for one day a week over a term or over the year or for continuous periods up to a maximum of 30 days.

University-based Scholarships may be taken as a block of up to eight weeks or in the form of day release up to 30 days.

For more information schools can visit www.farmington.ac.uk or E-mail: farmington@hmc.ox.ac.uk

➤ **Interfaith News Bulletins** were shared with schools

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-e-bulletin>

Information was shared on **Visit My Mosque**. In its 4th year Visit My Mosque, is a national campaign that has grown from strength to strength. In 2018 year there were over 200 mosques open across the country, with 12 Welsh mosques participating on Sunday 18th February. This was an opportunity for the wider community to visit their local mosque, meet the local Muslims, learn about the religion of Islam, ask questions and make new friends. Information was found on

<http://www.visitmymosque.org/about/> and shared with schools. Many of these mosques are open to visitors all year around.

A list of **free resources** for schools was also distributed these included suggested useful websites as was information on **visits and visitors** in South Wales was distributed to schools.

The Churches Together in Wales **CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN** was shared with schools <http://www.cytun.org.uk/index.html>. CYTŪN produces bulletins throughout the year.

3.4 **INSET**

Central South Consortium INSET - Due to the lack of take up of advertised courses and the subsequent need for cancellation, no RE courses were offered by the local authority via Central South Consortium this year.

SECTION FOUR

SUMMARY OF ADVICE ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Monitoring of collective worship has continued through a review of inspection report findings.

4.1 **School Inspection Reports**

During June 2017 - May 2018 seven primary schools, one special school and one secondary school were inspected in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. Estyn noted no instances of non-compliance with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship.

Where reference to the quality of collective worship is mentioned in inspection reports and a number of good features are highlighted. Acts of collective worship:

- enhance the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils well;
- enable pupils to understand the beauty of the world and how to live with each other successfully;
- promotes sustainable development and global citizenship effectively;
- provides pupils with worthwhile opportunities to reflect on their actions and how they affect others;

- promote respect and tolerance effectively;
- provide suitable opportunities for pupils to reflect on how they should treat others and to understand the diversity of the world.

It was noted that the quality of collective worship was too variable in one school.

SACRE wrote to all schools to acknowledge their good practice and to offer support.

4.2 School Self-Evaluation

SACRE had resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. During 2013–2014 two SACRE representatives agreed to share their self-evaluation with members. Members were supportive of this method of reporting schools' self-evaluation and expressed a wish that it continues to be shared with SACRE. However, during 2014–2015 the decision to request self-evaluation reports was being reviewed by the School Improvement Officers to determine if this was the LA's preferred method of monitoring. It was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not continue to use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of monitoring provision and standards in religious education.

4.3 Determinations

As last year, no applications were received from schools for determinations to be made on the lifting of the requirements for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

SECTION FIVE

SUMMARY OF OTHER ISSUES

5.1 **WASACRE**

SACRE continues to support the work of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) and recognises the value of the body in promoting religious education and collective worship on a national basis. During 2017-2018 issues considered at WASACRE meetings have been fully reported back to SACRE. The RE Consultant to SACRE is also Secretary to WASACRE.

5.2 **National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE)**

The RE Consultant to RCT SACRE is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf. In this way SACRE is able to keep abreast of developments in Wales and play a crucial role in informing decisions and policies that affect religious education.

5.3 **Holocaust Education**

Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE was informed of the 2018 Holocaust Memorial Day theme 'The Power of Words' and that further information about the theme and free educational Holocaust Memorial Day resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk. SACRE resolved to inform schools about the availability of these resources and encourage them to commemorate HMD in some way. This was also highlighted in the SACRE News Bulletin.

5.4 **National Curriculum for Wales**

SACRE has received termly updates, through feedback from the Consultant to SACRE, Paula Webber, on the progress of the National Curriculum Review and its implications for RE in the curriculum. RE remains a statutory curriculum requirement from reception and will form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience. WG send a termly newsletter to SACREs outlining the developmental work of the Pioneer Schools in relation to RE in the Humanities.

5.5 **GCSE and GCE Specifications**

SACRE have been updated about the progress being made with regards to the implementation of the new GCE and GCSE specifications and the work of Lead Practitioners, via updates from the Consultant. The consultant also provided SACRE with feedback on relevant WASACRE presentations made by Lynda Maddock of the WJEC and a variety of Lead Practitioners.

