



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**A virtual meeting of the CABINET will be held on
Thursday, 25th June, 2020 at 11.00 am**

Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 01443 424062)

Councillors 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, 23 June 2020.

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 interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. Any member wishing to speak must do so in accordance with the arrangements proposed by the Chair, for facilitating participation of non-committee members, in a virtual meeting. 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 approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21st May 2020 as an accurate record.

(Pages 5 - 10)

3. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

To receive the report of the Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication, providing the Cabinet with a 3 month work programme which includes the proposed list of matters requiring Cabinet consideration.

(Pages 11 - 24)

4. REVIEW OF LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES (SEBD) AND SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

To receive the report of the Director, Education and Inclusion Services, providing the Cabinet with the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of the proposal to enhance mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

(Pages 25 - 34)

5. PROPOSED EXTENSION AND VARIATION TO RCT CBC'S DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS

To receive the joint report of the Director, Legal Services, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services and the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services, which seeks Cabinet's approval in principal to extend and vary two Public Spaces Protection Orders related to dog controls within Rhondda Cynon Taf are due to expire on the 30th September 2020.

(Pages 35 - 64)

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

6. COUNCIL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS - SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY DURING CORONAVIRUS

To receive the joint report of the Chief Executive, Director of Prosperity and Development, Director of Corporate Estates and Service Director of Frontline Services, which updates the Cabinet on the action taken to continue to safely deliver key infrastructure and construction projects during the current COVID 19 pandemic to support businesses and help support the local economy.

(Pages 65 - 90)

7. SAFER PLACES - SOCIAL DISTANCING IN TOWN CENTRES AND PUBLIC PLACES DURING CORONAVIRUS

To receive the report of the Director, Prosperity and Development, updating Cabinet on the action taken to assist our community to maintain safe social distancing when visiting our town centres and parks during the current COVID 19 pandemic.

(Pages 91 - 102)

8. SAFER BUILDINGS - SOCIAL DISTANCING & OTHER SAFETY MEASURES IN COUNCIL OFFICES, SCHOOLS AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS AS THE LOCKDOWN IS LIFTED

To receive the report of the Director, Corporate Estates, updating Cabinet on the action taken to ensure the Council's buildings, including schools, can be opened safely to Members, staff, pupils and the general public maintaining safe social distancing and other appropriate safety measures during the current COVID 19 pandemic.

(Pages 103 - 140)

9. THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19

To receive the report of the Director, Finance and Digital Services, providing the Cabinet with an initial assessment of the financial implications for the Council arising from Covid-19.

(Pages 141 - 146)

10. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Smith', is written over a faint, circular official stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication

Circulation:-

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

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
David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Andy Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Derek James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 21 May 2020 at 3.30 pm.

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

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

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 N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Others in attendance

Councillor M Adams
Councillor P Jarman

121 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor R. Lewis declared the following personal interest in Item 3 of the agenda: "My partner works for Public Health Wales".

122 Minutes

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 13th and 20th February 2020 as an accurate reflection of the meetings.

123 The Council's Response to COVID-19

The Chief Executive introduced the report, which sought to provide the Cabinet with an update of the action taken by the Council as a result of the COVID 19 national emergency; along with an opportunity to discuss the reopening of services in the future, when social-distancing and self-isolation become the new normal. In turn, each officer from the Senior Leadership Team provided the

Cabinet with a comprehensive update in respect of the work undertaken within their service area in response to the pandemic.

The Group Director, Community and Children's Services took the opportunity to thank staff, who had been remarkable in supporting the vulnerable people of RCT and were continuing to work with internal and external partners. The Group Director advised that the position had stabilised slightly but highlighted the pressure on Children's Services due to an increase in Children Looked After numbers and the potential pressures of coming out of lockdown, when many staff are self-isolating or shielding. In respect of PPE and testing, the Group Director advised that the Council continued to provide support to all providers, which was working well. Prior to concluding, the Group Director was pleased to announce that the new Maesyffynnon Extra Care Facility had recently opened despite the current circumstances.

The Director, Education and Inclusion Services took the opportunity to thank the headteachers and school staff for working together during the unprecedented time. It was advised that there had been an increase in vulnerable learners accessing the HUB settings. Members learned that the previous week, 420 children accessed the Emergency Childcare Provision, 120 of which were vulnerable learners. It was explained that the Hubs were open seven days a week and would be open during bank holidays and the half term break to meet the demand for essential workers. The Director announced that on 1st June 2020, an additional 12 hubs would be opened due to the rise in demand, taking the total to 25 hubs. In respect of Free School Meal provision, the Director advised that all of the 9300 eligible children were accessing direct payments. Furthermore, the Director spoke of the Community Meals services for the elderly, which saw 635 people accessing daily meals at their homes and a further 413 frozen meals delivered each week to shielded vulnerable individuals who are unable to cook for themselves.

The Director, Prosperity and Development spoke of the restructured highways and cleansing maintenance regime, which has allowed the Council to rise to the high level of waste and recycling produced across the Borough, whilst continuing to respond to the repercussions of February's floods. The Director went on to speak of the business support available, which was outlined within the 'Prosperity' section of the report. He continued by emphasising that the safety of the public remains paramount, but that there was an opportunity to build upon the 'shop locally' slogan and for more manufacturing to take place in the UK and more local.

The Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services informed the Cabinet that approximately 11,000 residents of RCT were currently on the shielding list and that 1300 of them had been registered to be in receipt of Welsh Government food parcels. Furthermore, additional support was being provided to residents through the Council's food distribution centre and the Community Meals service. The Director took the opportunity to praise staff and community volunteers, who had helped residents in need of support varying from dog walking to food shopping and retrieving prescriptions from the pharmacy. In respect of contact tracing, the Director informed Members that a number of teams were being set up within the region to help support the initiative and prevent further transmission of the virus.

The Director, Finance and Digital Services paid thanks to the IT and Digital Teams for their rapid response in ensuring that over 3000 staff had been digitally

equipped to work from home during the pandemic, which meant that much of the Council's key back office work had been uninterrupted. The Director advised that Council Tax support had been awarded to an additional 900 households since the end of March, along with Free School Meal entitlement to over 400 additional pupils and £38M support in the form of business grants to over 3000 businesses. It was stated that the estimated financial impact of the pandemic was costing the Local Authority approximately £4.5M per month, but that a detailed update would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication provided the Cabinet with an update on the use of virtual meetings for the Committee meetings of the Council. The Cabinet were informed that although this was the first formal meeting to take place virtually, informal meetings had taken place between the Group Leaders, Chairs and Vice-Chairs, along with an informal Planning Committee briefing, all of which had been a success. The Service Director advised that the intention was to hold the first formal meeting of the Planning Committee on 4th June 2020 via the Zoom application, followed by formal meetings of Scrutiny. The Service Director stressed that the incremental approach was supported by Members as it provides experience in using the application.

The Chief Executive concluded the update and stated that lessons had been learned from the past few months and that staff views were being sought to inform discussions in respect of future Council services and working arrangements.

The Deputy Leader took the opportunity to thank staff across all of the Council services and was pleased to note that the incremental roll out of virtual meetings had been well received by Elected Members and was confident in moving forward.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing thanked officers for supporting businesses across RCT during the difficult time and questioned what measures had been put in place in readiness for the future opening of the town centres. The Cabinet Member was informed that a plan had been developed to ensure an increased number of shoppers would be able to undertake social distancing measures when visiting the town centres; that guidance would be placed within town centres; and that benches would be temporarily blocked or removed to discourage people congregating.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Heritage Services was pleased to note that the Council's Community Recycling Centres would be reopening the following day, along with the two additional pop-up sites and asked what measures had been put in place to ensure Council staff are safe at the sites. The Cabinet Member was informed that each site would have two additional members of staff, one of which would be an Enforcement Officer; there would also be Civil Parking Officers at two of the sites; and there would be additional signage and social media posts to encourage residents to be respectful.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services and the Welsh Language acknowledged the dedication and commitment of staff to helping the most vulnerable in the community during such a difficult time. The Cabinet Member questioned what preparations were being made by the Council in the event of a second peak and rise in the number of cases in RCT. In response, the Group

Director advised that the Council has its own flexible resources, as well as good relations with providers and as such, following discussions were able to procure visors for staff in advance of the shift away from goggles.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services praised the staff within Children's Services for their rapid response and commitment to the children and young people within the Council's care and asked how the Council is utilising the hubs and working with schools to identify the young people most in need of support. The Cabinet Member was informed that a robust approach had been developed by Children's Services in conjunction with Education and Inclusion to ensure the vulnerable children had been prioritised. The Council were providing taxis for those who have an allocated social worker and support provided to those without allocated social workers where teachers had raised concerns for their wellbeing. In addition, approximately 3000 learners had been identified as 'digitally excluded' and as such, were being provided with suitable IT equipment in order to access the online learning.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Wellbeing and Cultural Services thanked the Community Services staff, along with the vast amount of volunteers for their support in helping the most vulnerable in RCT. The Cabinet Member requested further information on the future reopening of the Council's libraries and the progression of the Track and Trace programme. The Cabinet Member was informed that the library service recovery plan included investment in self-service devices, along with proposals in respect of click and collect services and expanding the at home library service to help maintain the safety of the residents. In respect of Contact Tracing, the Director advised that the aim for going 'live' was the end of May and that the challenge for the coming week would be to train the redeployed staff with the guidance issued by Public Health Wales.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services wished to place on record his thanks to the IT staff for the quick delivery of equipment and training to over 3000 staff to ensure home working during the pandemic. The Cabinet Member questioned whether this was an opportunity for the Council to be more digitally led in the future. It was advised that the positive culture shift would be included in the Council's Digital Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services praised the staff in the quick delivery of the hubs, the additional Free School Meal payments and the recommissioning of IT equipment for the digitally excluded pupils. The Cabinet Member referred to Welsh Government's recent statement and questioned whether there were plans in place for the phased reopening of schools. The Director informed the Member that any phased reopening of schools would be steered by Welsh Government, however two recovery groups had been established to prepare the local approach to ensure the safety of both the staff and children and would be updated in line with the wider recovery plan.

The Leader wished to place on record his thanks to officers and in particular, the frontline staff for their continuous work during the February floods and the onset of Covid-19. The Leader spoke of the roll out of grants and informed the Cabinet that RCT had been praised by the Federation of Small Businesses for the quick turnaround. It was also stated that the Bevan Foundation had also praised the Council for the quick delivery of weekly BACS payments for those eligible for Free School Meals. The Leader went on to speak of staff working in a social care setting and how they had gone over and above to support vulnerable

residents under such stressful circumstances. Furthermore, he spoke positive of the quick establishment of the Emergency Childcare Provision, Emergency Hubs and the support of teaching staff to help key workers remain in work.

In respect of the financial position, the Leader advised that a significant amount of money had been set aside by Welsh Government to support Local Authorities but stressed that loss of income was a huge issue.

The Leader thanked officers for their work on the Test and Trace provision, commenting that it will be vital going forward. In respect of the 'R' (rate of infection) Number, it was suggested that it could be close to 1 in RCT and therefore, the Leader voiced his support to the cautious approach taken by Welsh Government to easing the lockdown.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillors P. Jarman and M. Adams spoke on the item.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the action taken by the Council to date in response to the Covid 19 pandemic;
2. To request that a report estimating the potential financial impact of the Council's response to the pandemic is presented to the next Cabinet meeting; and
3. To request that further reports that set out how the Council plans to reopen key services and public areas such as town centres and transport hubs are presented to future Cabinet meetings.

124 The Leader's Scheme of Delegation

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication updated Members with the changes to the Leader's Scheme of Delegation and it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the contents of the Leader's Scheme of Delegation; and
2. To note that the Leader of the Council is able to amend the Scheme of Delegation relating to executive functions at any time during the year; and that an update of the 3A will be presented to Members at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

This meeting closed at 4.30 pm

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH JUNE 2020

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2019- 2020 EXTENDED MUNICIPAL YEAR.

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.

Author: Hannah Williams, Democratic Services (01443 424062)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present, for Cabinet Members' comment and approval, an update on the Cabinet Work Programme which sets out business during the extended municipal year, requiring consideration by Cabinet for the period June – August. The Work Programme will guide and direct the activities of other arms of the Council, as well as the Cabinet itself.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet approve the extended Work Programme for the period June - August 2019-2020 (with appropriate amendment where necessary) and receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet Work Programme should be prepared to cover a period of three months, with an updated version provided at the end of this period.
- 3.2 Following the amendments to the Leader's Scheme of Delegation at the Council AGM on the 25th May, 2016 it was agreed that going forward a detailed Cabinet Work Programme be published for a 6 month period, allowing sufficient notice and opportunity for consultation and / or pre scrutiny.
- 3.3 As a result of the Covid-19 National pandemic, the 2019 – 2020 Cabinet Work Programme has been extended for a period of three months and seeks to include information relating to potential matters likely to be considered by the Cabinet during this period.

- 3.4 The updated Work Programme is attached to this report for Members' consideration.
- 3.5 For ease of reference the work programme will also be available on the main Cabinet webpage for Members and members of the public information.

4. CABINET REPORTS

- 4.1 The proposed work programme is a rolling work programme for the extended 2019 - 2020 Municipal Year, which is reported to Cabinet on a 3 month cycle to allow for regular updates and amendments.
- 4.2 During the period outlined, the Work Programme may be subject to further change to take into account any additional/deletion reports, including any new consultative documents or legislative initiatives from the Welsh Government, which require urgent attention.
- 4.3 In accordance with paragraph 2.5 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution, any Member of the Council may also request the Leader to put an item on the agenda of a Cabinet meeting. There is also the ability for a resolution to be made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the full Council that an item be considered by the Cabinet, which could alter the forward Work Programme.
- 4.4 The 2019 - 2020 Cabinet Work Programme is published on the main Cabinet page of the Website to again assist Members of the public, by improving transparency. The Work Programme link can be accessed on the following '[Cabinet Work Programme](#)'.

5. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 The work programme has been compiled by members of the Senior Leadership Team in discussion with the relevant portfolio holder(s) and has been consulted upon with the relevant scrutiny committees in respect of pre-scrutiny.
- 5.2 As democratic functions of the Council resume virtually, the extended 2019/20 Work Programme will need to be considered when as part of the work programme planning of other committees.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

- 9.1 The Cabinet work programme encompasses all of the Council priorities as it indicates reports coming forward across the Directorates which may impact upon the Council's corporate priorities and others. It also embraces the Future Generations Acts as all future decisions taken by the Cabinet seek to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the County Borough.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Cabinet work programme for the extended 2019-2020 Municipal Year is attached.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Overview & Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH JUNE 2020

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2019- 2020 EXTENDED MUNICIPAL YEAR.

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.

Item: CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2019- 2020 EXTENDED MUNICIPAL YEAR.

Background Papers

- Paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

Cabinet Work Programme.

Forward plan of proposed Cabinet Business for the 2019/20 Municipal Year Extended

Specific Period: -June 2020 – August 2020.

(Summary of proposed Key Decisions coming forward for Cabinet Members consideration.)

N.B – The work programme is subject to change to take account of any additional / deletion of reports, including any new consultative documents or legislative initiatives from the Welsh Government, which require urgent attention.

Contact: Hannah Williams (Tel No. 01443 424062)

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
CHIEF EXECUTIVE							
JUNE							
Cabinet Work Programme	In line with the Council's Constitution there is a need to advise and publish the Cabinet Work Programme.	Continuous	Cabinet	Every 3 months June 20 September 20 December 20 March 21	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • SLT • Overview & Scrutiny
Council Infrastructure Projects - Supporting the Local Economy During Coronavirus	To update Cabinet on the action taken to continue to safely deliver key infrastructure and construction projects during the current COVID 19 pandemic to support businesses and help support the local economy.		Cabinet	June 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan Chief Executive – C Bradshaw		
The Financial Implications of Covid 19	To receive an update on the financial	As agreed by Cabinet	Cabinet	June 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • SLT

	implications of Covid 19 upon the Council19				Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview & Scrutiny
Safer Buildings - Social Distancing & Other Safety Measures in Council Offices, Schools and Other Public Buildings as the Lockdown is lifted	To receive an update on the action taken to ensure the Council's buildings, including schools, can be opened safely to Members, staff, pupils and the general public maintaining safe social distancing and other appropriate safety measures during the current COVID 19 pandemic.		Cabinet	June 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell		
JULY							
Council's Performance & Resources Report	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective	Continuous		Quarter 4 – July 2020 Quarter 1 – September 2020 Quarter 2 – November 2020 Quarter 3 – March 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report is presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (interim basis) following consideration by cabinet

Council Priorities (Recovery)	To consider the Councils Priorities for the year including recovery from the current Covid 19 pandemic (in line with the requirements of the Local Government Measure and the WFG Act)		Cabinet and Council	July 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
Corporate Asset Management Plan Interim Update	To brief members on progress with the plan		Cabinet	July 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	
Medium Term Financial Planning Arrangements – Interim Update	To provide Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements for 2020/2021 – 2023/2024		Cabinet	July 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • SLT • Overview & Scrutiny
Corporate Safeguarding	To receive information in respect of Corporate Safeguarding		Cabinet	July 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
ONGOING UPDATES							
The Council's Response to Covid-19	To formally receive a service update on the Council's service response to the Covid-19 pandemic	Continuous	Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan, Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • SLT • Overview & Scrutiny

Council Tax Premium on Empty Properties	To receive the consultation feedback		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies		
Brexit	To receive a verbal update in respect of Brexit		Cabinet	When appropriate	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
Corporate Plan – Updates on delivery	To receive reports outlining delivery and ambition of the Corporate Plan		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Chief Executive, C Bradshaw	Open	
Cardiff Capital Region - City Deal	The need to advise of the progress being made in respect of the City Deal		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Chief Executive, C Bradshaw	Open	
Staff Panel Report	To receive details of the proposals put forward by the Council's Staff Panel in respect of efficiency savings and smarter ways of working		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor M Webber & Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication - C Hanagan	Open	
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous	Specific to the Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	

Write off of irrecoverable Debts	Need to provide Cabinet with a position statement on irrecoverable debts		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Councillor M Norris. Director, Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Exempt	
Update on the work of the Climate Change Steering Group	To provide Cabinet Committee with an update on the recent matters considered by the Climate Change Steering Group	Continuous	Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Climate Change Champion – R Lewis Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	Climate Change Steering Committee
PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES							
JUNE							
Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) Review	To review the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) agreed in 2017, in-line with statutory requirements.		Cabinet	June 2020	Cabinet Members A Crimmings and R Lewis Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler, Director Public Health – Mr Paul Mee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • SLT
Safer Places – Social Distancing in Town Centres and Public Places During Coronavirus	To update Cabinet on the action taken to assist our community to maintain safe social distancing when visiting our town centres and parks		Cabinet	June 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan and Councillor R Bevan Director – Prosperity, Development – S Gale		

[illegible]

Modernisation of Residential Care and Day Care for Older People – Consultation feedback	To receive the consultation feedback		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins, Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		Overview and Scrutiny Committee
SS&WB Board Development	To consider any updates as appropriate in respect of the SS&WB Board		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Regional Transformation Agenda	To receive an update on the regional transformation agenda		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		
Development of Community Hubs	To consider the development of Community Hubs across the County Borough		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor R Lewis Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services – P Mee	Open	
Extra Care Strategy	To receive update reports on the Councils progress in respect of delivery of the Extra Care Strategy		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Advocacy	To provide Cabinet with an update in respect of advocacy		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		

Cwm Taf MASH Annual Report	To receive the Annual report of the Cwm Taf MASH		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Social Services & Wellbeing Act	To provide updates as and when necessary on the Council's duties in respect of the Act		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Local Air Quality Management Reports	To provide details of the Local Air Quality Management Reports		Delegated Decision	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor R Lewis Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services – P Mee	Open	
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny
EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES							
JUNE							
Review of Learning Support Class provision for pupils with social, emotional, behavioural (SEBD) and significant	To receive consultation feedback and agree a way forward.		Cabinet	June 2020	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies		

additional learning needs (ALN)							
JULY							
RCT SACRE Annual Report	To receive the annual report of RCT SACRE		Cabinet	July 2020	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services - G Davies	Open	
ONGOING UPDATES							
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny
21 st Century Schools	To receive any updates in respect of the 21 st Century Schools Programme		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH JUNE 2020

REVIEW OF LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES (SEBD) AND SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR JOY ROSSER.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of the proposal to enhance mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT). It is proposed that as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, more flexible provision than the statutory Learning Support Classes proposed in the consultation should be offered to support those learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). This will also further support the Education Directorate's overarching strategic priority to build the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the needs of learners with SEBD.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1** Notes the information contained within the report
- 2.2** Agree to lapse the original LSC consultation process due to current Covid 19 restrictions and the impact upon statutory educational provision for the foreseeable future.
- 2.3** Agree to proceed with a proposal to provide funding for a two-year period for three English medium secondary schools to establish provision for learners with SEBD in Bryn Celynnog School, Ferndale Community School and Mountain Ash School.
- 2.4** Agree to progress with an amended proposal to provide funding for a two-year period to establish Welsh medium secondary school provision for learners with complex needs, including SEBD, in Ysgol Gartholwg.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To amend the original statutory proposal due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic to enable the Council to progress without delay to provide funding to four secondary schools to establish school-based provision to meet the needs of our most vulnerable learners in their local communities. This funding will improve the continuum of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision for pupils with SEBD in the County Borough and will enable us to meet key strategic priorities.
- 3.2 If approved, all schools will be required to submit detailed proposals for consideration outlining the proposed approach, perceived benefits and the preventative and collaborative elements to meeting the needs of vulnerable learners in our communities. Joint proposals with other schools will be encouraged to extend the potential reach of the funding.
- 3.3 To promote opportunities for developing more inclusive practice in our schools and to provide the resources needed to develop sustainable and bespoke provisions for learners with SEBD.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Significant changes are planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with SEN/additional learning needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act 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. This includes a statutory requirement to take all reasonable steps to create a bilingual system of support for pupils with ALN. The Act will be supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code. The current draft Code is based on the following principles:
- meeting the needs of pupils with ALN should be part of a whole school approach to school improvement;
 - pupils must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in the National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever this is feasible.
- 4.2 Members will recall that on 17th December 2019, Cabinet agreed that the Access and Inclusion Service should undertake a consultation on proposals to enhance LSC provision for pupils with SEBD within RCT during the spring term 2020. The consultation process was undertaken as part of statutory arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code for the period 10th January 2020 until 28th February 2020. In accordance with the Code, a Consultation Feedback Report would need to be approved by Cabinet and shared with stakeholders within 26 weeks of the closure of the consultation period.

- 4.3 Due to the impact of restrictions incurred by the COVID 19 pandemic at both a local and national level, it is not practical to continue to progress with the consultation process. The first step usually would be for Members to consider the consultation feedback; and then agree to proceed to the statutory consultation and, if in agreement, to progress to the opening of the new provision. Given the significantly short summer term, this process cannot ensure that the new provision will be available in September 2020. With the likely reduction in the number of school pupils attending school for a large part of academic year 20/21, it makes good sense to offer a flexible school run provision that responds to the needs of the pupils within a number of schools, rather than via the prescriptive statutory provision controlled by the Council.
- 4.4 On 24th March 2020, the Cabinet Member for Education, approved a delegated decision to fund a number of mainstream secondary schools to establish their own alternative curriculum provision (Step 4 provision) or pupil referral unit for learners with significant social, emotional and behavioural needs. The model describing the local authority's approach to managing learners' behaviour is outlined in Appendix 1. Step 4, is the fourth of five steps of the Council's behaviour management approach where a pupil's educational provision is provided in a local alternative provision or pupil referral unit led and managed by schools.
- 4.5 This proposal was to extend the earlier pilot and create provision to reduce the number of exclusions and improve attendance. A sum of £500k per annum for two years was set aside to encourage schools to apply to develop their own provision. Schools wishing to establish a Step 4 provision were required to submit a detailed business case which included a clear commitment to match fund so as to develop a sustainable and effective provision.
- 4.6 Despite, the closure of schools during the Covid 19 pandemic and the delegated decision only being made on 24th March 2020, four schools have submitted bids to develop their own Step 4 provision, which met the strict eligibility criteria. These four bids have been agreed in principle, but schools are required to revise the bids to take into account Covid 19, and the likely restrictions placed on the numbers of learners attending school in the autumn term 2020. Successful bids were received from Aberdare Community School, Pontypridd High School, Ysgol Nant Gwyn and Ysgol Cwm Rhondda.
- 4.7 As the learning support classes proposal which was also to increase the SEBD provision is unlikely to happen until the academic year 2021/22, approval is being sought to lapse/cease the consultation process and utilise the funding earmarked for the enhancement of LSC provision to further extend the alternative curriculum Step 4 provision. This will ensure other schools develop their own alternative curriculum by delegating funding to schools to build their capacity to meet the needs of learners with significant SEBD in their local community.

5. PROPOSAL

- 5.1 It is proposed to pool the £416,000 per annum originally set aside to fund the four Learning Support Classes for SEBD provision, as set out in the Cabinet Report of 17th December 2019, with the £500,000 funding allocated in the delegated decision of 24th March 2020, to extend the school based SEBD provision in as many schools as possible, to reduce the number of exclusions and improve attendance. Therefore, it is proposed that the Council initially works with the four schools that were being considered for SEBD learning support classes: Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School; Ferndale Community School; Mountain Ash Comprehensive School; and Ysgol Garth Olwg for a 2 year period to develop school-based provision to support pupils with SEBD, thus supporting the Council's strategic approach to improving the continuum of provision for vulnerable learners across RCT.
- 5.2 It is further proposed that other schools will be invited to bid for the remainder of the funding in the autumn term to establish their own provision after Christmas.
- 5.3 The schools will establish alternative curriculum provision or specialist provision suitable to accommodate the needs of learners with SEBD in their local community. This will improve opportunities for inclusive practice, enhancing the capacity of schools to meet increasingly complex needs in mainstream settings and reducing the demand for local authority led specialist SEBD placements.
- 5.4 With this additional investment will come high expectations that there will be:
- significant reductions in both fixed term and permanent exclusions;
 - reductions in-year transfer requests and managed moves;
 - reduced requests for secondary PRU placements;
 - improved outcomes for vulnerable learners; and
 - Improved attendance.

The success of schools in achieving these improved outcomes will be closely monitored and reviewed.

- 5.5 The additional provision in each school will be monitored and a report presented to Cabinet at the end of each year, setting out the findings of this new approach. This allows the Council to respond to the needs of those pupils with SEBD, and if necessary consider extending the provision to other schools or consulting on opening new LSCs as necessary. Given the changing needs of the pupils, it is important that all specialist provision is kept under review so that the additional resources available have the greatest impact on this group of pupils.

6. CASE FOR CHANGE

- 6.1 There is a clear need to reduce the number of school exclusions, improve the education prospects of young people susceptible to school exclusions and to

address the long-term costs and negative impact of exclusion on learner outcomes and their life chances.

- 6.2 Research conducted by Barnardo's, suggests that children with SEN are nearly 10 times more likely to be permanently excluded and seven times more likely than others to receive a fixed term exclusion. There is also a strong association between poverty and deprivation, with pupils eligible for free school meals being four times more likely to be permanently excluded from secondary school and three times more likely to receive a fixed term exclusion than their better off peers. For a few, exclusions may provide the short, sharp consequence that is needed, but for young people whose families are facing challenges exclusions can be detrimental. Exclusion can have an adverse impact on a young person's socialisation, physical and mental health. Repeat exclusions from schools for pupils who are already alienated can further exacerbate difficulties and rates of poor attendance and disengagement.
- 6.3 If we do not effectively meet the social, emotional and behavioural needs of pupils, the cost to young people will be reduced confidence, increased disaffection and poor qualifications and employment prospects in the long term. Permanently excluded children are 3 times more likely than their peers to leave school without qualifications and 37% times more likely to be unemployed.
- 6.4 Whilst exclusions have their place, the significant growth in RCT point to a need to intervene sooner and more effectively. Effective alternatives to exclusion are needed to intervene before the risk of exclusion escalates to a crisis level and the need for a PRU placement. The expansion of school-based provision would assist in strengthening the continuum of support available for some of our most vulnerable learners and replace the demand for more specialist provision.
- 6.5 In summary, the proposal for change provide a more efficient, inclusive model for addressing the escalating exclusion rates and incidents of challenging behaviour in RCT. Evidence clearly suggest that investing in early intervention and preventative approaches can reduce demand for the more specialist costly PRU placements and gives some of our vulnerable pupils the best chance of achieving success. It would also reduce pressures on the mainstream schools that are experiencing significant challenges in resourcing the support that is needed for pupils with the most complex needs.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No Equality Impact Assessment is required at the current time.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There are no consultation implications arising from the content of the report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no additional budget implications from the proposals set out in this report. The £416,000 referred to in this report to establish additional Step 4

provisions in secondary schools was previously set aside to fund the LSCs as set out in the report to Cabinet on 17th December 2019, and will be utilised to address the key priorities of the Council to reduce exclusions, address challenging behaviour within mainstream schools and increase the numbers of Welsh learners accessing specialist and bespoke provision to meet their SEN.

- 9.2 It is provisionally proposed that this funding will be made available from September 2020 until August 2022. However, the release date will be subject to school opening proposals, and all funding will be subject to the Education Directorate securing robust funding bids evidencing effective preventative and partnership approaches to reduce exclusions and the demand for more specialist PRU placements.
- 9.3 With this additional investment, it is anticipated that the demand for secondary specialist SEBD placements will diminish. This will enable funding for the most costly specialist SEBD placements, including PRU placements, to be redistributed to offset increased specialist placement costs. The capacity of the secondary PRU in RCT will be significantly reduced over time once the benefits of enhanced Step 4 provision across the County Borough, in addition to the existing LSC provision for SEBD, are realised.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with them receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for; the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources.
- 10.2 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 also requires the LA to ensure that SEN provision is kept under review. Sections 1:20 and 1:21 of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) also requires LAs to evaluate the effectiveness of school funding arrangements in supporting and raising the achievement of children with SEN.

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

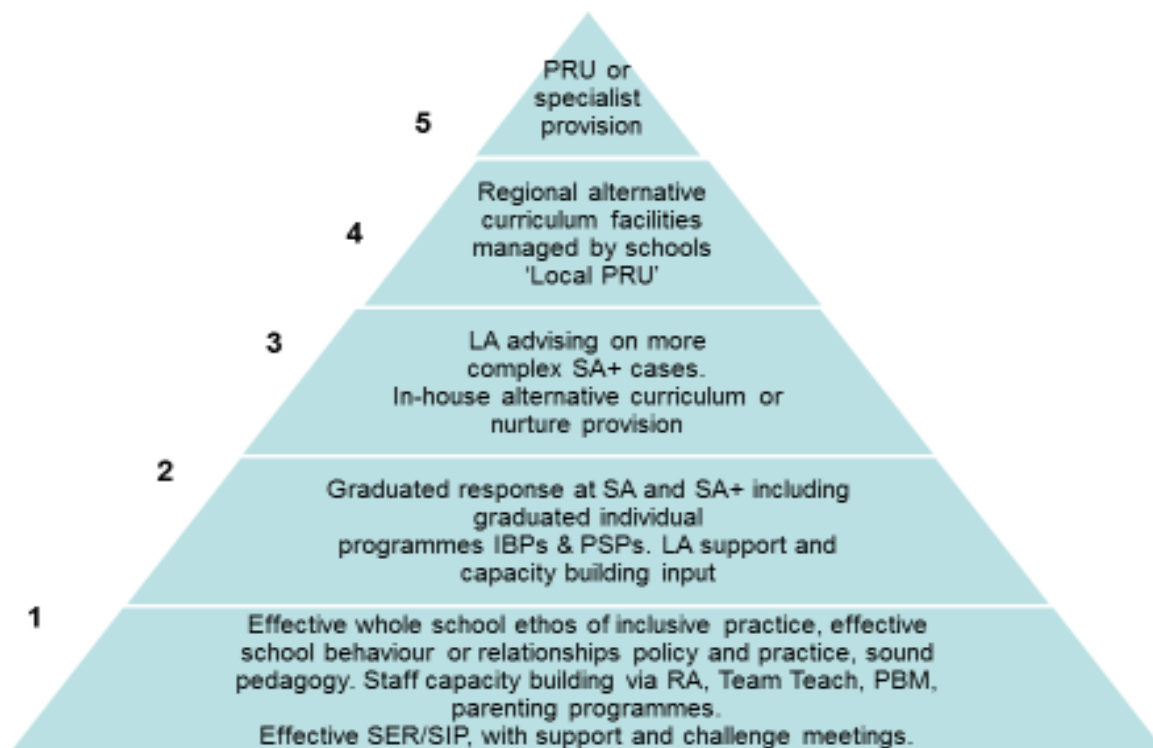
- 11.1 The proposals will ensure that two of the Council's three key priorities will be met. These include:
- Economy: Building a strong economy
 - People: Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone
- 11.2 The proposals will ensure that some of the Council's most vulnerable pupils will have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes.
- 11.3 Organising services so that they are focussed on early intervention and prevention is a key statutory requirement of the Wellbeing and Future

Generations Act and a key element of the Council's Corporate Plan. These proposals will ensure there is renewed capacity for early intervention and prevention thus minimising the need for statutory processes and intervention.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 RCT has an excellent range of LSC provisions attached to mainstream schools which includes provision for social, emotional and behavioural needs. In light of the requirements of the ALNET Act, concerns regarding rising exclusions and an increase in requests for SEBD placements there is a clear need to enhance provision for learners with these needs.
- 12.2 In summary, the measures implemented to date and proposals for change will provide an inclusive model for addressing the escalating exclusion rates and incidents of challenging behaviour in RCT secondary schools. Evidence clearly suggests that investing in early intervention and preventative approaches can reduce demand for the more specialist costly PRU placements and gives our most vulnerable pupils the best chance of achieving success in mainstream settings. This resource will also reduce pressures on mainstream secondary schools that are experiencing significant challenges in resourcing the support that is needed for pupils with the most complex needs.
- 12.3 Members are asked to consider the contents of the report and agree to the delegation of funding to strengthen the continuum of support for pupils with SEBD, and other associated needs.
- 12.4 The amended proposal continues to meet the core principles outlined in the draft Additional Learning Needs Code with an enhanced focus upon developing effective whole school approaches to meet the needs of our most vulnerable learners, including the enhancement of Welsh medium SEN provision.

5 Step Behaviour Support Model



Step 1 is characterised by robust whole school approaches to positive behaviour management and the consistent implementation of the school behaviour/relationships policy due to robust whole school training and effective leadership. Good classroom practice will be in place and clear, consistently applied behaviour management routines and good teaching and learning will be evident in classrooms. To support this, schools will be challenged and supported (as they will be throughout the stages) through self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes. In some cases, where there is cause for concern due to high exclusion rates, additional support and challenge meetings will be provided. External support for the school, pupil and family will be essential at higher levels but should not be overlooked at this step.

Step 2 links most closely to what should be provided at School Action and School Action Plus of the current Code of Practice. The main characteristics of this stage will be support for capacity building so that schools can offer a personalised graduated response to individual pupils. This may take many forms for learners who should continue to access mainstream education and the provision of individual or small group interventions aimed at further improving social, emotional and behavioural skills. This could include ELSA, Thrive, and restorative or learning coach interventions to target the development of identified social, emotional and behavioural skills. Interventions at this stage could also include access to an in-house inclusion provision

aimed at managing significant behavioural incidents in school and avoiding fixed term exclusions, with a focus placed on reflection and repairing harmed relationships.

Step 3 is characterised by in-house alternative curriculum support and/or 'revolving door' provision for pupils.

- At KS3 the aim should be that targeted pupils eventually return to mainstream provision but access short-term but intensive support, which could include nurture provision
- At KS4 the in-house alternative curriculum arrangements may be exclusive to a particular group of dis-engaged pupils.

Step 4 is where the most significant change in provision is envisioned with strategically situated Key Stage 4 Alternative Curriculum Centres (local PRUs) managed by school staff and potentially delivered in partnership with other providers. This provision should have a significant impact on school attendance and exclusions, and reduce the demand for step 5 provisions.

Focus could be placed on providing learners with a bespoke core curriculum offer delivered by subject specialists and access to more vocational training opportunities with external providers if appropriate. Any externally commissioned provider should have their registration status checks and all placements risk assessed. Good quality information about pupils' learning and behavioural needs should be provided and measures taken to ensure curriculum continuity and progression, robust attendance recording and engagement.

Step 5 is the intensive specialist end of the spectrum, where pupils who cannot manage a mainstream school curriculum or the Key Stage 4 alternative curriculum arrangements are placed. These pupils will be attending a learning support class provision for young people with significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties or the LA PRU.

A significant proportion of these pupils will be under statutory assessment or will have a statement of SEN. Some pupils will have been permanently excluded. Some pupils will move into this category of provision early in their school lives. In exceptional circumstances some learners will have escalated through the stages and others may move up or down the steps depending on their presenting needs.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25 JUNE 2020

PROPOSED EXTENSION AND VARIATION TO RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC'S DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND GROUP DIRECTOR PROSPERITY,
DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLORS A. CRIMMINGS AND R.
LEWIS**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The two Public Spaces Protection Orders related to dog controls within Rhondda Cynon Taf are due to expire on the 30th September 2020. At any point before expiry of these orders, the Council can vary or extend them by up to three years if it considers it necessary to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or recurring.
- 1.2 This report revisits the terms of the two existing orders and asks the Cabinet to approve, in principal the proposal to extend and vary those orders and to authorise officers to publicise the proposed orders and to consult as required by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve in principle, the proposal to extend and vary the two Public Spaces Protection Orders for dog control within Rhondda Cynon Taf, for a further period of three years from 1st October 2020, in the form set out at Appendix B1 and B2 of the report;
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, to authorise officers to publicise the proposed orders and to carry out a consultation exercise as required by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014; and
- 2.3 Subject to 2.1 and 2.2 above, receive a further report detailing the responses to the consultation and any recommendations for amendments to the proposed orders.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Dog fouling remains a significant concern for the Council and for those who live, work and visit the County Borough. Dog Fouling is unpleasant and is a serious risk to human health, particularly amongst children.
- 3.2 The Public Spaces Protection Orders in relation to dog controls has allowed the Council to introduce a range of reasonable and proportionate restrictions on the

use of publicly accessible land across the County Borough and helped control the harmful activities of irresponsible dog owners whilst allowing responsible dog owners to continue to exercise their dogs without undue restrictions.