5.6 **Statutory Requirements for RE**

In 2016-2017 the curriculum review had caused some confusion in schools regarding the status of agreed syllabuses. SACRE wrote to all schools reminding them that coverage of the programmes of study of the locally agreed syllabus remains a statutory requirement. It was brought to SACREs attention that the 2016 WASACRE survey on the impact of the WBQ on Religious Education showed that some secondary schools believed that delivery of the Global Citizenship element of WBQ was sufficient to cover the RE requirements. SACRE resolved to remind secondary schools that coverage of the Global Citizenship unit alone would not be sufficient to cover all aspects of the agreed syllabus KS4 programme of study. It asked all schools to confirm that they understood the requirements of the agreed syllabus and that they are meeting these statutory requirements in their schools.

5.7 **ESTYN Thematic Review and Updates**

SACRE were informed that members of WASACRE and NAPfRE had met with Estyn in June 2017. The meeting was a positive one and had mutual benefits as it had presented an opportunity for the delegation to gather information about the RE Thematic Review & New Inspection Framework and also raise concerns SACREs have regarding the meeting of statutory requirements with particular attention drawn to the provision for RE KS4. In this meeting Estyn outlined the personnel involved, process for identification of schools and the remit of the Thematic Review of KS2 & 3. The delegation outlined the ways that SACREs monitor RE in schools, including the analysis of inspection reports. They stressed the importance of Estyn identifying whether or not statutory requirements are being met when they conduct inspections so that SACREs can act upon such information. The delegation also referred to the particular issue of delivery at KS4 – especially those delivering through WBQ. Estyn was very supportive of the concerns raised and said that they would raise these issues with their inspectors. Estyn have been in regular attendance in WASACRE meetings during 2017-2018.

SACRE received feedback on the Estyn Thematic Report in the Summer Term of 2018 and the RE consultant will make a more detailed presentation to SACRE on the Report in the Autumn 2018 meeting. This will provide the opportunity for discussion and inform the SACRE Development Plan.

5.8 **Training of SACRE Members**

As part of its training for members SACRE proposed the following:

to keep members updated on developments in RE and collective worship through regular presentations to SACRE members. Paula Webber made a presentation this year on the Role and Responsibilities of SACREs and one on Curriculum Development.

SACRE is very appreciative of the opportunities offered through visits and presentations to become more informed on RE and Collective worship issues in schools and would like to extend their appreciation to all concerned

5.9 **Commission on Religious Education in England**

The Consultant presented the WASACRE paper "*The CoRE and its relevance to Wales: A paper for discussion*" and explained its purpose to Rhonddha Cynon Taf SACRE Members. The Religious Education Council of England and Wales are overseeing this Commission but the Commissioners are independent. They are a body made up of experts in Religious Education. It was highlighted that there were many issues that are relevant to Wales and the document should be noted. SACRE were informed that the Final Report of the Commission on Religious Education would be published in the Autumn Term

5.10 **Humanist representation on SACRE**

It was agreed in the Summer 2018 meeting to invite a Humanist representative to sit as a Group A representative on Rhonddha Cynon Taf SACRE. This decision was taken following consideration of the letter of guidance written by the Cabinet Officer for Education, Kirsty Williams, to WASACRE.

SACRE MEMBERSHIP

LA: 6 Places

Religions and denominations: 14 Places

Teacher Associations: 10 Places

ORGANISATION	NAME
Officers	Esther Thomas RCT Bernard Whittingham RCT Emma Griffiths RCT Clerk to SACRE Paula Webber RE Consultant
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Mark Adams
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Jeffrey Elliott
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Geraint Hopkins
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Jayne Brencher
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Margaret Griffiths
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	1 Vacancy
Church in Wales	Father Haydn England-Simon
Church in Wales	The Reverend Peter Lewis
Catholic Church	Wendy Lavagna
The Evangelical Movement of Wales	Mr Brian Rogers
Baptist Union of Wales	The Reverend David Brownutt
Bahá'í	Carol Adams
Jewish	Prof. David Cohen
Sikh	Mr Gurwinder Singh
Religion and belief representatives Group A	6 Vacancies
SHA	Dr Sue Mitchell
NASUWT	Mr Mathew Maidment (Bryncelynnog Comp)
NUT	Lynsey Parsons (Cwmlai Primary)
NAHT	Mr Rob James (YG Y Cymer)
Teacher representatives	6 Vacancies
Co-opted	Jane Ward
Co-opted	Darren Rogers
Co-opted	Mrs Lynda Davies