- 3.3 Despite the introduction of the orders in October 2017 however there remains a minority of dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs or keep them under control. Therefore officers consider it vital the orders, which would ordinarily expire on 30th September 2020, are renewed for a further period in order to maintain the significant benefits the orders have had in relation to dog fouling and ensure appropriate powers remain in place to deal with the minority who continue to flout the laws.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Dog fouling is unsightly, unpleasant and can lead to toxocariasis in humans. Toxocariasis causes serious illness and even blindness. It is caused by a parasite that lives in dogs' digestive systems. Eggs are present in the faeces of infected animals. If infected material is ingested, the eggs hatch into larvae and can cause toxocariasis. The disease can be controlled if dog faeces are disposed of immediately in a responsible manner.
- 4.2 The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 (the 'Act') introduced provisions whereby a local authority can make Public Spaces Protection Orders ('PSPOs'). A PSPO is designed to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in an area. The behaviour must be having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the community, it must be persistent or continuing and it must be unreasonable. PSPOs are designed to ensure that the law-abiding majority can enjoy public space, safe from anti-social behaviour.
- 4.3 The majority of dog owners are responsible, clean up after their dogs and keep them under control. However, a minority of irresponsible dog owners create significant problems. The Council receives many complaints each year about dog fouling in public places. In addition, despite the introduction of the Dog Control PSPO's some of our playing fields need to be checked for dog fouling before they can be used; on occasion individuals wishing to use the playing fields for sport are doing this.

5. CURRENT DOG CONTROL PSPOs

- 5.1 This report revisits the terms of the following two Public Space Protection Orders which came into effect on 1st October 2017:

[RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL \(DOG CONTROL\) PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER 2017 \(attached at Appendix A1\)](#)

[RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL \(DOG CONTROL – ABERDARE PUBLIC PARK\) PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER 2017 \(attached at Appendix A2\)](#)

(the "Dog Control PSPO's")

- 5.2 This report reviews the impacts of the Dog Control PSPOs and considers the case for varying and extending them for a further three years, as permitted by the Act.
- 5.3 The introduction of the Dog Control PSPOs, following a public consultation exercise, created transparency and consistency within Rhondda Cynon Taf and gave authorised officers the ability to issue fixed penalty notices for offences that were not able to be previously enforced.
- 5.4 The activities prohibited by the Dog Control PSPOs are:
- (i) The prohibition of Dog Fouling in all Public Places within Rhondda Cynon Taf;
 - (ii) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog to keep that dog on a lead at all times in Cemeteries owned and/or maintained by the Council;
 - (iii) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog at all times to carry bags or other suitable means for the disposal of dog faeces;
 - (iv) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog to follow a direction given by an Authorised Officer, if they deem reasonably necessary, that a dog be put and kept on a lead in a Public Place within Rhondda Cynon Taf for such period and/or in such circumstances as directed by the Authorised Officer; and
 - (v) A prohibition excluding dogs from all Schools, Playgrounds and Marked Sports Pitches owned and/or maintained by the Council.
- 5.5 In relation to the Dog Control PSPO covering Aberdare Park there is a specific requirement for a person in charge of a dog to keep that dog on a lead at all times in Aberdare Public Park. This requirement is consistent with existing provisions that have been in place since 1866 (local bye law) and with the expectations of many users of the park. Further detail in respect of this particular requirement can be found in the report presented to Cabinet in [September 2017](#) prior to the commencement of this PSPO.
- 5.6 The Dog Control PSPOs were not put forward as a means of unduly restricting the exercising or recreation of dogs across the County Borough. The reason for making the Dog Control PSPOs was to address the detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality caused by the irresponsible behaviour of a small minority of dog owners; and to set out a clear standard of behaviour to which all dog owners were required to adhere.
- 5.7 The Council currently employs 20 officers who are authorised to enforce the Dog Control PSPOs in line with the Council's enforcement policy. The penalty for committing an offence of failing to comply with a PSPO without reasonable excuse is a maximum fine of level 3 on the standard scale (currently £1,000). Alternatively, the opportunity to pay a fixed penalty of £100 may be offered in place of prosecution.

6. EXTENSION AND VARIATION OF THE DOG CONTROL PSPOS

- 6.1 At any point before expiry of the Dog Control PSPOs the Council can extend them by up to three years if it considers it is necessary to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or recurring.
- 6.2 According to section 60(2) of the Act, before the time when a PSPO is due to expire, the local authority that made the PSPO may extend the period for which it has effect if satisfied on reasonable grounds that doing so is necessary to prevent-
1. Occurrence or recurrence after that time of the activities identified in the Order, or
 2. An increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities after that time.
- 6.3 Section 61 of the Act makes provision for the Order to be varied by increasing or reducing the affected area, or by altering or removing a prohibition or requirement included in the Order or by adding a new one. For an order to be able to be varied, the Council must be satisfied that, on reasonable grounds, the following two conditions are met.

The first condition is that:

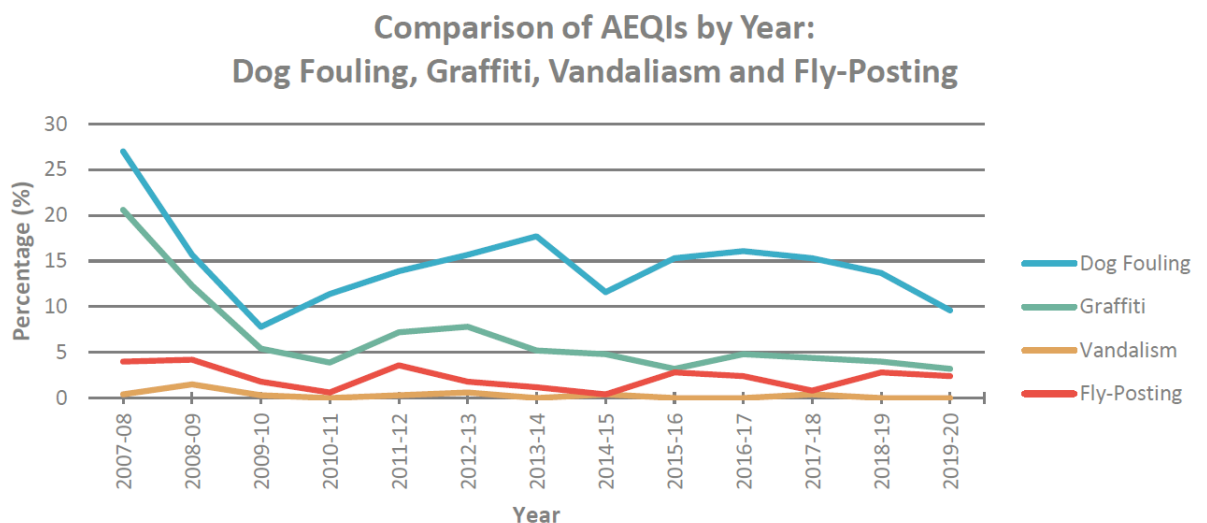
- a. Activities carried on in a public place within the Council's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; or,
- b. It is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.

The second condition is that the effect or likely effect, of the activities:

- a. Is or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature;
- b. Is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable; and,
- c. Justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.

- 6.4 Any such variations will need to be subject to public consultation.
- 6.5 A number of Community Councils have approached the Council since the commencement of the original Dog Control PSPO and enquired as to whether the order could be extended to cover particular areas (such as recreation fields) they have responsibility for. It is therefore proposed that certain specific areas of land used as parks and/or sports pitches be added to the proposed Dog Control PSPO covering land for whom responsibility lies with Llanharan Community Council; Pontyclun Community Council and Llanharan Community Council.
- 6.6 If the Dog Control PSPOs are to be extended this must be done before the time the Orders are due to expire, on 30th September 2020. In the event of the orders not being extended, they would lapse on 1st October 2020 at which point there would be no restrictions on dogs in Rhondda Cynon Taf (save for any enforceable local byelaws).

- 6.7 Officers consider it reasonable to assume that anti-social behaviour in regards to dog controls in the restricted areas would reoccur, and/or increase in the frequency and/or seriousness if the Orders are not extended. There would continue to be a positive effect on local environmental quality with the proposed extended and varied orders and continued enforcement against dog fouling and irresponsible dog owners.
- 6.8 [Consultation feedback](#) received prior to the introduction of the Dog Control PSPOs in 2017 highlighted that there was overwhelming public support for the introduction of the orders and prohibitions and requirements in relation to the control of dogs. Over 90% of respondents supported the Council's proposed approach to dealing with dog fouling and that dog fouling should be prohibited.
- 6.9 A report published by Keep Wales Tidy entitled 'An Analysis of Local Environmental Quality in RCT 2019/2020' showed that the cleanliness indicator for RCT was the highest recorded level to date. It further showed a decreased presence of dog fouling. For only the second time since 2007-2008 dog fouling was found on fewer than 10% of streets across the County Borough. From the table below it is possible to conclude the reduction correlates with the introduction of the Dog Control PSPOS in 2017-2018 with a clear downward trajectory in the instances of recorded levels of dog fouling (AEQIs – Adverse Environmental Quality Indicators):



- 6.10 Therefore factoring in the above it is therefore proposed to extend and vary the Dog Control PSPOs, for a further period of three years from 1st October 2020, in the form set out at Appendix B1 and B2 to this report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 In accordance with the Act if the recommended proposed extension and variation of the Dog Control PSPOs is approved in principle the Council is then required to consult the Chief Officer of Police for the area, community councils, community representatives the Council thinks it appropriate to consult and the

owner or occupier of land (not owned or occupied by the Council) within the restricted areas.

- 7.2 The Council is also required to publish the text of the proposed draft extended and (if relevant) varied order on its website.
- 7.3 It is therefore proposed the Council undertakes a comprehensive consultation exercise with the public, relevant bodies and other interested parties in accordance with the Act's requirements on the proposal to extend and vary the Dog Control PSPOs as outlined in the report.
- 7.4 Subject to that consultation exercise being initiated by Cabinet, officers would report the outcome of the consultation to the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in the first instance and thereafter to Cabinet for any final decision(s) on the proposals.
- 7.5 Given the current situation in relation to COVID-19 the Council's Consultation and Engagement Officer has developed a revised approach to consultation and how the Council can best engage with the public and key stakeholders during these times, in particular with those who would have ordinarily attended 'face to face' engagement events (should this approach be deemed prohibitive due to legislative restrictions and/or administrative/safety issues) as well as those who may digitally excluded.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Council must be able to demonstrate that a PSPO is a necessary and proportionate response to the problems caused by the activities of dogs and those in charge of them. The Council is required to balance the interests of those in charge of dogs against the interests of those affected by the activities of dogs. This must take into consideration the need for people, particularly children, to have access to dog-free areas and areas where dogs are kept under strict control, and the need for those in charge of dogs to have access to areas where they can exercise their dogs without undue restrictions.
- 8.2 In developing the original PSPO an Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken to ensure that:
- The Council meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties, and
 - Due regard has been taken of the likely impact of the decision in terms of equality and discrimination.
- 8.3 This exercise has been refreshed and it is considered the impact on residents, visitors and businesses is expected to continue to be positive, as these proposals should continue to act as a deterrent to irresponsible dog ownership. Taking into account the exemptions set out in 8.4 and 8.5 below there is no adverse impact on any other Protected Grounds from its adoption through to its potential variation and extension.

- 8.4 The provisions of the proposed Dog Control Orders would not apply to a person who:
- (i) is registered as partially sighted or blind, in a register compiled under section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948;
 - (ii) is registered as “sight-impaired”, “severely sight impaired” or as “having sight and hearing impairments which, in combination, have a significant effect on their day to day lives”, in a register compiled under section 18 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014;
 - (iii) has a disability which affects their mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, or ability to lift, carry, or otherwise move everyday objects, such that he cannot reasonably be expected to remove the faeces; or (iv) has some other disability, such that he reasonably cannot be expected to remove the faeces.
- 8.5 The provisions of the orders would not apply to a dog trained by a registered charity to assist a person with a disability and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.
- 8.6 For the purposes of the orders, a ‘disability’ means a condition that qualifies as a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.
- 8.7 Nothing in the Order shall apply to the normal activities of a working dog whilst the dog is working. This includes dogs that are being used for work in connection with emergency search and rescue, law enforcement and the work of HM Armed Forces and farm dogs that are being used to herd or drive animals.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Should the proposed orders be extended there would be a need to amend existing signage to reflect this however any associated costs would be met from existing budgets.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Section 60(2) of the Act states that before the time when a public spaces protection order is due to expire, the local authority that made the order may extend the period for which it has effect if satisfied on reasonable grounds that doing so is necessary to prevent—
- (a) occurrence or recurrence after that time of the activities identified in the order, or
 - (b) an increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities after that time.
- 10.2 An extension under this section—
- (a) may not be for a period of more than 3 years;
 - (b) must be published in accordance with regulations made by the Secretary of State.

- 10.3 A public spaces protection order may be extended more than once.
- 10.4 Section 61 states that where a public spaces protection order is in force, the local authority that made the order may vary it—
- (a) by increasing or reducing the restricted area;
 - (b) by altering or removing a prohibition or requirement included in the order, or adding a new one.
- 10.5 A local authority may make a variation that results in the order applying to an area to which it did not previously apply only if the conditions in section 59(2) and (3) are met as regards activities in that area.
- These are:
- The first condition is that—
- (a) activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or
 - (b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.
- The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities—
- (a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,
 - (b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
 - (c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.
- 10.6 A local authority may make a variation that makes a prohibition or requirement more extensive, or adds a new one, only if the prohibitions and requirements imposed by the order as varied are ones that section 59(5) allows to be imposed.
- The only prohibitions or requirements that may be imposed are ones that are reasonable to impose in order—
- (a) to prevent the detrimental effect from continuing, occurring or recurring, or
 - (b) to reduce that detrimental effect or to reduce the risk of its continuance, occurrence or recurrence.
- 10.7 Where an order is varied, the order as varied must be published in accordance with regulations made by the Secretary of State.
- 10.8 A local authority, in deciding whether to extend the period for which a public spaces protection order has effect (under section 60) and if so for how long and whether to vary a public spaces protection order (under section 61) and if so how must have particular regard to the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in articles 10 and 11 of the Convention.
- 10.9 A local authority must carry out the necessary consultation and the necessary publicity, and the necessary notification (if any), before extending the period for which a public spaces protection order has effect or varying it.

“the necessary consultation” means consulting with—

- (a) the chief officer of police, and the local policing body, for the police area that includes the restricted area;
- (b) whatever community representatives the local authority thinks it appropriate to consult;
- (c) the owner or occupier of land within the restricted area;

“the necessary publicity” means—

- (a) in the case of a proposed order or variation, publishing the text of it;
- (b) in the case of a proposed extension or discharge, publicising the proposal;

“the necessary notification” means notifying the following authorities of the proposed order, extension, variation or discharge—

- (a) the community council (if any) for the area that includes the restricted area.

The requirement to consult with the owner or occupier of land within the restricted area—

- (a) does not apply to land that is owned and occupied by the local authority;
- (b) applies only if, or to the extent that, it is reasonably practicable to consult the owner or occupier of the land.

In relation to a variation of a public spaces protection order that would increase the restricted area, the restricted area for the purposes of this section is the increased area.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

11.1 The proposals in this report are consistent with the priorities of the Council’s Corporate Plan, in particular *“Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work”*:

11.2 These proposals are also consistent with the Well-being Goals under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- *A healthier Wales – a society in which people’s physical and mental wellbeing is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.*
- *A Wales of cohesive communities – attractive, viable, safe and well connected communities.*

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Dog fouling remains a significant concern for the Council and for those who live, work and visit the County Borough and is a serious risk to human health, particularly amongst children.

- 12.2 The Public Spaces Protection Orders in relation to dog controls has allowed the Council to introduce a range of reasonable and proportionate restrictions on the use of publicly accessible land across the County Borough and helped control the harmful activities of irresponsible dog owners whilst allowing responsible dog owners to continue to exercise their dogs without undue restrictions.
- 12.3 Despite the introduction of the orders in October 2017 however there remains a minority of dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs or keep them under control. Therefore officers consider it vital the orders, which would ordinarily expire on 30th September 2020, are renewed for a further period in order to maintain the significant benefits the orders have had in relation to dog fouling and ensure appropriate powers remain in place to deal with the minority who continue to flout the laws.
- 12.4 Cabinet is now asked to consider initiating the necessary consultation to extend, and if appropriate vary the Dog Control PSPOs as outlined in the report.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

CABINET

25 JUNE 2020

**PROPOSED EXTENSION AND VARIATION TO RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC'S
DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND GROUP DIRECTOR PROSPERITY,
DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLORS A. CRIMMINGS AND R.
LEWIS**

Background Papers

- a) Public Spaces Protection Orders (Dog Controls) – Joint Report of Director of Highways & Streetcare Services & Service Director of Public Health & Protection in discussion with the relevant Portfolio Holders, Councillor A Crimmings and Councillor J Rosser: 22nd June 2017
- b) Public Spaces Protection Orders (Dog Controls) – Aberdare Park - Joint Report of Director of Highways & Streetcare Services & Service Director of Public Health & Protection in discussion with the relevant Portfolio Holders, Councillor A Crimmings and Councillor J Rosser: 28th September 2017
- c) Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 – Chapter 12
- d) Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: Reform of anti-social behaviour powers: statutory guidance

Officers to contact:

Paul Mee, Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services

Nigel Wheeler, Group Director Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL (DOG CONTROL) PUBLIC SPACES
PROTECTION ORDER 2017**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ('the Council') in exercise of its powers under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the 'Act') hereby makes the following Public Spaces Protection Order:

1. This Order may be cited as the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2017' (the 'Order').
2. This Order comes into force on 1st October 2017 and shall have effect and remain in force for a period of three years from that date.

OFFENCES

3. The effect of this Order is to impose the following conditions within Rhondda Cynon Taf:
 - (i) The prohibition of Dog Fouling in all Public Places within Rhondda Cynon Taf;
 - (ii) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog to keep that dog on a lead at all times in Cemeteries owned and/or maintained by the Council;
 - (iii) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog at all times to carry bags or other suitable means for the disposal of dog faeces;
 - (iv) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog to follow a direction given by an Authorised Officer, if they deem reasonably necessary, that a dog be put and kept on a lead in a Public Place within Rhondda Cynon Taf for such period and/or in such circumstances as directed by the Authorised Officer; and
 - (v) A prohibition excluding dogs from all Schools, Playgrounds and Marked Sports Pitches owned and/or maintained by the Council.
4. For the purposes of this Order:
 - 4.1 'Dog Fouling' means failing to immediately remove the faeces of a dog by a person who is in charge of that dog.
 - 4.2 Placing dog faeces in a receptacle on land which is provided for the purpose, or for the disposal of waste, shall be a sufficient removal from the land. Being unaware of the defecation (whether by reason of not being in the vicinity or otherwise) shall not be a reasonable excuse for failing to remove the faeces.
 - 4.3 'a person in charge of a dog' means a person who habitually has a dog in his/her possession at any time unless at that time some other person is in charge of the dog.
 - 4.4 'Public Place(s)' means any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right by virtue of express or implied permission.

- 4.5 'Authorised Officer' means a constable or a person authorised by the Council for the purposes of enforcing this Order.
- 4.6 For the purposes of 3(iv) above an Authorised Officer may only direct a person to put and keep a dog on a lead if such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent a nuisance, or behaviour by the dog that is likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person, or the worrying or disturbance of any animal.
- 4.7 'Rhondda Cynon Taf' means the whole area of the county borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf as shown in Schedule 1 to this Order.
- 4.8 'Cemeteries' means the areas of land as shown and detailed in Schedule 2 to this Order.
- 4.9 'Schools' means the areas of land as shown and detailed in Schedule 3 to this Order.
- 4.10 'Playgrounds' means the areas of land as shown and detailed in Schedule 4 to this Order.
- 4.11 'Marked Sports Pitches' means the areas of land as shown and detailed in Schedule 5 to this Order.
5. It is an offence for a person, without reasonable excuse, to engage in activity which they are prohibited from doing by effect of this Order or fail to comply with a requirement to which a person is subject by effect of this Order.
6. The Council is satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59 of the Act have been satisfied and, that it is in all the circumstances expedient and reasonable to make this Order for the purpose of prohibiting the above activities and introducing the stated requirements. The effect or likely effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, such as to make them unreasonable, and justifies the restrictions imposed by this Order.

EXEMPTIONS

7. The provisions of this Order do not apply to a person who:
- (i) is registered as partially sighted or blind, in a register compiled under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948;
 - (ii) is registered as "sight-impaired", "severely sight impaired" or as "having sight and hearing impairments which, in combination, have a significant effect on their day to day lives", in a register compiled under Section 18 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014;
 - (iii) has a disability which affects their mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, or ability to lift, carry, or otherwise move everyday objects, such that he cannot reasonably be expected to remove the faeces; or
 - (iv) has some other disability, such that he reasonably cannot be expected to remove the faeces.

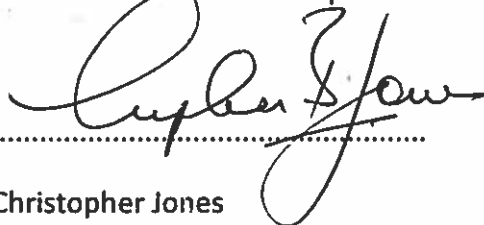
8. The provisions of this Order do not apply to a dog trained by a registered charity to assist a person with a disability and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.
9. For the purposes of this Order, a 'disability' means a condition that qualifies as a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.
10. Nothing in this Order shall apply to the normal activities of a working dog whilst the dog is working. This includes dogs that are being used for work in connection with emergency search and rescue, law enforcement and the work of HM Armed Forces and farm dogs that are being used to herd or drive animals.
11. Where a person in charge of a dog wishes to rely upon any of the exemptions set out in this Order the burden shall be on that person to prove they satisfy the requirements of the exemption being relied upon.

PENALTIES

12. A person who is guilty of an offence under this Order is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.
13. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by an Authorised Officer to a person who breaches this Order, offering them the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence by payment of a fixed penalty.

THE COMMON SEAL OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Was hereto affixed in the presence of



 Christopher Jones

Director, Legal & Democratic Services



AWDURDOD/ AUTHORITY	
Cynllun Dirprwyo/ Scheme of Delegation	
DYDDIAD/ DATE	
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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL (DOG CONTROL – ABERDARE PUBLIC PARK) PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER 2017

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ('the Council') in exercise of its powers under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the 'Act') hereby makes the following Public Spaces Protection Order:

1. This Order may be cited as the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (Dog Control – Aberdare Public Park) Public Spaces Protection Order 2017' (the 'Order').
2. This Order comes into force on 1st October 2017 and shall have effect and remain in force for a period of three years from that date.

OFFENCES

3. The effect of this Order is to impose the following condition within Rhondda Cynon Taf:
 - (i) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog to keep that dog on a lead at all times in Aberdare Public Park.
4. For the purposes of this Order:
 - 4.1 'a person in charge of a dog' means a person who habitually has a dog in his/her possession at any time unless at that time some other person is in charge of the dog.
 - 4.2 'Aberdare Public Park' means all land within the boundary of Aberdare Public Park as detailed in Schedule 1.
 - 4.3 'Authorised Officer' means a constable or a person authorised by the Council for the purposes of enforcing this Order.
5. It is an offence for a person, without reasonable excuse, to engage in activity, which they are prohibited from doing by effect of this Order or fail to comply with a requirement to which a person is subject by effect of this Order.
6. The Council is satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59 of the Act have been satisfied and, that it is in all the circumstances expedient and reasonable to make this Order for the purpose of prohibiting the above activities and introducing the stated requirements. The effect or likely effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, such as to make them unreasonable, and justifies the restrictions imposed by this Order.

EXEMPTIONS

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- (i) is registered as partially sighted or blind, in a register compiled under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948;
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- (iii) has a disability which affects their mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, or ability to lift, carry, or otherwise move everyday objects, such that he cannot reasonably be expected to remove the faeces; or
- (iv) has some other disability, such that he reasonably cannot be expected to remove the faeces.

8. The provisions of this Order do not apply to a dog trained by a registered charity to assist a person with a disability and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.

9. For the purposes of this Order, a 'disability' means a condition that qualifies as a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.

10. Nothing in this Order shall apply to the normal activities of a working dog whilst the dog is working. This includes dogs that are being used for work in connection with emergency search and rescue, law enforcement and the work of HM Armed Forces and farm dogs that are being used to herd or drive animals.

11. Where a person in charge of a dog wishes to rely upon any of the exemptions set out in this Order the burden shall be on that person to prove they satisfy the requirements of the exemption being relied upon.

PENALTIES

12. A person who is guilty of an offence under this Order is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

13. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by an Authorised Officer to a person who breaches this Order, offering them the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence by payment of a fixed penalty.

THE COMMON SEAL OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Was hereto affixed in the presence of

.....*Christopher Jones*.....

Christopher Jones

Director, Legal & Democratic Services



AWDURDOD/ AUTHORITY	
Cynllun Dirprwyo/ Scheme of Delegation	
DYDDIAD/ DATE	
ARDYSTIUYD GAN/ CERTIFIED	ASW

10646/7

SCHEDULE 1

Parc Aberdâr / Aberdare Park

Hysbysiad Cyfreithiol / Legal Notice

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

GORCHYMYN DIOGELU MANNAU CYHOEDDUS (RHEOLI CŴN) 2017

GORCHYMYN DIOGELU MANNAU CYHOEDDUS
(RHEOLI CŴN – PARC I'R CYHOEDD, ABERDÂR) 2017

DEDDF YMDDYGIAD GWRTHGYMDEITHASOL, TROSEDDU A PHLISMONA 2014

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (DOG CONTROLS) 2017

PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER
(DOG CONTROLS - ABERDARE PUBLIC PARK) 2017

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

Mae croeso i gŵn yn y parc hwn **O FEWN Y PARTHAU PRIODOL** ond rhaid ichi godi baw eich ci ar ei ôl a chadw'ch ci o dan reolaeth ar bob adeg.

Dilynwch y rheolau syml yma er budd pawb sy'n defnyddio'r parc.

1. Codwch faw eich ci ar unwaith a rhoi'r baw yn y biniau gwastraff sydd ar gael.
2. Gofalwch fod bagiau cario'r baw ci gyda chi ar bob adeg.
3. Rhaid cadw cŵn ar dennyn ar bob adeg.
4. Chaiff cŵn ddim bod ar y caeau chwaraeon na'r caeau chwarae, manau chwarae nac ar unrhyw nodweddion dŵr yn y parc.
5. Os bydd swyddog o'r Cyngor neu'r Heddlu yn gofyn i chi roi'ch ci ar dennyn, gwnewch hynny ar unwaith.

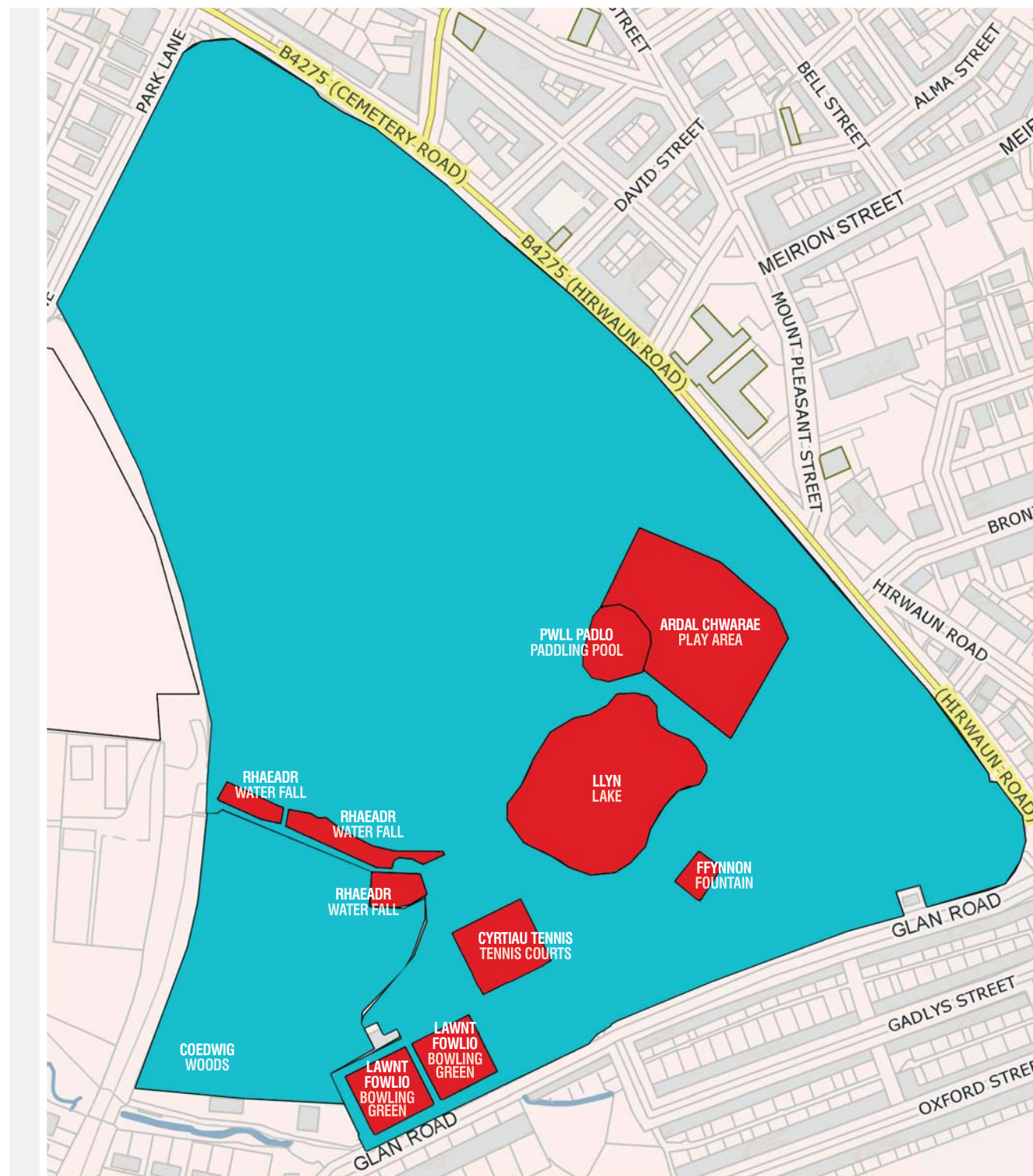
O beidio â dilyn y rheolau yma, mae'n bosibl y cewch chi hysbysiad cosb benodedig o £100.

Dogs are welcome in this Park **WITHIN THE APPROPRIATE ZONES** but you must clean up after your dog and keep your dog under control at all times.

Please follow these simple rules for the benefit of everyone who uses this Park.

1. Clean up after your dog immediately and dispose of the mess in the waste bins provided.
2. Always carry waste bags for your dog mess.
3. Dogs must be on a lead at all times.
4. Dogs are not allowed on the sports or playing fields, play areas or on any water feature in the Park.
5. If a Council or Police officer asks you to put your dog on a lead, please do so immediately.

Failure to follow these rules may result in a fixed penalty notice of £100.



- Dim Cŵn | No Dogs
- Cŵn ar Dennyn | Dogs on Leads

Hawlfraint y goron a hawliau cronfa ddata 2016 Arolwg Ordnans 100023458
Crown copyright and database rights 2016 Ordnance Survey 100023458

Am ragor o wybodaeth, ewch i:
<http://fymhethau.rctcbc.gov.uk/fyRhondda.aspx>

For further information, please visit:
<http://my.rctcbc.gov.uk/myRhondda.aspx>

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL (DOG CONTROL) PUBLIC SPACES
PROTECTION ORDER 2020**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ('the Council') in exercise of its powers under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the 'Act') hereby makes the following Public Spaces Protection Order:

1. This Order may be cited as the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2020' (the 'Order').
2. This Order comes into force on 1st October 2020 and shall have effect and remain in force for a period of three years from that date.

OFFENCES

3. The effect of this Order is to impose the following conditions within Rhondda Cynon Taf:
 - (i) The prohibition of Dog Fouling in all Public Places within Rhondda Cynon Taf;
 - (ii) A requirement for a person in charge of a dog to keep that dog on a lead at all times in Cemeteries owned and/or maintained by the Council;
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 - (v) A prohibition excluding dogs from all Schools, Playgrounds and Marked Sports Pitches owned and/or maintained by the Council.
4. For the purposes of this Order:
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 - 4.4 'Public Place(s)' means any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right by virtue of express or implied permission.

- 4.5 'Authorised Officer' means a constable or a person authorised by the Council for the purposes of enforcing this Order.
- 4.6 For the purposes of 3(iv) above an Authorised Officer may only direct a person to put and keep a dog on a lead if such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent a nuisance, or behaviour by the dog that is likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person, or the worrying or disturbance of any animal.
- 4.7 'Rhondda Cynon Taf' means the whole area of the county borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf as shown in Schedule 1 to this Order.
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6. The Council is satisfied that the conditions set out in Section 59 of the Act have been satisfied and, that it is in all the circumstances expedient and reasonable to make this Order for the purpose of prohibiting the above activities and introducing the stated requirements. The effect or likely effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, such as to make them unreasonable, and justifies the restrictions imposed by this Order.

EXEMPTIONS

7. The provisions of this Order do not apply to a person who:
- (i) is registered as partially sighted or blind, in a register compiled under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948;
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THE COMMON SEAL OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Was hereto affixed in the presence of

.....

Andy Wilkins

Director, Legal Services

SCHEDULE 1 – RHONDDA CYNON TAF AREA

SCHEDULE 2 - CEMETERIES

SCHEDULE 3 – SCHOOLS

SCHEDULE 4 - PLAYGROUNDS

SCHEDULE 5 – MARKED SPORTS PITCHES

SCHEDULE 6 – COMMUNITY COUNCIL SITES

DRAFT

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL (DOG CONTROL – ABERDARE PUBLIC PARK) PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER 2020

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9. For the purposes of this Order, a ‘disability’ means a condition that qualifies as a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.

10. Nothing in this Order shall apply to the normal activities of a working dog whilst the dog is working. This includes dogs that are being used for work in connection with emergency search and rescue, law enforcement and the work of HM Armed Forces and farm dogs that are being used to herd or drive animals.

11. Where a person in charge of a dog wishes to rely upon any of the exemptions set out in this Order the burden shall be on that person to prove they satisfy the requirements of the exemption being relied upon.

PENALTIES

12. A person who is guilty of an offence under this Order is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

13. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by an Authorised Officer to a person who breaches this Order, offering them the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence by payment of a fixed penalty.

THE COMMON SEAL OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Was hereto affixed in the presence of

.....

Andy Wilkins

Director, Legal Services

DRAFT

SCHEDULE 1

DRAFT

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH JUNE 2020

COUNCIL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS - SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY DURING CORONAVIRUS

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR A MORGAN)

Authors: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive; Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development; David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates; Roger Waters, Service Director of Frontline Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on the action taken to continue to safely deliver key infrastructure and construction projects during the current COVID 19 pandemic to support businesses and help support the local economy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider the information provided and notes the action taken to date to continue the safe delivery of priority £200m infrastructure and regeneration projects, supporting over 200 jobs, over the period of the COVID 19 pandemic;
- 2.2 Requests that a further report is presented to the following Cabinet setting out the actions the Council proposes to take, in partnership with Welsh Government, Cardiff Capital Region and private sector partners, to mitigate the economic impact of COVID 19 on the local and regional economy.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide a summary for Cabinet of the major infrastructure and regeneration work that has continued to be undertaken, safely in accordance with safe distancing and other health & safety guidelines, since the COVID 19 restrictions were imposed by the UK and Welsh Governments.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On 23rd March, the UK government announced unprecedented lockdown measures to stop the spread of the COVID 19 virus between households, changing the way in which everyone in the UK lives their daily lives. This resulted in an initial three week lockdown of the movement of people, forcing people to remain at home, other than key workers.
- 4.2 Clearly these measures have had a significant impact on the local economy. Whilst the UK and Welsh Governments have put in place a range of interventions to support businesses across a wide range of sectors, locally, the Council has continued to safely deliver key strategic projects across a wide range of service areas. The report sets out the comprehensive list of key projects continued to be safely delivered by teams from corporate estates, regeneration, housing, highways, transportation, and flood recovery and prevention that are important elements of the Council's wider infrastructure investment strategy and support our contractors during the current COVID 19 national emergency.
- 4.3 It has been important for the Council to continue with its investment plans in order to financially support our contractors; meet our contractual commitments and obligations to a range of organisations, create an effective working environment for businesses to operate as we recover from the current crisis; and to continue with our statutory maintenance and compliance responsibilities whilst the majority of the Council's built assets, such as schools and offices, are temporarily closed. This work, in turn, will play a vital role in the sustaining the local economy and employment in the area.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 5.1 Services across the Council have continued to focus on the development and delivery of key investment projects, and the management of our existing built assets during the current COVID 19 pandemic.
- 5.2 A key part of this work has involved the Council working proactively with contractors, and Registered Social Landlords to ensure projects continue to deliver on site as far as possible. Compliance with social distancing measures has played a major role in the delivery of projects, where contractors have had to adapt their working methods to ensure compliance with guidelines set by Government and the construction industry.
- 5.3 Examples of a number of these projects are given below and demonstrate that the Council has worked with contractors to ensure the projects have continued to develop and be delivered as far as possible. A

more comprehensive list of projects that have continued through the pandemic are set out in Appendix 1. The value of these projects is worth more than £200m and they have sustained more than 200 jobs in addition to securing hundreds more over the life of the projects and through the supply chain.

- 5.4 In addition to the projects listed below considerable officer time has been invested in planning for new infrastructure projects that are still in the design and planning stages such as the A4119 Dualling at Coed Ely, the Cynon Valley Gateway North Link and the Llanharan By-Pass. Storm Dennis created significant additional work for the Structures Team and work has continued to progress on developing options to replace a number of bridges damaged by the storm.
- 5.5 Work has also continued to stabilise Tylorstown Tip after the well-publicised land slide during Storm Dennis. The tip is currently in a stable condition after the Council's engineers and contractor installed temporary surface water drainage systems to remove flow of water from the tip to dry the materials/mountainside. This work was completed by April 2020. Design and investigations are ongoing, and further reports will be brought forward to Cabinet to provide options to restore the Rhondda Fach River to its original level and course.
- 5.6 Further examples of the progress that has been made by the Council over the period of the Covid pandemic are set out below.

Taff Vale/Llys Cadwyn (Contractor: Wilmott Dixon) - Total Project Cost - £38M (Contract sum)

- 5.7 Regular contact has been maintained with the Contractor and with the Tenant of Building A. With the implementation of appropriate site operating procedures to maintain social distancing and minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus, the Contractor has continued to operate with a reduced workforce since the start of the lockdown period. The availability of adequate resources in the form of labour, plant and materials has proved difficult which inevitably has resulted in programme delays. Positively the number of operatives on site returned to full capacity with approximately **85** operatives back on site by mid-May. A revised programme is in place with an anticipated completion date of mid-October.