RECORD OF SACRE MEETINGS

Three meetings of SACRE were held during the 2017–2018 academic year:

- 6th November, 2017
- 7th March, 2018
- 18th June 2018

6th November 2017

- Welcome and apologies for absence.
- Election of Chairperson.
- Election of Vice Chairperson.
- Minutes of the last meeting on 26th June 2017.
- Action Points and Matters Arising.
- To receive and approve the SACRE Annual Report 2016–2017.
- SACRE Membership.
- Monitoring provision and standards - RE and Collective Worship.
 - Update - Letters and survey sent to secondary schools with regards to statutory requirements for RE;
 - School letters;
 - Update: Estyn Thematic Review of RE at KS2 and KS3 in 2017/2018.
- Curriculum development update.
- WG planning group including letters to SACREs from Welsh Government.
- WASACRE Commissioned Paper.
- Lead Practitioner work to support the implementation of the new RS GCSE.
- WASACRE:
 - draft minutes from WASACRE meeting 7th July 2017;
 - dates of future WASACRE meetings.
- To receive from members items and suggestions for SACRE News Bulletin.
- To receive information pack:
 - SACRE News Bulletin;
 - To note details of the Holocaust Memorial Day 2018;
 - Churches Together in Wales Policy Bulletin;
 - Inter Faith Network Bulletin;
 - Visits and Visitors;
 - RE Idea;s
 - St. Davids Cathedral.
- Humanist representation on SACREs.
- The Role of SACRE.

7th March 2018

- Welcome and Apologies.
- Minutes of the last meeting 6th November 2017 .
- Matters Arising.
- Presentation Paula Webber: The Role of SACRE.
- Update Spring RE News bulletin information briefings.
- Curriculum development update:

- To consider and respond to the letter and supporting documents to SACREs from Welsh Government ;
- WASACRE guidance document *Managing the Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education* and WASACRE questionnaire to schools.
- Monitoring Collective Worship and RE.
- Self Evaluation process.
- School inspection reports synopsis.
- KS3 data analysis.
- GCSE Examination data.
- WASACRE:
 - draft minutes from WASACRE meeting 10th November 2017;
 - nominations from SACRE members to join the WASACRE Executive Committee;
 - dates of future WASACRE meetings and confirm representation;
- Correspondence - WASACRE - Minutes Clerk.
- To confirm the date of the Summer SACRE meeting.

18th June 2018

- Welcome and apologies for absence.
- Minutes from the last meeting 6th March 2018.
- Matters arising and actions.
- SACRE Membership.
- To consider membership situation and vacancies.
- To receive and consider copy of letter from WG re. Humanist representation on SACREs.
- To receive from members items and suggestions for SACRE Summer News Bulletin.
- Curriculum development update.
- To consider and respond to the letter and supporting documents to SACREs from Welsh Government.
- The Commission on RE (England) and its relevance to Wales.
- Monitoring provision and standards - RE and Collective Worship:
 - school inspection reports synopsis;
 - Estyn Thematic Review and Update.
- WASACRE business:
 - draft minutes from WASACRE meeting Friday 9th March;
 - nomination for WASACRE Executive Committee (1 nomination for one place);
 - revised WASACRE constitution;
 - collation of Secondary School Survey Responses;
 - To note dates of future WASACRE meetings and confirm representation.

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH THIS REPORT HAS BEEN SENT

- All schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf
- DfES
- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- Directors of Education, all other Welsh LAs
- Wales Association of SACREs
- University of Wales Trinity St David
- Welsh National Centre for Religious Education-Bangor
- Central South Consortium
- Church in Wales (Diocese of Llandaff)
- The Roman Catholic (Archdiocese of Cardiff)
- Other Churches
- Association of Religious Education Teachers in Wales
- National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
- Religious Education Movement Wales
- Cytun
- Swansea Metropolitan University

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Examination Results Analysis 2017 - GCSE Religious Studies

	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	All Wales 2017
A* - A	24%	24.4%	20.0%	27.8%	24.7%
A* - C	67.1%	67.2%	66.2%	71.5%	68.3%
A* - G	97.2%	96.9%	97.9%	98.5%	97.5%
Entry	1030 students (38.5% of cohort) 16 schools	872 students (33% of cohort) 14 schools	999 students (38.8% of cohort) 16 schools	4789 students (50.8% of cohort)	12401 students (39.5% of cohort)