Llys Cadwyn – Park Bridge (Contractor: Knights Brown) - Total Project Cost - £1.4M (Contract Sum)

- 5.8 Unfortunately the Contractor had no option but to close down the site at the end of March as its supply chain had temporarily shut down

operations. Regular engagement has been maintained with the contractor and the site was remobilised week commencing 11th May with a range of site operating procedures implemented to comply with social distancing requirements and to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus. There are currently **6** operatives on site. Due to the nature of the work this is the maximum number of operatives that can comfortably maintain social distancing whilst still being productive to complete the necessary tasks. Significant progress has subsequently been made on site since mid-May with the final sections of the bridge deck being installed and the final works being just weeks from completion.

Coedely Industrial Estate – New Commercial Unit (Contractor: John Weaver Contractors) - Total Project Cost - £3.9M

- 5.9 John Weaver Contractors have made steady progress since returning to site on 20th April, with new Site Operating Procedures introduced. This has resulted in fewer operatives allowed on site due to social distancing restrictions.
- 5.10 Roof cladding works are completed, with solar PV underway and some external drainage and brick work being undertaken. The Council has worked with the project & site management teams to ensure the site and materials on site, during the suspension of works, were safe and secure. Encouragement and support was given to ensure Government and Construction Industry advice and best practice was followed and full risk assessments carried out, prior to recommencement of works.

**Statutory Compliance in Council buildings (Contractors: Various)
Payments processed for payment - £1.8M (including orders issued to contractors prior to Covid-19 Pandemic)**

- 5.11 During the lockdown period, the majority of Council owned/occupied buildings, including schools, were closed as most staff were advised to work from home. Corporate Maintenance staff worked in conjunction with all Service Groups and local contractors to ensure the buildings maintained compliance in accordance with statutory requirements. During the period, more than 750 orders were issued to local contractors which allowed contractors to continue to operate without having to furlough all their staff.
- 5.12 Essential maintenance continued along with essential inspection and servicing of plant/systems by appointed contractors. Service and inspection programmes were also undertaken to ensure compliance with Legionella and Asbestos legislation.

Pontypridd YMCA (Contractors: Knox & Wells) - Total Project Cost - £4.4M

5.13 Construction started on the YMCA Building in February 2020 and has been primarily focused on demolition works. Despite COVID 19 restrictions, the scheme has made significant progress, with the Contractor adopting working methods to comply with guidelines set by UK Government and the construction industry and in consultation with their CDM advisor. The Council's Highways team has continued to work closely with the YMCA to ensure appropriate traffic management arrangements are in place. During the COVID 19 lockdown period, on average there have been 15 operatives present on site each week, including sub-contractors. Of the supply chain to date, four of the main suppliers have been from within RCT, with local builders merchants and hire companies being utilised on a regular basis.

5.14 In addition to this, Knox & Wells also rent a local empty business premises for site office and welfare facilities. The Council continues to work proactively with the YMCA to monitor and assess the impact of COVID 19 restrictions on the work programme and cost plan.

Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link (Contractor Walters / John Sisk joint venture) - Total Project Cost £20m

5.15 The site has continued to work through the pandemic, although social distancing has reduced the number of staff on site and had an impact on the programme. Delivery of precast concrete units and attenuation tanks have been delayed due to subcontractors/manufacturers being closed. As a result, the contractor is now looking to complete the works in September 2020, a delay of 8-12 weeks.

St Albans Bridge Replacement (Contractor Alun Griffiths Contractors Ltd (AGCL)) - Total Project Cost £2.4m

5.16 The construction of the replacement bridge continues on site after an initial 3 week closure at the beginning of the lockdown period. Whilst there has been some issues with suppliers, work has continued with the project scheduled to be completed in late Autumn 2020.

Castle Ifor Bridge Deck Replacement (Contractor AGCL) - Total Project Cost £500k

5.17 The replacement bridge deck works commenced in May 2019 but due to a flash flooding in late August 2019 the works, apart from removing the debris from the river, has been on hold due to constraints from Natural Resources Wales in respect of working in the river during the winter. The works has now recommenced on site in May 2020 and is scheduled for completion in October 2020.

Ferndale Community School – Pool Hall/Changing Room Refurbishment (Contractor: A&N Lewis Ltd) - Project Cost - £1.2M

- 5.18 A further phase of modernisation of the Ferndale Community School has been completed despite the contractor having to close the site due to the lack of its supply chain. The contractor returned to site in early May to complete the works by adopting new site operating procedures.

Sobel Leisure Centre – Changing Room Refurbishment (Contractor: A&N Lewis Ltd) - Project Cost – £278K

- 5.19 The project start was initially delayed but the Council worked with the contractor to agree a new start date to allow them to introduce revised site operating procedures to carry out the works safely. The project will now complete by the end of July.

Highways Investment Programme – Highways

- 5.20 The resurfacing and reconstruction to the carriageways and footpaths has continued during lockdown, although the emphasis has been on undertaking works that are not in built up areas due to the large amount of residents' vehicles being left in the streets and issues with social distancing. However good progress has been made by the Council's contractors and Streetcare team, in undertaking works.

Disabled Facility Grants - £3.7 million budget for 2020/2021

- 5.21 A number of new process and procedures have been implemented to support the delivery of the housing grants programme during the COVID 19 pandemic. An example of this is the Disabled Facilities Grants team:
- 5.22 The service has:
- Implemented an online process to continue to approve DFG's (whilst all staff are working agile), issuing work to framework contractors, in order to aid hospital discharge or to prevent a client from being admitted to hospital.
 - Allowed for PPE costs to be included within the cost of works, supporting contractors on the framework to be able to carry out works safely and no financial cost to themselves.
 - Deferred quarter 3 rebate costs to financially support the agency framework contractors during lockdown, as a number of these had to furlough their staff.
 - Directly supported local contractors, with 42% of contractors on the framework residing in RCT.
 - Introduced an online process to agree unforeseen work on live ongoing Grants through the use of photographs and video links, allowing work to proceed.

- Introduced an online process of valuing and agreeing interim payments, up to the value of 90%, on live ongoing Grants through photographs and video links allowing work to continue, financially support contractors.
- Implemented an online payment process ensuring all payments are made without delay for contractors.
- Received 31 new DFG referrals since lockdown, 6 of the referrals were identified as urgent by Occupational Therapists and therefore have been progressed and work completed by contractors.

Tonyrefail Community School (Contractor: Morgan Sindall) - Total Project Cost - £33.6M (Contract Sum)

- 5.23 The contractor was well prepared and responded effectively to the lockdown to mitigate a number of perceived risks in the very early stages of the pandemic. There have been challenges with supply chains however the contractor continued to source materials locally and from established national companies based in the area. Local and South Wales based subcontractors continue to be employed averaging **23** operatives on site with no loss in productivity even with the social distancing rules in place.

Treorchy Comprehensive School (Contractor: Kier Construction) - Total Project Cost - £12.8M (Contract Sum)

- 5.24 The contractor experienced a significant drop in labour supply in the first week of the lockdown. However, a skeleton staff maintained the operation and by week three, with the introduction of new site operating procedures, the labour supply increased to an average of **18** operatives on site. Materials and labour has been sourced locally where possible and progress on the project continued to achieve completion by the beginning of June.

Hirwaun Primary (Contractor: Morgan Sindall - Total Project Cost - £8.8M (Contract Sum)

- 5.25 The contractor was well prepared and responded well to the lockdown to mitigate a number of perceived risks in the very early stages of the pandemic. There have been numerous challenges with supply chains however the contractor continued to source materials locally from established national companies together with assistance from a local builders merchants based in Hirwaun. In the first three weeks of the lockdown, the staff on site averaged between 8 to 10 operatives daily however this has now significantly increased and in the last few weeks to an average of **26** operatives which is slightly ahead than was anticipated. Although some specialist supplies such as glazing remain challenging

the project remains on programme and continues to be closely monitored by the Council.

Garth Olwg Campus (Contractor: Vinci UK Ltd) -Total Project Cost - £4.3M

- 5.26 The main contractor had procured large amounts of material in order to commence major roof works at the site immediately before the lockdown. With the school closing to pupils the project team and the contractor took advantage and mobilised the local supply chain to provide ample labour supply to the site working with new site operating procedures which has resulted in works rapidly advancing ahead of the current programme. The Council has continued regular inspections of the site to allow the contractor to take advantage of the empty buildings currently on Campus.

Maesyfynnon Extra Care Total Project Cost - £9.15 M, Council Contribution £1.4 M

- 5.27 Linc Cymru Housing continued to work on the construction of the Maesyfynnon Extra Care scheme despite the pandemic following Government guidelines for safe working. The 40 bedroom Extra Care Scheme was completed and handed over to the Council for occupation on May 1st 2020. Adult Services is currently nominating tenants to take up apartments and the allocation and moving in process is currently underway.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality or diversity implications associated with this report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There is no requirement for consultation in respect of this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This report highlights a number of schemes and grants that are operational across the Council that will play a vital role in supporting the local economy recover from the COVID 19 pandemic. All these schemes and projects are budgeted for.

9. LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

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

- 10.1 This is an information report on progress in responding to the COVID 19 pandemic. No decisions are being taken in this report.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report has set out the actions taken to develop and sustain delivery of a wide range of key strategic regeneration, and housing investment projects during the current COVID 19 national emergency.
- 12.2 Good progress has been made to enable a number of schemes across the Council to continue to develop which plays a vital role in supporting the local economy recover from the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 12.3 The next step in the recovery stage from the pandemic is to work in partnership with Welsh Government, the Cardiff Capital Region and the private sector to develop investment programmes that supports the economy out of the projected severe recession, supporting local businesses and town centres and increases job opportunities, in particular youth employment via apprenticeships. Early indications from the UK and Welsh Governments is their focus will be on investing for the future, in particular tackling climate change, creating the infrastructure and investing in new ways of working and living that will reduce our carbon footprint. This will include an investment in housing, and the potential investment in making all homes more energy efficient and less reliant on carbon fuels.
- 12.4 As a Council we need to work with our partners in the public and private sector to support the UK and Welsh Governments investment strategies. Over the coming weeks and months, further reports will be presented to Cabinet taking into account future Government plans and how the Council can capitalise on these opportunities in the best interests of the communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Appendix 1

Long List of Council Infrastructure/Construction Projects that have Continued During the Coronavirus Emergency

Taff Vale/Llys Cadwyn (Contractor: Wilmott Dixon) - Total Project Cost - £38M (Contract sum)

Regular contact has been maintained with the Contractor and with the Tenant of Building A. With the implementation of appropriate site operating procedures to maintain social distancing and minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus, the Contractor has continued to operate with a reduced workforce since the start of the lockdown period. The availability of adequate resources in the form of labour, plant and materials has proved difficult which inevitably has resulted in programme delays. Positively the number of operatives on site returned to full capacity with approximately **85** operatives back on site by mid-May. A revised programme is in place with an anticipated completion date of mid-October.

Llys Cadwyn – Park Bridge (Contractor: Knights Brown) -Total Project Cost - £1.4M (Contract Sum)

Unfortunately the Contractor had no option but to close down the site at the end of March as its supply chain had temporarily shut down operations. Regular engagement has been maintained with the contractor and the site was remobilised week commencing 11th May with a range of site operating procedures implemented to comply with social distancing requirements and to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus. There are currently **6** operatives on site. Due to the nature of the work this is the maximum number of operatives that can comfortably maintain social distancing whilst still being productive to complete the necessary tasks. Significant progress has subsequently been made on site since mid-May with the final sections of the bridge deck being installed and the final works being just weeks from completion.

Coedely Business Unit (Contractor: John Weaver Contractors) - Total Project Cost - £3.9M

John Weaver Contractors have made steady progress since returning to site on 20th April, with new Site Operating Procedures introduced. This has resulted in fewer operatives allowed on site due to social distancing restrictions.

Roof cladding works are completed, with solar PV underway and some external drainage and brick work being undertaken. The Council have

worked with the project & site management teams to ensure the site and materials on site, during the suspension of works, was safe and secure. Encouragement and support was given to ensure Government and Construction Industry advice and best practice was followed and full risk assessments carried out, prior to recommencement of works.

Porth Transport Interchange (Contractor: Bond Demolition) - Welsh Government Local Transport Fund; £820,000 allocation for 2019/20; with the same amount secured from City Deal for 2020/21.

Whilst the demolition of Barclays Bank and the Alec Jones Day Centre has largely been completed; the demolition of Porth Farm Surgery – which was purchased earlier this year as part of the project – has temporarily paused. The UK's COVID-19 outbreak has created difficulties within the construction sector's supply chain prompting delays for the demolition contractor, Bond Demolition. However, with support from the Council and the outdoor nature of the work and small number of operatives required, have allowed the contractor to make continued efforts throughout the COVID-19 lockdown to complete the work.

Valleys Regional Park improvements at Dare Valley Country Park (Contractor: Davies Bros.) - Total Project Cost - £1,677,898

The Council has continued to work with the Contractor throughout the pandemic – regular site visits have been undertaken to inspect works and monitor progress. The contractor is self-contained in terms of public interaction and whilst there has been a decrease in labour on site due to social distancing (Approximately 4-6 employees on site per day) and delays in obtaining materials, work is progressing well and nearing completion.

Pontypridd YMCA (Contractors: Knox & Wells) - Total Project Cost - £4.4M

Construction started on the YMCA Building in February 2020 and has been primarily demolition works. Despite COVID 19 restrictions, the scheme has made significant progress, with the Contractor adopting working methods to comply with guidelines set by UK Government and the construction industry and in consultation with their CDM advisor. Highways have continued to work closely with the YMCA to ensure appropriate traffic management arrangements are in place. During COVID 19, on average there have been 15 operatives present on site each week, including sub-contractors. Of the supply chain to date, 4 of the main suppliers used have been from the RCT region, with local merchants and hire companies being utilised on a regular basis.

In addition to this, Knox & Wells also rent a local empty business premises for site office and welfare facilities. The Council continue to

work proactively with the YMCA to monitor and assess the impact of COVID 19 restrictions on the work programme and cost plan, which at this stage is minimal.

Scheme outputs:

- Business Premises created or refurbished (sqm) - 1512
- Number of Jobs accommodated - 75
- Enterprises accommodated - 9
- Gross Jobs Created - 8

Bingo Hall, Pontypridd (Contractor: Various) - Total Project costs: £2.2M (acquisition and demolition only)

The Council purchased Pontypridd Bingo Hall in March 2020. Since then, external consultants have progressed all commissioned survey/feasibility work and RCT Officers have continued to prepare tender documentation throughout the period for its demolition. A Project Board has been established and continues to meet via Teams on a fortnightly basis. The implications of social distancing will need to be captured during the tender processes for the Asbestos removal and Demolition contracts.

Redevelopment of Guto Square, Mountain Ash (Contractors: Landmark Surveys Wales, Bradley Associates, Lanes for Drains) - Total Project Cost: currently being established

The project has continued and been unaffected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. Designs have been amended further to incorporate the additional area of land created through the planned acquisition of 39 Oxford St and the Workingman's Club Annex. The acquisition of both properties are progressing well and nearing completion. Remedial works to the Workingman's Club are being developed and Ground Investigation works are continuing, to support the overall scheme design. A range of consultants are being used to deliver this work, including Landmark Surveys Wales, Bradleys Associates and Lanes for Drains. A pre-demolition assessment has been requested for both 39 Oxford St and the Workingman's Club Annex, this is being undertaken by Bradleys Associates. A financial cost plan is currently being developed for the scheme. The scheme is scheduled for completion in November 2020.

Pontypridd Property Improvement Programme (WG TRI Programme) - Total Project Cost: - £300K

The Prosperity and Development service leads on the delivery and co-ordination of Welsh Governments Targeted Invest Programme for the ten South East Wales authorities with a total budget of £10M. For RCT, Three scheme have commenced since the COVID 19 pandemic. The Council has worked proactively with grant applicants to ensure that approvals were put in place to allow projects to start on site as soon as

possible. The Council also allowed a degree of flexibility regarding payment arrangements and worked with applicants to resolve COVID 19 related issues e.g. restrictions that affected the ability of contractors to start on site and delays to the supply chain. All three projects are now progressing well and include:

- **9a Gelliwastad Rd – Contractor: Revive Contract Services** are based in Pontypridd. They have 8 employees, of which 4 are employed on this project. There are 4 subcontractors and 5 suppliers, all within a 15 miles radius of Pontypridd.
- **5 – 6 Ceridwen Terrace – Contractor: GKR** are based in Bedwas. They have 93 employees of which 4 – 15 are employed on this project. There are 5 subcontractors and 5 suppliers, all within a 15 miles radius of Pontypridd.
- **Ceridwen Terrace – Contractor: CADWAL** are based in Church Village. They have 6 employees of which 5 are employed on this project. There are 7 subcontractors and 11 suppliers all within a 15 miles radius of Pontypridd.

Housing Grants

In addition to the Housing development programme, the service has implemented a number of new process and procedures to support the delivery of its grant programme during the COVID 19 pandemic. The below list provide a summary of this work.

Disabled Facility Grants - £4 million budget for 2020/2021

The team has:

- Implemented an online process to continue to approve DFG's (whilst all staff are working agile), issuing work to framework contractors, in order to aid hospital discharge or to prevent a client from being admitted to hospital.
- Allowed for PPE costs to be included within the cost of works, supporting contractors on the framework to be able to carry out works safely and no financial cost to themselves.
- Deferred quarter 3 rebate costs to financially support the agency framework contractors during lockdown, as a number of these had to furlough their staff.
- Introduced an online process to agree unforeseen work on live ongoing Grants through the use of photographs and video links, allowing work to proceed.
- Introduced an online process of valuing and agreeing interim payments, up to the value of 90%, on live ongoing Grants through photographs and video links allowing work to continue, financially support contractors.

- Implemented an online payment process ensuring all payments are made without delay for contractors.
- Received 31 new DFG referrals since lockdown, 6 of the referrals were identified as urgent by Occupational Therapists and therefore have been progressed and work completed by contractors.

Empty Home Grants - £4.5million budget for 2020/2021

The Prosperity and Development Service leads on the delivery of the Empty Homes grant for the Valley's Taskforce authorities. In 2019/20, the Council was able to claim £3.1M of funding to bring empty homes back into use across the borough. To support the delivery of the scheme and to prepare for the launch of phase 2 in 2020/21 the service has:

- Implemented an online process to continue to approve EHG's (whilst all staff are working agile).
- Introduced an online process to agree unforeseen work on live ongoing Grants through the use of photographs and video links, allowing work to proceed.
- Introduced an online process of valuing and agreeing interim payments, up to the value of 90%, on live ongoing Grants through photographs and video links allowing work to continue, financially support contractors.
- Implemented an online payment process ensuring all payments are made without delay for contractors.
- There are a number of open Empty Homes Grant applications which have been approved and where the client would be offering work to contractors.

Houses into Homes Loan

To support the delivery of the Houses into Homes Loan scheme we have:

- Continued to issue loan application packs to referrals and those who have directly requested them. Since lockdown 27 application packs have been distributed.
- Continued to receive loan applications. Since lockdown 8 applications have been received.
- Introduced remote assessment of loan applications by requesting photos and video footage of properties.
- Continued to approve applications for Houses into Homes loans. Since lockdown 7 loans have been approved.
- Continued to issue payments to applicants in order for them to carry out the works on the property through contractors.
- Introduced a new process for payment of fees to enable fees to be paid online without delay.

Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link (Contractor Walters / John Sisk joint venture) - Total Project Cost - £20m

The site has continued to work through the pandemic although by the use of social distancing, etc this has affected outputs and the programme. Delivery of precast concrete units and attenuation tanks has been delayed due to sub contractors / manufacturers being closed which is on the critical path. The contractor is now looking to complete the works in September 2020, a delay of 8-12 weeks.

A4419 Dualling Coed (Hospital to Coed Ely)- Total Project Cost £16m

The project is in design stage with the preliminary design completed and detailed design ongoing. Despite the lockdown, the design has continued including meeting a critical stakeholder on site ie DCWW regarding interface with their plant. Land purchase negotiations are ongoing and preparations are currently underway for the Compulsory Purchase Order. Advance ecological mitigation works and sewer diversion works are planned in 2021 with main construction commencing in Spring 2022.

Cynon Gateway North (Aberdare Bypass Extension) - Total Project Cost £30m

The project is currently in preliminary design stage. Geotechnical site investigations were completed prior to lockdown. Ecological surveys have continued during the lockdown which feeds into the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Design work progresses coupled with Early Contractor Involvement which advises on the buildability, programme and cost of the project. A planning application for the project will be submitted late 2020.

Llanharan Bypass - Total Project Cost £16m

The project is currently in preliminary design stage. Geotechnical investigation was completed during the lockdown and ecological surveys continue which will form part of the EIA. Design work progresses with discussions ongoing with Network Rail regarding constructing a highway bridge over the main Cardiff to Swansea railway line. A planning application for the project will be submitted in late 2020.

Tips

The Highways, Engineering and Strategic Projects services have completed all the necessary inspections of Cat C and D tips and are inspecting the A and B tips. The service areas are working closely with

Welsh Government and the Coal Authority over a Welsh strategy for database, monitoring, maintenance, etc.

Tylorstown Tip (Contractor : Walters for phase 1-3) - Total Project Cost £10-15m

Tylorstown Tip suffered a significant landslip as a result of Storm Dennis resulting in 60,000 Tonnes of material travelling down the mountainside and filling the river valley below adjacent to the Rhondda Fach leisure centre. The tip is currently in a stable condition. Phase 1 ie installation of temporary surface water drainage systems to remove flow of water from the tip to dry the materials / mountainside was completed by April 2020. Design and investigations are ongoing, utilising an experienced earthworks contractor for the construction of phase 2 and 3 ie the removal of the material from the river valley and the restoration of the river to its original level and course. Currently it is anticipated that these works will commence late June and be complete by end of October. Phase 4 which is the stabilisation of the upper tip area, is being designed and is anticipated for commence on site during Spring 2021.

Highways Investment Programme - Structures

The Highways Investment Programme has continued during the lockdown period with a number of projects on site, completed and in the design process. A number of these are highlighted below with the other projects included within the Appendix.

St Albans Bridge Replacement (Contractor Alun Griffiths Contractors Ltd (AGCL)) - Total Project Cost - £2.4m

The construction of the replacement bridge continues on site after an initial 3 week closure at the beginning of the lockdown period. Whilst there has been some issues with suppliers work has continued with the project scheduled to be complete on site in late Autumn 2020.

Castle Ifor Bridge Deck Replacement (Contractor AGCL) - Total Project Cost - £500k

The replacement bridge deck works commenced in May 2019 but due to flash flooding in late August 2019 the works, apart from removing the debris from the river, has been on hold due to constraints from Natural Resources Wales in respect of working in the river during the winter. The works has now recommenced on site in May 2020 and is scheduled for completion in October 2020.

Highways Investment Programme – Highways

The resurfacing and reconstruction to the carriageways and footpaths has continued during lockdown, although the emphasis has been on undertaking works that are not in built up areas due to the large amount of residents' vehicles being left in the streets and issues with social distancing. However good progress has been made by the Council's contractors and Streetcare in undertaking works. A full list of works undertaken to date is provided in the Appendix and has included strategic roundabouts on the highway network as well as Stag Square, Treorchy.

Traffic Management and NRSWA Services

During the lockdown period the various statutory utility companies have been in constant liaison and dialogue about the undertaking of "difficult" repair works to their apparatus on strategic traffic sensitive routes. As a result of the low traffic numbers, the utility companies have been able to work at these various sensitive locations under the guidance and control of the Traffic and NRSWA teams.

The Traffic team has continued to deliver its capital programme of £160k during the lockdown period whilst also undertaking evaluations and costings to be supplied to Welsh Government in under two weeks for a bid of over £2m for highway modifications as a result of Covid19 and different modes of transport.

Storm Dennis – Structures

The Structures team has continued to deliver the following during the lockdown period as a result of Storm Dennis in mid February 2020:

- Scour assessments and surveys
- Bridge and retaining wall inspection and assessments
- Culvert surveys and assessments
- Removal of debris from rivers at bridge locations
- Localised repairs to structures
- Identification of repair works
- Commissioning of consultants for works

Some projects to note are:

- Berw Rd bridge – replacement
- Castle Inn bridge – replacement
- Campbell Terrace – unblocking of main culvert and repairs
- Ynysyngharad Park footbridge – specialist repairs

Statutory Compliance in buildings (Contractors: Various)

Payments processed for payment - £1.8M (incl orders issued to contractors prior to Covid-19 Pandemic)

During the lockdown period, the majority of Council owned/occupied buildings were closed as most staff were advised to work from home. Corporate Maintenance staff worked in conjunction with all Service Groups and local contractors to ensure the buildings maintained compliance in accordance with statutory requirements. During the period, more than 750 orders were issued to local contractors which allowed contractors to continue to operate without having to furlough all their staff.

Essential maintenance continued along with essential inspection and servicing of plant/systems by appointed contractors. Service and inspection programmes were also undertaken to ensure compliance with Legionella and Asbestos legislation.

Ferndale Community School – Pool Hall/Changing Room Refurbishment (Contractor: A&N Lewis Ltd) - Project Cost - £1.2M

A further phase of modernisation of the Ferndale Community School has been completed despite the contractor having to close the site due to the lack of its supply chain. The contractor returned to site in early May to complete the works by adopting new site operating procedures.

Sobel Leisure Centre – Changing Room Refurbishment (Contractor: A&N Lewis Ltd) - Project Cost – £278K

The project start was initially delayed but the Council worked with the contractor to agree a new start date to allow them to introduce revised site operating procedures to carry out the works safely. The project will now complete by the end of July.

Ynysangharad Memorial Park – Repairs following flood damage (Contractors: Various) - Project Cost – circa £1M

Extensive damage to numerous buildings due to the unprecedented flooding as a result of storm Dennis. The Council has continued to work with our insurers and their appointed assessors to maintain progress with repairs/reinstatement.

Tenders were produced and local contractors appointed to carry out priority works to the Rangers Hut, Golf Hut and Public Toilets which should all be complete by end of June in readiness for the summer holidays. Additional tenders have been worked on and local contractors will soon be invited to tender for the works to repair/reinstate the Café, Bowls Pavilion, Lido Buildings and Lido pools.

Ty Glyntaf Depot (Contractor – Brecongate Building Solutions) - Project Cost: £97K

This key site also suffered from extensive flood damage as a result of storm Dennis. Despite there being initial issues with supply of materials, the contractor has continued to work throughout the period whilst maintaining a safe 2M physical distance to allow the site to be reinstated allowing front line services to be delivered across the communities.

Tonyrefail Community School (Contractor: Morgan Sindall) - Total Project Cost - £33.6M (Contract Sum)

The contractor was well prepared and responded well to the lockdown to mitigate a number of perceived risks in the very early stages of the pandemic. There have been challenges with supply chains however the contractor continued to source materials locally and from established national companies based in the area. Local and South Wales based subcontractors continue to be employed averaging **23** operatives on site with no loss in productivity even with the social distancing rules in place.

Treorchy Comprehensive School (Contractor: Kier Construction) - Total Project Cost - £12.8M (Contract Sum)

The contractor experienced a significant drop in labour supply in the first week of the lockdown. However, a skeleton staff maintained the operation and by week three, with the introduction of new site operating procedures, the labour supply increased to an average of **18** operatives on site. Materials and labour has been sourced locally where possible and progress on the project continued to achieve completion by the beginning of June.

Hirwaun Primary (Contractor: Morgan Sindall) - Total Project Cost - £8.8M (Contract Sum)

The contractor was well prepared and responded well to the lockdown to mitigate a number of perceived risks in the very early stages of the pandemic. There have been numerous challenges with supply chains however the contractor continued to source materials locally from established national companies together with assistance from a local builders merchants based in Hirwaun. Labour supplies in the first three weeks of the lockdown averaged between 8 to 10 operatives daily however this has now significantly increased and in the last few weeks to an average of **26** operatives which is slightly ahead than was anticipated. Although some specialist supplies such as glazing remain challenging the project remains on programme and continues to be closely monitored by the Council.

Garth Olwg Campus (Contractor: Vinci UK Ltd) - Total Project Cost - £4.3M

The main contractor had procured large amounts of material in order to commence major roof works at the site immediately before the lockdown.

With the school closing to pupils the project team and the contractor took advantage and mobilised the local supply chain to provide ample labour supply to the site working with new site operating procedures which has resulted in works rapidly advancing ahead of the current programme. The Council, has continued regular inspections of the site to allow the contractor to take advantage of the empty buildings currently on Campus.

Strategic Housing and Investment

To support the development of housing investment the Prosperity and Development Service has continued to liaise with RSL partners on new potential schemes, discuss scheme designs with private developers and architects, and support with the delivery of current schemes within the Social Housing Grant programme. The below list provides a summary of some of the **16** scheme that have been supported during the COV19 pandemic. The schemes are to be delivered over the next three years, delivering **191** units in total, with a total investment of **£20M**.

Hafod Housing

Lanelay Road, Talbot Green has experienced some delays, overall delays approximately 6 weeks however the site is now fully operational, with contractors on site and following social distancing guidelines.

Aberdare Girls School – scheme has remained operational throughout the pandemic with the contractors remaining on site, although progress was been hampered by social distancing guidelines and a shortage of some materials. Project was due to be handed over in April 2020, this has now been complete and properties will be let in June 2020.

Trivallis

Appletree Avenue, Dinas – scheme was delayed at the beginning of April but works are due to recommence on the 8th June. This delay was due to a lack of availability of sub-contractors, namely external ground workers required to construct roads and retaining walls.

Forge Lane, Pentre – was delayed as of 26th March but reopened on 4th May, where contractors are back on site following social distancing guidelines.

Black Lion, Aberdare – the scheme was delayed for a week as increased Health and Safety measures were put in place in line with Covid-19 guidelines. Works are continuing, contractors are on site following social distancing guidelines and at present there have not been any reported delays.

Pentre Hotel, Pentre – scheme was due to commence at the end of March but due to Covid-19 the main contractor paused operations. With support from the Council the development is due to recommence 15th June.

Crown Avenue, Ynyswen – works are continuing well and have not been stopped, contractors have remained on site following social distancing guidelines.

Cynon Taf Housing

Oxford Building, Mountain Ash – Contractor started onsite in May with support and advice from the RSL and Council. Work is progressing well with the scheme due to be completed by May 21.

PROGRESS – Strategic Projects

Strategic Investments and Projects; Project Management and Design Team

The project management team has continued to work on a variety projects during lockdown. There has been some challenges managing contracts and contractors locking down sites and then re-opening together with supply chain issues. The Team has continued to progress a significant Capital programme both funded from within Strategic Projects and working for other service areas, such as Prosperity and Development. Some of which have been indicated in the foregoing sections. A summary of all the current projects being progressed during lockdown is in Appendix A

Flood Risk Management Team

The Flood Risk Management team has continued to work on both projects and statutory duties. With the added challenge of dealing with the flood risk strategic planning, project development and damage repairs after Storm Dennis. The volume of priority and public correspondence remains high, and particularly difficult to deal with under lockdown conditions. A summary of all the current projects being progressed during lockdown is in Appendix B

The SuDs Approval Body (SAB) has continued to function at full efficiency other than face to face meeting. As a new service it has been set up to be fully digital and this has proved beneficial during lockdown. Site Inspections have only been carried out where absolutely necessary but with developers returning to site demand is growing.

The lead Local Flood Authority Team (LLFA) is liaising with WG and preparing strategic overviews and forward plans for the local Strategy review which after Storm Dennis, will present a timely opportunity. They are also progressing 28nr Flood Investigation Reports into the Storm Dennis Flooding and it is envisaged will be required to write 18 regulatory reports under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 after their completion. This will include main river flooding so are in contact with NRW for their flooding Investigation Reports.

The 2 major projects which were being developed for construction in 2020/21 prior to Storm Dennis have continued to be progressed through Storm Dennis and Lockdown.

Park Lane Flood Alleviation Scheme - Project Value: £500k

The scheme is currently out to tender and will alleviate flooding to both the Park Lane School and properties in the local area.

The project will use sustainable drainage techniques and removal of culverted watercourses to alleviate the risks and reduce the cost of routine inspection and maintenance.

The water will be throttled to create a basin/flood plain therefore reducing the peak flows downstream through Aberdare by as much as 40 – 50%. This water will be used to create a wetland habitat with linkage the Aberdare Park. Envisaged commencement August 2020.

Scheme Outputs:-

- 30 Properties benefiting from increased standard of protection
- Reduced flood risk to Park Lane School.
- Removal of high risk and maintenance culverts.
- Creation of wetland habitat.
- Walking routes/links to Aberdare park.

Cwmbach – phase 2 (Canal Road) Flood Alleviation Scheme - Project Value: £450k

The scheme is currently nearing completion of detailed design and will alleviate flooding to both the commercial premises and properties In the local area.

The project will use sustainable drainage techniques and overland flow routing into an overflow system. Envisaged Commencement September 2020.

Scheme Outputs:-

- 69 Properties benefiting from increased standard of protection
- Creation of overland flow interceptors.

- Overflow pipeline from the overflow interceptors

Maesfynnon Extra Care Total Project Cost - £9.15 M, Council Contribution £1.4 M

Linc Cymru Housing continued to work on the construction of the Maesfynnon Extra Care scheme despite the pandemic following Government guidelines for safe working. The 40 bedroom Extra Care Scheme was completed and handed over to the Council for occupation on May 1st 2020. Adult Services is currently nominating tenants to take up apartments and the allocation and moving in process is currently underway.

Pontypridd Extra Care (Former Magistrates Court) – Total Project Cost - £12.73m, Council Contribution £4.143 M

Construction work commenced on the project in July 2019, with the demolition of the former Pontypridd Magistrates Court, with the projected completion in June 2021. The Extra Care facility will offer 60 Beds along with a day care facility for other social care clients. Works have progressed diligently throughout the pandemic and the project is progressing with the concrete section of the substructure frame completed and work progressing on the lightweight steel framework for the above ground floors.

Bryn Pica Eco Park – Estimated Total Project Cost -£12.73m, Council Contribution £4.143 M

Initial clearance and enabling works undergoing and design work progressing through RIBA development stages.

Scheme outputs:

- Development of 4ha of land at Amgen Cymru Site
- Construction of 4 no industrial buildings arranged in 2 number buildings in 2 number pairs with integral office space and welfare.
- Premises created or refurbished- 6,000 square-metres
- Car parking for © 140 vehicles including 14 number EV charging points.
- Internal access roads.
- Biomass heat exchange facility

Design Works have progressed diligently throughout the pandemic and the completion of the RIBA Stage 2 report was presented in May and design progression is continuing with an expected commencement of an earthworks package in November 2020.

Bryn Pica HV Installation – Estimated Total Project Cost -£.35M

Tender package nearing completion.

Scheme outputs:

- Provide High Voltage electrical power and infrastructure to service new MRF facility.
- Containment works for future Eco Park project

Design Works have progressed diligently throughout the pandemic and pre-qualification of tendering contractors compete. Tender package to be issued w/e 12/06/2020 and projected site commencement August 2020 subject to Western Power agreement.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25 JUNE 2020

SAFER PLACES – SOCIAL DISTANCING IN TOWN CENTRES AND PUBLIC PLACES DURING CORONAVIRUS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR A MORGAN) & THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING (COUNCILLOR R BEVAN)

Author: Simon Gale

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on the action taken to assist our community to maintain safe social distancing when visiting our town centres and parks during the current COVID 19 pandemic.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Considers the information provided and notes the action taken to date in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 2.2 Request that the Group Director for Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services monitors the situation on a regular basis to ensure our town centres and public spaces are suitably safe, and in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s), introduces additional measures and/or enforces measures where necessary in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide a summary for Cabinet of the action taken since the COVID 19 restrictions were imposed by the UK and Welsh Governments and to prepare for the future re-opening of non-essential supplies and services, in particular within town centres.
- 3.2 To ensure that the Group Director for Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, expediently responds to introduce, change and/or enforce measures in town centres and public spaces where necessary in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On 23rd March, the UK government announced unprecedented lockdown measures to stop the spread of the COVID 19 virus between households, changing the way in which everyone in the UK lives their daily lives. This resulted in an initial three week lockdown of the movement of people, forcing people to remain at home, other than key workers. More recently, some of these initial measures have been eased and there is an expectation that further restrictions will be lifted as the response to the pandemic is reviewed by the Welsh Government on a three weekly basis.
- 4.2 At the start of the lockdown there was a significant drop in the number of people visiting our main town centres but over recent weeks there has been a gradual increase.
- 4.3 In discussing the latest review of the lockdown measures, the First Minister has given a clear indication to town centres that they need to be prepared for the re-opening of 'non-essential' shops potentially as early as the next 3 week review, on June 15th.
- 4.4 For Members' information, officers have been supporting town centre business throughout the coronavirus pandemic through the distribution of government grants and through dedicated business support. The services of our 'Stay Well @ Work' team have been made available to the numerous small business to offer support in these difficult times. Dedicated pages have been developed for our website providing a 'toolkit' for shops to support the safe reopening of our town centres.
- 4.5 Our parks have continued to be in use during the lockdown period and have been used by our communities as part of their daily exercise regime. Members will also be aware that Ynysangharad Park reopened to the public on 27 May 2020 following the completion of repair works necessitated by the Storm Dennis floods in February.
- 4.6 This report sets out the measures the Council is introducing in order to enable increased numbers of visitors to return to our towns and parks whilst still maintaining social distancing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The measures take account of the guidance issued by UK Government - *Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer Public Places – Urban Centres and Green Spaces* last updated on 13 May 2020.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 5.1 The advice from public health bodies remains that staying 2 metres apart reduces the risk of transmission of Coronavirus. The measures introduced in our town centres and parks enable the public to visit them in a way where social distancing can be maintained. Where the achievement of 2 metre social distancing is simply not possible, the

measures introduced do all that can reasonably be undertaken to reduce the risk.

5.2 The interventions have been planned on the basis of a 'signs and lines' approach and significant physical interventions and the closure of areas have been avoided wherever possible. The measures are designed to enable visitors to town centres and parks to exercise social distancing rather than to force it to happen and the continued cooperation of our communities in exercising social distancing will be critical in the success of the measures proposed.

5.3 The general principles of the 'signs and lines' approach is as follows:

Large banners at the entrance to our main town centres reminding of the need to stay two metres apart and alerting visitors that social distancing measures are in operation in the town (the signs are designed to demonstrate 2m width)



Posters in all available shop windows reinforcing social distancing



Posters stuck to litter bins and bus shelters reinforcing social distancing



Signs applied to the pavement, 2 metres apart, to delineate safe queuing distances where significant queuing is anticipated.



Priority to oncoming pedestrians applied to pinch points in town centres and parks where otherwise social distancing cannot be achieved



Also under consideration:

Where street width allows, lines and arrows applied to the footway setting out one way walking lanes to minimise pedestrians brushing past each other.