Examination Results Analysis 2017 - GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	All Wales 2017
A* - A	15.1%	17.4%	2.4%	7.5%	9.8%
A* - C	52.1%	52.5%	28.9%	34.3%	39.6%
A* - G	92.7%	91.6%	87.1%	86.9%	90.2%
Entry	1889 students (70.7% of cohort) 16 schools	1792 students (67.9% of cohort) 15 schools	868 students (33.7% of cohort) 16 schools & EOTAS	2607 students (28%)	9343 students (29.8%)

Examination Results Analysis 2017 - AS Level Religious Studies

	RCT 2016	Consortium 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017
A	12.9%	20.1%	0.0%	7.1%
A - C	63.6%	73.5%	35.3%	40.2%
A - E	93.5%	95.8%	67.6%	76.4%
Entry	217 students	740 students	34 students 12 schools	127 students

Examination Results Analysis 2017 - A level Religious Studies

	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	All Wales 2017

A* - A	19.2%	12.3%	9.7%	18.9%	18.2%
12A* - C	71.5%	67.0%	73.1%	75.2%	78.1%
A* - E	98%	90.5%	97.9%	95.7%	99.8%
Entry	151 Students 16 schools	179 students 16 schools	145 students 14 schools	513 students	1305 students

Rhondda Cynon Taf Key Stage 3 Year 9 Religious Education Levels 201

	All Pupils													% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
	NOR	% No level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional					
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2446	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	1.7	10.1	37.6	34.8	14.0	1.1	0.0	100.0	87.4	49.8	15.0	
Consortium	7539	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.1	1.4	9.2	34.0	35.7	16.8	2.1	0.0	100.0	88.7	54.6	18.9	
	Boys													% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
	NOR	% No level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional					
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1249	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	2.3	12.0	43.7	31.8	8.5	0.5	0.0	100.0	84.5	40.8	9.0	
Consortium	3852	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	1.9	11.8	40.4	33.1	11.1	0.9	0.0	100.0	85.5	45.1	12.0	

	Girls													% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
	NOR	% No level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional					
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1197	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.0	8.1	31.2	37.9	19.7	1.7	0.0	100.0	90.5	59.3	21.4	
Consortium	3687	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.0	6.5	27.4	38.4	22.6	3.4	0.1	100.0	91.9	64.6	26.2	

Examination Results Analysis 2018

GCSE Religious Studies-full course

	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	RCT 2018	Consortium 2018	All Wales 2018
A* - A	24.4%	20.0%	26.8%	28.8%	26.1 %
A* - C	67.2%	66.2%	70.4%	70.0 %	68.0%
A* - G	96.9%	97.9%	99.0%	98.1%	97.4 %
Entry	872 students (33% of cohort) 14 schools	999 students (38.8% of cohort) 16 schools	1012 students (40.8 % of cohort) 14 schools	4747 students (52.0 % of cohort)	11870 students (39.0 % of cohort)

Comments

- There was an increase in entries for the GCSE Religious Studies course in 2018 with 1012 candidates from 14 schools. In 2017 there were 999 students from 16 schools. There was also an increase in the All – Wales figure with 11870 candidates compared to 11051 candidates in 2016.
- The cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 was 40.8% which is an increase on the 2017 entry.
- The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 is 99.0% which is higher than both the 2016 and the 2017 figures. The Consortium and all Wales performances are slightly lower.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 is 70.4% which is higher than the figures in 2016 and in 2017. Performance at A* - C of 70.4% in RCT is on a par with the Consortium figure, but slightly higher than the all Wales figure.
- In 2018 the overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 26.8% which is an improvement on both the 2016 and 2017 figures. It remains slightly below the Consortium performance but slightly better than the All Wales figure.



Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Examination Results Analysis 2018 - GCSE Religious Studies
Short Course

	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	RCT 2018	Consortium 2018	All Wales 2018
A* - A	17.4%	2.4%	3.7%	4.8 %	8.1 %
A* - C	52.5%	28.9%	23.7%	34.6%	39.2%
A* - G	91.6%	87.1%	82.0%	84.5 %	87.8 %
Entry	1792 students	868 students		2108 students	8301 students
	(67.9% of cohort) 15 schools	(33.7% of cohort) 16 schools and EOTAS-education other than school	705 students (28.4% of cohort) 14 schools plus EOTAS	(23.1% of cohort)	(27.3% of cohort)