Where footway width allows, lines applied to the pavement separating space for the free flow of pedestrians from the space available immediately adjacent to shops to allow for safe queuing

- 5.4 None of our town centres are the same and each presents their own individual issues in terms of observing social distancing due to their size, configuration, role, traffic and parking and levels of footfall. As such not all of the measures set out above have been introduced in all of the main town centres
- 5.5 That said, consistent advice has been deployed across all our main town centres in the form of banners, shop window posters and stickers on street furniture and further examples are shown below:



- 5.6 Benches within town centres have the potential to attract groups of people in conflict with the principles of social distancing. The benches in our centres are not of a uniform design with different styles and sizes depending on the area they are situated. Some are sited on their own, whilst others are in groups or even back to back, each of these configurations presents its own considerations in terms of social distancing conflicts.



- 5.7 There have already been examples where people have been gathering in large numbers on and around groups of benches at the expense of social distancing.

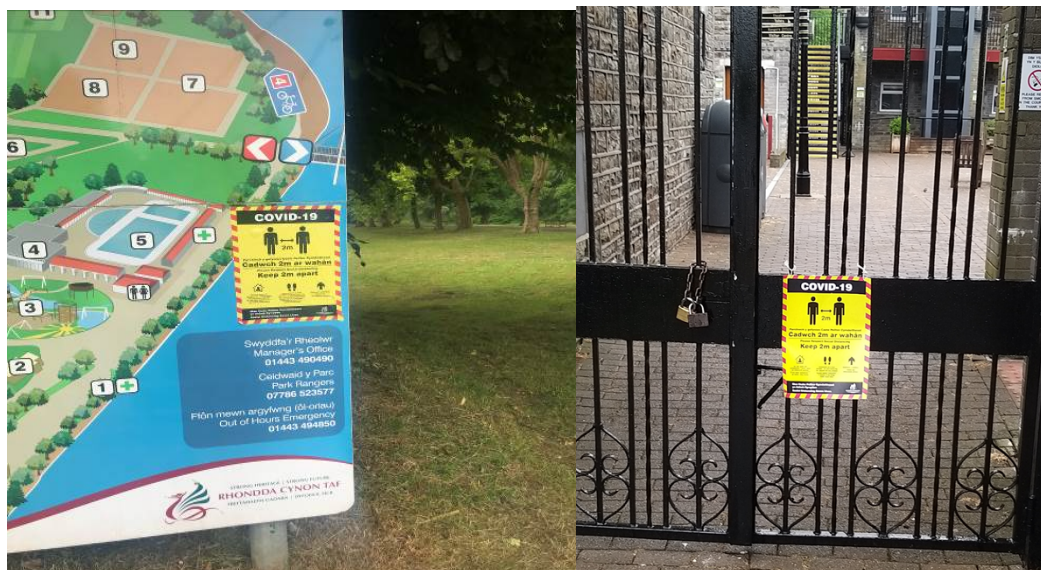


- 5.8 It is recognised that benches present an opportunity for the elderly or less able to have a short rest when they are visiting our town centres. However, at present the overriding need remains the health and safety of the whole community and as a Council we must do what we can to prevent the spread of the virus through enabling and promoting social distancing.
- 5.9 As such, the decision was made to remove some of these benches in order to prevent people gathering in close proximity to each other. However, as can be seen in the example below, to mitigate the effect that this decision will have, we are now leaving some benches open in areas of our Town Centres and are placing a 1 person/seat signs, which will allow residents to use these facilities when required, whilst still maintaining social distancing.



- 5.10 There is continued dialogue between officers and our main town centre contacts such as the BIDs and Chambers of Trade around the measures that have been introduced. Any issues arising and updates have been sent to all businesses in the main town centres. Officers are also engaging with organisations such as RNIB that represent those in our community that are most affected by the removal of benches and the introduction of social distancing measures.
- 5.11 The operation and effectiveness of the measures will be kept under constant review and if and where it is evident that social distancing is not being observed then additional measures will be considered and where necessary deployed. Alternatively, where lockdown restrictions are relaxed in the future and the risk of the spread of the virus can be managed, consideration will be given to the removal of some of the measures and the reinstatement of benches.
- 5.12 In terms of our bus stops and bus stations we have introduced signage and are developing proposals to increase the pedestrian access and waiting areas at Aberdare and Pontypridd bus stations to enable bus users to maintain social distancing whilst waiting, boarding or alighting buses and moving through the bus station area. The public toilets in both these bus stations re-opened on 8 June.
- 5.13 There is a specific issue at the Catherine Street Bus stops in Pontypridd and measures will be implemented over coming Sundays to re-assign road space to widen the footway to allow queuing and through movement of pedestrians to take place. These bus stops will be promoted for journeys out of Pontypridd to reduce pressure on the bus station itself. Consideration is being given to introducing similar measures at Porth.
- 5.14 In terms of our parks, play equipment has been fenced off as a means of restricting the spread of the virus but the remainder of the wider areas of the parks are open. The larger parks such as Ynysangharad and Aberdare which attract greater numbers of visitors have been assessed and predominantly are being managed through the 'signs and lines' approach.

- 5.15 Social distancing awareness posters are being displayed extensively throughout Ynysangharad Park and also placed in the other large parks such as Aberdare and Dare Valley (see examples below). Social distancing awareness signs are also being displayed at the entrance to all other parks.



- 5.16 Benches in our parks tend to be in ones and distant from the nearest next bench, and as such, there is little need to remove them to maintain social distancing. However, in Ynysangharad Park; there is potential for gatherings on the numerous benches around the bandstand. The bandstand area is easily cordoned off and it was therefore considered that this is the best way to maintain social distancing. There are a small number of picnic benches in the park and these have been removed to promote social distancing.
- 5.17 Enforcement Officers from Frontline Services were on hand to monitor the reopening of Ynysangharad Park in case it became the subject of large gatherings but other than a small minority, visitors to the park maintained the principles of social distancing.
- 5.18 As outlined in 5.2 significant physical interventions and the closure of areas have been avoided wherever possible. However, as visitor numbers to our town centres increase there are some issues and areas that need careful consideration with a view to introducing additional measures where necessary.
- 5.19 For example, all of our main town centres currently have traffic flows and parking through the main streets which does have the effect of compromising the ability of pedestrians to maintain social distancing. One option is to reallocate some of the vehicle carriageway and/or parking bays to allow for a wider space for pedestrians to move through the towns. Similarly, pedestrian crossings could become areas where pedestrians gather in close proximity as they wait to safely cross the road. It is possible to reprogramme the light sequences to give

pedestrians more priority (and therefore reduce groups queuing) at the expense of creating more queues of vehicle traffic. This will be addressed on a case by case basis.

- 5.20 The current view is that these measures should not be introduced yet but the issues should be closely monitored and then targeted interventions only used where there is a demonstrable need to protect the ability for visitors to our towns to safely socially distance.
- 5.21 One other issue that will need to be assessed when pubs and cafes are allowed to reopen is open air tables and chairs. On the one hand sitting outdoors may be the safest way for customers to use such premises, however tables and chairs in the street have the potential to take away space that would otherwise allow pedestrians to maintain a safe distance.
- 5.22 At this time it is not considered that a blanket policy for all of RCT would be appropriate as street furniture could work in some cases where street width allowed but be wholly inappropriate in others. Members may be aware that a street furniture licencing scheme is in operation in Pontypridd and it is recommended that licences to deploy tables and chairs in the street is suspended for the time being and instead the operators of the premises will be required to demonstrate how they propose to safely reintroduce street furniture before they are allowed to do so. Officers will work with traders in the other main towns to develop a system where street tables and chairs are only introduced where it is safe to do so.
- 5.23 Officers are also exploring opportunities where open space can be dedicated as an area where visitors to towns can consume food and drinks they have ordered from cafes and coffee shops as an alternative to using tables and chairs directly outside the premises.
- 5.24 Welsh Government has invited Expressions of Interest for Emergency Funding to deal with social distancing, particularly around re-assigning road space to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, and other complimentary measures. The Council has submitted a bid for over £2M of funding to introduce a number of potential measures;
- Implementing wide ranging 20mph limits across all town centres to make these areas safer for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Implementing wide ranging 20mph limits outside up to 20 schools, which will extend into surrounding communities to make these areas safer, and to enable more pupils to walk, cycle or scoot safely to school.
 - Piloting the closing of roads to traffic outside 6 schools in the county borough to reduce congestion at schools, enable social distancing and to limit the attractiveness of the car as an option for school travel.

- Introducing real-time passenger information at our two busiest bus stations to enable passengers to have more information and assurance regarding their journeys.
- Introducing facilities to enable social distancing at our two busiest bus stations, and at two other busy interchanges, to enable bus users to access public transport safely and minimise car use.
- Introducing enhancements to a range of cycle routes to encourage cycle use.

5.25 Subject to funding being made available, a number of these initiatives could be implemented relatively quickly.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An EIA was carried out to support the decision to remove town centre benches. The considerations are summarised in 5.6 – 5.9 above. Officers are engaging with relevant access groups to assist in keeping the measures under review so that they remain proportionate to the overriding need to protect the whole community against the spread of coronavirus.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 There has been continued engagement with town centre business groups. Overall feedback has been positive and the groups have welcomed the early engagement from the Council. Where specific issues have been raised this has been used to inform the ongoing deployment of the social distancing measures.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Additional funding has been necessary to develop and introduce the measures. This over and above expenditure will form part of our wider claim to Welsh Government for reimbursement of COVID related costs.

9. LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The measures have been deployed in consideration of the Coronavirus Legislation and guidance and the relevant highways legislation.

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

10.1 This is an information report on progress in responding to the COVID 19 pandemic. No decisions are being taken in this report.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 This report has set out the actions taken to develop and deliver of a range measures to enable increased numbers of visitors to our parks

and town centres to remain safe through social distancing whilst we remain in the current COVID 19 national emergency.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee –



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Officer to contact:

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH JUNE 2020

SAFER BUILDINGS – SOCIAL DISTANCING & OTHER SAFETY MEASURES IN COUNCIL OFFICES, SCHOOLS AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS AS THE LOCKDOWN IS LIFTED

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ESTATES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES (COUNCILLOR M NORRIS)

Author: David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on the action taken to ensure the Council's buildings, including schools, can be opened safely to Members, staff, pupils and the general public maintaining safe social distancing and other appropriate safety measures during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Considers the information provided and notes the action taken to date in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.2 Request that the Director of Corporate Estates monitors the situation on a regular basis to ensure as schools, services and offices reopen to staff, pupils and the general public, our schools and Council buildings are suitably safe, and in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s), introduces additional measures and/or enforces measures where necessary in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide a summary for Cabinet of the action taken since the COVID-19 restrictions were imposed by the UK and Welsh

Governments and to prepare for the future safe re-opening of Council buildings, and schools.

- 3.2 To ensure that the Director of Corporate Estates, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, expediently responds to introduce, change and/or enforce measures in schools and Council buildings where necessary in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On 23rd March, the UK government announced unprecedented lockdown measures to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus between households, changing the way in which everyone in the UK lives their daily lives. This resulted in an initial three week lockdown of the movement of people, forcing people to remain at home, other than key workers. More recently, some of these initial measures have been eased and there is an expectation that further restrictions will be lifted as the response to the pandemic is reviewed by the Welsh Government on a three weekly basis.
- 4.2 At the start of the lockdown all schools and the vast majority of Council offices were closed, including libraries, theatres, leisure centres, day centres, civic buildings in Clydach Vale, and other key sites where people gathered to work or provide major services. The buildings were closed in a controlled manner to ensure mechanical and electrical services were shut down/adjusted and security systems set to reflect the fact that the buildings would not be occupied. The only operational and administrative buildings that remained open were to continue to support, principally, the day to day social care, homelessness and frontline service provision. Working from home using remote technology has been the default position for the majority of staff.
- 4.3 However, as the lockdown is gradually eased in Wales, council services will need to adapt and consider how they respond to the next phase of the crisis. A number of areas that have not been operating over the course of the crisis will need to 'restart' in an adapted way, such as libraries and schools. Some will not be able to operate over the short to medium term, such as Leisure Services.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 5.1 The Council's approach to date has been to re-start services, such as the Community Recycling Centres, in a way that ensures the safety of staff and citizens, and working at all times working to stop the spread of the virus.

- 5.2 As part of the Council's approach to lowering the rate of transmission, the process of reopening services will be managed in a phased manner as part of a disciplined and coordinated Council wide process. Every service subject to a risk-based assessment, which will be discussed with the Trade Unions, to ensure that they can operate effectively and safely. This will cover all aspects of how services will be delivered in the context of physical distancing and infection control requirements. The Council's Health and Safety methodology will include:
- **Safe Premises** - Each council premises will be subject to an assessment, which identifies the maximum occupancy of the building and considers specific building issues to achieve physical distancing. This includes implementation of safe access/egress, safe use of communal facilities such as welfare provisions, printing, kitchens, meeting rooms and the allocation of safe desk space. The frequency of cleaning of high contact surfaces and provision of hygiene supplies will be included in the assessment.
 - **Safe Services** - Each service area will complete an assessment checklist, which will highlight risks in relation to interaction with the public, colleagues, contractors, as well as use of equipment and travel in work. A risk assessment will be completed for each service area detailing the required controls in place in line with Council policy and national guidelines.
- 5.3 The Chief Executive has written to all staff currently working from home stating that working from home will remain the default position for those council staff who are able to do so until 31 August 2020. The position will be reviewed at that date, but based on the forecast of a second wave of the pandemic in the late autumn, working from home will be common practice for many staff for the foreseeable future. This Council-wide change in working practices will need to be supported by new policies, procedures and management practices. For those services where staff cannot work from home, or where face-to-face contact is necessary, robust physical distancing measures will be put in place as detailed in service area risk assessments.
- 5.4 On 3 June 2020, the Welsh Government Minister for Education announced the next phase for schools in Wales. It is proposed that all schools will reopen on 29 June 2020, with the summer term being extended by one week and ending on 27 July 2020. In the next academic year beginning in September 2020, the intention is to expand the autumn half-term break to two weeks.
- 5.5 All children will have the opportunity to attend school to 'check in, catch up and prepare' for the summer break and the new school year in September 2020. This period of opening will focus on making sure that

pupils, staff and parents are prepared – mentally, emotionally and practically – for a ‘new normal’ in September.

- 5.6 It is likely that each school will adopt a phased approach, with year groups being split into cohorts with staggered starts, lessons and breaks. It is expected that this will mean, at most, a third of pupils being present at any one time, though schools may need time to reach this level of operation. There will be much smaller classes, providing secure dedicated time with teaching staff and classmates.
- 5.7 The physical reopening of schools will involve a similarly rigorous process to that applied to other council services and further guidance is expected shortly from Welsh Government.
- 5.8 To support the opening of schools and public buildings the Corporate Estates Team has prepared comprehensive guidance for headteachers and service managers and sets out Rhondda Cynon Taf’s approach to opening buildings whilst applying consistent measures to protect staff and visitors in accordance with guidance under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020.
- 5.9 A copy of the guidance is set out in Appendix 1 to this report. To support services, the Corporate Estates team has set maximum occupancy numbers for staff and the public in Council buildings. A similar approach to setting maximum occupancy levels will be adopted with schools, on receipt of the final guidance from Welsh Government.
- 5.10 The guidance provides clear direction to headteachers and service managers, the focus must be to:
- Take all reasonable measures to **ensure a 2m physical distance** is maintained between all staff, whenever possible;
 - Provide **hand sanitiser/wipes/ handwash arrangements** in appropriate locations;
 - **Not exceed** the max number of staff in the office, kitchen and toilets;
 - Ensure an **enhanced cleaning regime** is introduced for the office and workstations;
 - **Use virtual meetings where practical**, if physical distancing is not possible;
 - Ensure a **clear desk policy** is maintained;
 - Ensure staff **do not cross on stairs** – use one way travel wherever possible;
 - Restrict use of **lifts to 1 person** (and a carer) at a time;
 - Mark out **2m exclusion zones** in appropriate locations;

- Use Kitchens for individual beverages only with **no food preparation**;
 - Consider having **staggered start/finish times** for staff to avoid gatherings in confined spaces;
 - **Communicate effectively with staff** and ensure they also adhere to the regulations and any site specific rules.
- 5.11 Corporate Estates has also prepared and had manufactured a series of signs for all buildings and schools to remind staff and the public using the building of what is expected from them in terms of social distancing, personal hygiene etc. Copies of the signs are set out in the Appendix to this report.
- 5.12 Signage and equipment packs have been rolled out to buildings over the past couple of weeks and measures implemented in accordance with the guidance to ensure buildings are ready to open as soon as an appropriate decision is taken.
- 5.13 The Council is also exploring how best to use temperature checking systems for all users of Council buildings, including schools. Some trial equipment is being tested and if it works successfully, this will also be available in all Council buildings, to help reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No Equality Impact Assessment is required for this report. Corporate Estates is engaging with the Council's Equality and Diversity team to identifying specific groups of public and staff that will be affected by the changes in the operation of buildings. Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as part of the respective re-opening of services, such as Libraries and Schools etc.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There has been continued engagement with Trade Unions in respect of the guidance set out in the Appendix to this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Additional funding has been necessary to develop and introduce the measures. This over and above expenditure will form part of our wider claim to Welsh Government for reimbursement of COVID-19 related costs.

9. LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The measures have been deployed in consideration of the Coronavirus Legislation and guidance and the relevant Health & Safety legislation and guidance.

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

- 10.1 This is an information report on progress in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. No decisions are being taken in this report.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report has set out the actions taken to ensure schools, public buildings and Council offices can be safely opened in the future as the lock down is lifted. Individual schools and services will inevitably have to adapt these guidelines to best meet their particular needs, taking into account the physical layout of the respective building.

Officer Contact: David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates 01443 424144

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee –



GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

RE-OCCUPATION OF BUILDINGS DURING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Taking all reasonable measures to maintain physical distancing in the workplace: Guidance under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020

This document is available in Welsh or English and other formats are available when requested

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Checked	Approved
C19.01	May 2020	Hilary Reid	Mike Murphy	David Powell

CONTACT

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RE-OCCUPATION OF BUILDINGS DURING CORONAVIRUS **(COVID-19)**

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- Appendix B – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 ("Coronavirus Restrictions Regulations") have been amended with effect from 7 April 2020 to introduce general restrictions on places of work, which were not previously covered.

1.2 Certain businesses were closed down and people were told to 'stay at home', protect the NHS and save lives. Employers were required to take every possible step to facilitate their employees working from home, including providing suitable IT and equipment to enable remote working.

1.3 It was recognised that not everyone can work from home and certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work. Everyone attending a place of work must take all reasonable measures to maintain physical distancing in the workplace to comply with guidance under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020, wherever possible.

1.4 A breach of the above regulation may result in a fine (the amount of which is unlimited) or fixed penalty. This is a change in law in Wales which is in force until 26 September 2020, with ability to extend.

1.5 As the restrictions are eased over the coming weeks/months and businesses re-open, the Council needs to be ready to respond to buildings being opened such as Libraries, Schools, Offices etc whilst still complying with the physical distancing rules until such time as the restrictions are fully lifted and there is no further threat of contracting the virus.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 This guidance document sets out Rhondda Cynon Taf's approach to open buildings whilst applying consistent measures to protect staff and visitors in accordance with guidance under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020.

2.2 The guidance is specific for our built assets and does not attempt to deal with open spaces, parks or town centre facilities.

2.3 The guidance sets out practical measures for managers to use in the various workplaces and is intended to be used in conjunction with signage/specialist equipment for each building based upon specific risk assessments/building requirements.

2.4 Each section covers particular 'spaces' within the building and any spaces not included below specific to a building such as a classroom, will need to be

assessed and similar principles applied to ensure compliance with the physical distancing within the workplace.