Comments

- In 2018 there was a noticeable decrease in the number of students sitting the GCSE Religious Studies short course with only 705 students from 14 schools in comparison to 868 students from 16 schools in 2017. Across Wales there continues to be a drop in numbers of candidates entered, with 8307 students in comparison to 11,666 students in 2016.
- In 2017 and 2018 schools used selective entry, whereas in 2016 some schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf entered almost a full cohort. The average cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 and 2018 is considerably lower than in 2016 when it was over 67 % of the cohort.
- The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 decreased to 82.0%. It is now lower than both the Consortium and all Wales figures.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 is 23.7%. This is a decrease from the 2017 figure of 28.8%. The Consortium figure and that for Wales have also significantly decreased this year. The figure of 23.7% remains well below the Consortium and the All Wales figures.
- The overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 of 3.7 % is an improvement in the 2017 figure. The 2018 performance is below the Consortium and the All Wales figures.



AS Level Religious Studies

	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	RCT 2018	Consortium 2018
A	0.0%	7.1%	5.0%	6.8%
A - C	35.3%	40.2%	37.5%	42.4%
A - E	67.6%	76.4%	87.5%	87.1%
Entry	34 students 12 schools	127 students	40 students in 11 schools	132 students

Comments

- The new WJEC GCE A Level specification was introduced in September 2016 with these first examination results in 2017 for AS Level.
- There continues to be a significant decrease in the number of students who sit the AS Level examination compared to 2016.
- The overall % of A - E grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 87.5% which is an improvement from the 2017 figure. Performance is similar to the Consortium figure.
- The overall % of A - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 37.5 % which is similar to the 2017 figure. Performance at A-C is below the Consortium figure.
- The overall % of A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 5.0% an improvement since 2017.

Examination Results Analysis

2018 A level Religious Studies

	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	RCT 2018	Consortium 2018	All Wales 2018
A* - A	12.3%	9.7%	22.4%	23.5%	22.0%
A* - C	67.0%	73.1%	74.8%	72.8%	77.1%
A* - E	90.5%	97.9%	97.2%	94.0%	99.6%
Entry	179 students 16 schools	145 students 14 schools	107 students 13 schools	400 students	1066 students

Comments

- 2018 saw a further drop in entries for A Level Religious Studies at 107 students from 13 schools compared to 179 candidates from 16 schools in 2016. The number of candidates who sat the examination across Wales is lower at 1066 students in comparison to 1446 in 2016.
- The 2018 % pass rate for grades A* – E remained roughly the same as in 2017. Performance is higher than the Consortium figure but lower than the All Wales figure.
- The % pass rate for grades A* –C saw a slight improvement from 2017. Performance at A*-C is similar to the Consortium figure but slightly below the All Wales figure.
- 22.4 % of students achieved A*-A grades in 2018. This is a significant improvement from 2017. Performance at A*-A is on a par with the Consortium performance and the All Wales figure.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Key stage 3 data 2018

All Pupils	NOR	% No level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional	% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2193	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.1	9.1	37.1	34.9	15.9	0.7	0.0	100.0	88.6	51.5	16.6
Consortium	6668	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.2	1.3	8.6	36.6	34.6	16.3	1.6	0.1	100.0	89.1	52.5	17.9

Boys	NOR	% No level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional	% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1110	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.7	1.7	13.0	41.5	30.5	11.6	0.1	0.0	100.0	83.8	42.3	11.7
Consortium	3338	0.9	0.0	0.1	0.3	2.0	12.0	42.4	31.2	10.6	0.4	0.1	100.0	84.8	42.3	11.1

Girls	NOR	% No level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional	% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1080	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.5	5.2	32.6	39.4	20.4	1.3	0.1	100.0	93.8	61.2	21.8
Consortium	3327	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.6	5.1	30.7	38.1	21.9	2.8	0.1	100.0	93.6	62.8	24.8

Narrative

Please Note:

Teacher assessment is not moderated externally. Teachers arrive at judgements for each pupil using assessment information gathered during the course of key stage 3.

Exemplification material is made available to schools in order to moderate standards internally against the level description contained in the agreed syllabus.

L5+ is the figure for those pupils gaining a level 5 or above in Religious Education

L6+ is the figure for those pupils gaining a level 6 or above in Religious Education

L7+ is the figure for those pupils gaining a level 7 or above in Religious Education

NL means that no level was able to be awarded to those pupils

To note:

- At all levels, the local authority perform approximately in line with the consortium.
- Girls outperform boys at all levels, but the gap is widest at L6+.

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