3. KEY THEMES

3.1 Managers must:

Ensure a suitable risk assessment for Covid-19 in the workplace is undertaken and implement any necessary controls. To ensure the risk is reduced as far as reasonably practicable managers will need to:

- Take reasonable measures to **ensure a 2m physical distance** is maintained between all staff, whenever possible
- Provide **hand sanitiser/wipes/ handwash arrangements** in appropriate locations
- **Not exceed** the max number of staff in the office, kitchen and toilets
- Ensure an **enhanced cleaning regime** is introduced for the office and workstations
- **Use virtual meetings where practical**, if physical distancing is not possible
- Ensure a **clear desk policy** is maintained
- Ensure staff **do not cross on stairs** – use one way travel wherever possible
- Restrict use of **lifts to 1 person** (and a carer) at a time
- Mark out **2m exclusion zones** in appropriate locations
- Use Kitchens for individual beverages only with **no food preparation**
- Consider having **staggered start/finish times** for staff to avoid gatherings in confined spaces
- **Communicate effectively with staff** and ensure they also adhere to the regulations and any site specific rules

3.2 Staff must:

Inform their manager if they (or someone in their household) are in an 'at risk' category, and

- Ensure they are **symptom free** while working from the office
- Maintain a **2m distance** between themselves and colleagues wherever reasonable and practicable to do so

- **Regularly wash hands** with soap for a min. of 20 seconds
- Make use of **hand sanitiser/wipes** as appropriate if hand washing facilities not available
- Adhere to the **max number of staff** in the office, kitchen and toilets
- Adhere to the **clear desk policy** and ensure individual workstations are cleaned/sanitised before re-use
- **Use common sense** when moving around the workplace and be courteous to colleagues when waiting to enter spaces/use equipment

4. RECEPTION

4.1 Objective: to ensure the safety of both visitors and staff

- Where possible, visitors should arrive only by appointment and the organiser should make arrangements with reception staff to achieve the smallest turn around time possible
- Use of temperature sensing equipment may be required
- Clear plastic (or existing glass) protective screens must be used to separate staff and visitors and allow for safe interaction
- Areas must operate on a one in/one out basis and if possible, the use of one way systems
- Where possible a separate waiting area should be provided
- Use of floor and wall signage both internally and externally (see section on signage) will help to remind staff and visitors of distancing requirements
- Doors may be propped open (subject to advice on fire restrictions) to allow for better visibility and reduced contact with door handles
- Sanitiser should be provided at reception counters
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out
- Encouraging visits via remote connection/working where this is an option.
- Limiting visitor times to a specific time window and restricting access to required visitors only
- Maintaining a record of all visitors

5. DELIVERIES

5.1 Objective: to reduce transmission through contact with objects that come into the workplace and staggering arrival and departure times at work to reduce crowding into and out of the workplace, taking account of the impact on those with protected characteristics.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Cleaning procedures for goods and merchandise entering the site.
- Cleaning procedures for vehicles.

- Introducing greater handwashing and handwashing facilities for workers handling goods and merchandise and providing hand sanitiser where this is not practical.
- Regular cleaning of vehicles that workers may take home.
- Restricting non-business deliveries, for example, personal deliveries to workers.

6. CIRCULATION SPACE

6.1 Objective: to maintain social distancing while using common areas.

- Staff/visitors must not cross on stairs wherever possible – most buildings can accommodate one way travel
- Staff will need to be alert at all times of distancing ability being compromised in these areas
- Good use of signage (see section on signage) will help to remind staff of distancing
- Doors may be propped open (subject to advice on fire restrictions) to allow for better visibility
- Opening windows and doors frequently to encourage ventilation where possible
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out

7. LIFTS

7.1 Objective: to reduce transmission by allowing for social distancing outside or inside a lift

- To be operated as one in/one out basis (with a carer if required)
- Signage to be clearly visible
- Queuing system to be utilised
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out

8. FIRE RECORD SIGNING IN/OUT BOOKS

8.1 Objective: to operate the procedure safely whilst still complying with fire safety regulations

- Sanitiser should be provided at the station
- Signage should be easily visible
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out
- Staff to use personal pen to sign in /out (rather than communal pen)

9. SPACE/DESK UTILISATION

9.1 Objective: to reduce transmission by creating an office space allowing for desk users to achieve relevant distances between them

- The advised maximum number of staff should not be exceeded
- Desk occupation should be allocated to achieve the appropriate space/distance between people this can be done in various ways often depending upon the desk layouts for example: diagonally, straight line, alternating etc
- If desk need to be used by more than one person then the clear desk guide will be explicit in this and user must clean desk after use
- Staff rotas may be needed in order to achieve safe distancing
- Moving desks apart may be possible to assist
- Use of screens between people/desks could assist
- Increase number of air changes/hr in rooms by adjusting ventilation and/or opening windows

10. CLEAR DESK POLICY

10.1 Objective: to reduce transmission between desk users and allow for cleaning of desks to be achieved easily and consistently

- No personal items/paperwork etc are to be kept on desks at any time
- Pedestals must be locked or secured with tape and no items put back and forth onto/from the desk
- Desks, keyboards and telephones must be wiped clean before and after use
- Staff must not share desk phones and shall try at all times to use mobile phones

11. SHARED EQUIPMENT

11.1 Objective: to reduce transmission by managing the use of these

- MFD's and similar equipment such as plotters should be operated on the basis of one user at a time
- Space for queuing should be identified
- Sanitiser should be made available
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out
- Wipes to be provided for cleaning after each use

12. MEETINGS

12.1 Objective: To reduce transmission due to face-to-face meetings and maintain social distancing in meetings.

- Using remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings, wherever possible
- Only absolutely necessary participants should attend meetings and should maintain 2m separation throughout.
- Avoiding transmission during meetings, for example avoiding sharing pens and other objects.
- Providing hand sanitiser in meeting rooms.
- Holding meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.
- For areas where regular meetings take place, using floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.
- Limiting or restricting use of high-touch items and equipment, for example, printers or whiteboards

13. KITCHEN USE

13.1 Objective: to reduce transmission and maintain social distancing while allowing staff to use the facilities

- The advised maximum number of staff should not be exceeded
- Only hot drinks to be made or cold drinking water from the dispenser
- Drinks must only be made for the individual needing/wanting one
- No food preparation is to be carried out in the space
- Food and drink which needs refrigeration can be placed in the refrigerators but must be placed in and removed swiftly and removed from the kitchen area for consumption
- Space for queuing should be identified
- Regular checks on the supply of sanitiser/soap should be undertaken
- Cupboards will be sealed so that no items can be held in the kitchen
- The advised maximum number of staff should not be exceeded
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out

14. TOILETS

14.1 Objective: to allow safe use of facilities while reducing transmission and maintaining social distancing

Toilets must be operated on a safe space distancing basis

- The advised maximum number of staff should not be exceeded
- Distance between hand basins and door cubicles must be able to accommodate staff passing whilst maintaining appropriate distancing
- A one staff in/one staff out policy may need to be implemented
- Where possible visibility of persons in the ancillary toilet area should be achieved
- Space for queuing should be identified
- Suitable hand wash facilities at the sink
- Regular checks on the supply of sanitiser/soap should be undertaken
- The advised maximum number of staff should not be exceeded
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out

15. SHOWERS

15.1 Objective: to reduce transmission and maintain social distancing while allowing staff to use the facilities

Where possible, showers must not be used unless they are required because of the work activity so in the event that they are needed;

- Users will need to provide their own soap etc...
- Nothing to be left in the space after use
- Ensure lockers and changing rooms are kept clean and clear of personal items
- Appropriate exclusion zones marked out
- Wipes to be provided for cleaning surfaces after each use

16. STATUTORY MAINTENANCE COMPLIANCE

167.1 Objective: to ensure buildings that have been closed are maintained appropriately prior to staff returning

Prior to opening buildings, building managers should;

- Undertake a full building inspection for any obvious health and safety issues noting any degradation of the site including access and egress routes and car parking areas
- Liaise with Corporate Maintenance regarding all corporate statutory inspections and testing compliance undertaken during the building closure
- Ensure all routine Legionella flushing and/or testing has been completed
- Ensure all routine fire alarm testing has been completed
- Whilst testing of fire alarms and systems must be maintained, it is recommended fire drills be suspended until further notice. Managers will need to periodically remind staff of the procedures to ensure they are fully familiar with arrangements
- Inspection of the fire escape routes to ensure that they remain adequate and clear of any obstructions
- Physical check of all Internal & External fire doors to ensure that they open and close as intended
- Recommission any specialist plant/equipment in accordance with manufacturers recommendations

17. ACCIDENTS, SECURITY AND OTHER INCIDENTS

17.1 Objective: to prioritise safety during incidents.

- In an emergency, for example, an accident or fire, people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe.
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

18. SIGNAGE/EQUIPMENT

18.1 Objective: to reduce transmission by means of the provision of multiple targeted message signs and the erection of physical barriers.

- Signage to be displayed in the following locations using signage as listed in Appendix A

Locations	Sign Type
Reception/waiting areas –signs	A,B,C,D, F,H,I,J,K
Kitchens	A,B,C,E,J, M
Toilets	A,B,C,E,J
Lifts	D,J
Staff notice boards and prominent locations on walls	A,E,K
Hand sanitiser stations	F,J
Hand washing locations	E,
Floor distance/direction markers	J
Doors to identify direction of travel	B,G,H,I,J
Hazard Marker tape to be used in front of lift doors to indicate distance spacing and in Entrance Foyers/Receptions to keep back/queuing	L

- Specific equipment will also be provided as listed in Appendix A
 - Additional bins for disposal of wipes
 - Additional temporary clear plastic screens for reception counters
 - Suitable quantities of sanitiser/wipes

19. FURTHER INFORMATION

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

<https://gov.wales/taking-all-reasonable-measures-maintain-physical-distancing-workplace>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-launched-to-help-get-brits-safely-back-to-work>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-social-distancing-guidance>

CONTACTS

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Phil Bond, Head of Corporate Maintenance 01443 281151

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Mike Murphy, Health and Safety Advisor 01443 425536

mike.murphy@rctcbc.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1 – RCT APPROVED SIGNAGE/EQUIPMENT

Type A - Covid posters to be erected in prominent locations around the building including office notice boards, kitchens, toilets and communal areas;

(COVID-19) - Coronavirus

Physical Distancing in the workplace

Office Accommodation Standards

A guide for managers/staff

Everyone attending a place of work **MUST** take all reasonable measures to maintain physical distancing in the workplace to comply with guidance under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020.



Should you have any queries please contact:

Head of Operational Property:
01443 281188
Corporate Estate will provide the maximum number of occupants.

Health and Safety Advisor:
01443 425536
Corporate Health and Safety will be able to discuss concerns.

Managers must:

- Take reasonable measures to ensure a 2m physical distance is maintained between all staff
- Provide hand sanitizer/wipes in appropriate locations (i.e. entry/exit points, signing in, MFD's, shared ICT kit, kitchen and toilets)
- Not exceed the max number of staff in the office, kitchen and toilets
- Ensure an enhanced cleaning regime is introduced for the office and workstations
- Use virtual meetings if physical distancing is not possible
- Ensure a clear desk policy is maintained
- Ensure staff do not cross on stairs – use one way travel whenever possible
- Restrict use of lifts to 1 person (and a carry) at a time
- Mark out 2m exclusion zones at lift doors, entrance to toilets, fire signing in book, etc.
- Use kitchens for individual beverages only – NO food preparation
- Consider having staggered start/finish times for staff to avoid gatherings in confined spaces

Staff must:

- Ensure they are symptom free while working from the office
- Maintain a 2m distance between themselves and colleagues whenever reasonable and practicable to do so
- Regularly wash hands with soap for a minimum of 20 seconds
- Make use of hand sanitizer/wipes as appropriate
- Adhere to the max number of staff in the office, kitchen and toilets
- Adhere to the clear desk policy and ensure individual workstations are cleaned/sanitized before reuse
- Use common sense when moving around the workplace and be courteous to colleagues when waiting to enter spaces/equipment




RHONDDA CYNON TAF

(COVID-19) - Y Coronafeirws

**Cadw pellter corfforol yn y gweithle
Safonau ar gyfer swyddfeydd
Canllaw i reolwyr/staff**

RHAID i bawb sy'n bresennol mewn gweithle gymryd mesurau rheoli rhesymol i gadw pellter corfforol yn y gweithle er mwyn cydymffurfio â chanllawiau o dan reoliad 7A o Reoliadau Diogelu Iechyd (Cyfyngiadau Coronafeirws) (Cymru) 2020



Os oes gyda chi ymholiadau:
Pennaeth Eiddo Gweithre ddi:
01443 281188
Bydd modd i'r gartref Eiddo Corfforaethol nodi'r uchelwern o bobl mewn lleoliad.
Cynghorydd Iechyd a Diogelwch:
01443 425536
Bydd modd i chi dafod prydion i'r gartref Iechyd a Diogelwch Corfforaethol.

Rhaid i reolwyr:

- Cymryd mesurau rheoli rhesymol i sicrhau bod pellter o 2 fetr yn cael ei gynnal rhwng pob aelod o staff
- Darparu glanedd d'wleips dwylo mewn lleoliadau paratod, eia, wrth fynedfau i'rfa, wrth i'r ddrad i mewn, dyllau amddiffydd, offer TDCs a'n cael ei rannu
- Sicrhau bod nifer y staff yn y swydd, y gegin a'r toiledau ddim yn fwy na'r uchelwern
- Sicrhau bod system lantaw hysbysu yn cael ei chyflwyno ar gyfer y swydd a'r manau gwaith
- Cynnal cyfarfodydd aelod o'r dda ddim modd cadw pellter corfforol
- Sicrhau bod pellter desglauglin yn cael ei gynnal
- Sicrhau bod staff ddim yn croesi ar y grisiau - ddiwyddwch aystum unfordd i'r bo hynnyh baibl
- Sicrhau bod ddim mwy na 1 person (a chynhauw) mewn lift ar unrhyw oed
- Nodi ar lawr lle mae rhaid cadw pellter o 2 fetr wrth ymyl dylau liftiau, mynedfau i gyfeustau, llyfr ffridod i mewn, ac ati
- Sicrhau bod bwyd DDM yn cael ei bennu gan unigolion yn y gegin - ddim ond ddiwyddid ddim i'r awr hwn
- Tafael bod staff yn dod i'r gegin ar weithle i'w hysbysu a'u hysbysu mewn llydd cyffwrdd

Rhaid i staff:

- Sicrhau bod ddim symptomau gyda niw pan mewn i'r gweithle yn y swydd
- Cadw pellter o 2 fetr rhwng ddim i'r dda ddim mewn llydd cyffwrdd
- Gallu hysbysu a'u hysbysu mewn llydd cyffwrdd
- Deddfydd glanedd d'wleips dwylo'n brodd
- Paid i mynd dros uchelwern nifer y staff yn y swydd, y gegin a'r toiledau
- Glynu wrth y pellter desglauglin a sicrhau bod manau gweithlunigol yn cael eu glanhau ddiwyddid ddim i'r awr hwn
- Deddfydd gynnwys cyffwrdd wrth aymud ddim gweithle a dangos o'rfa i'r dda ddim mewn llydd cyffwrdd ddim

RHONDA CYNN TAF

Type B - Sign to be erected outside of kitchens, toilets and all/any small areas or rooms and reception areas



Type C - Sign to be erected in prominent locations around the building including office notice boards, kitchens, toilets, reception and communal areas



Type D - Sign to be erected outside of the lift and at appropriate entry/exit locations



Type E - Sign to be erected in prominent locations around the building including office notice boards, kitchens, toilets, reception and communal areas



Type F - Sign to be erected at all sanitiser locations

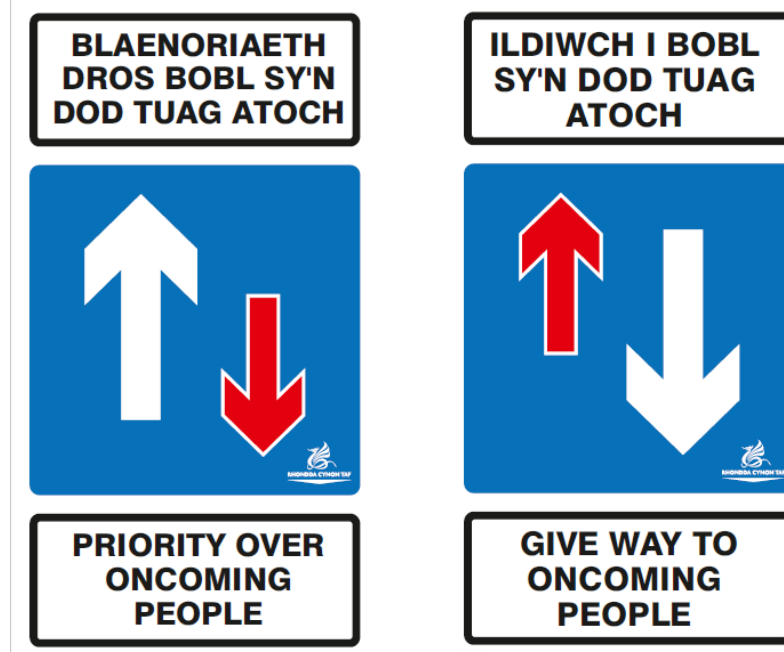


Type G - Signs to clearly indicate one way systems around office areas including stairwells and on doors into rooms where one way in and one way out can be achieved





Type H - Signs to be erected at appropriate locations around the building to clearly indicate travel systems around office areas on doors and on walls in stairwells



Type I – Floor sign to be placed at appropriate locations around the building to clearly indicate travel systems around office areas



Type J – Floor signs to be placed at appropriate locations around the building to clearly indicate where safe distance queueing can take place around office areas to access kitchens, WCs, printers ,lifts, filing rooms and outside reception areas



Type K – Sign to be placed at locations where wipes can be disposed of in appropriate bins



Type L – Hazard tape to be used at appropriate locations around the building to clearly indicate travel systems around office areas, no-go zones such as clear areas outside lifts and to separate travel directions in corridors and stairwells.



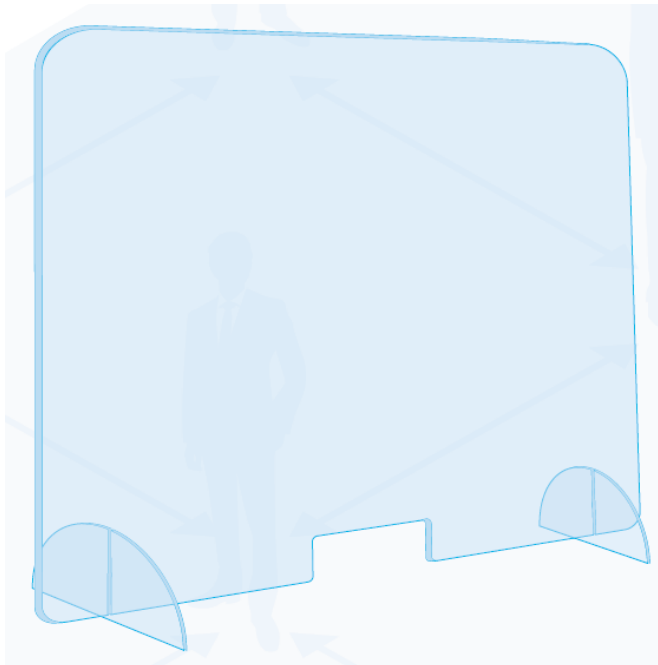
Type M – Sign to be erected in kitchens/tea making facilities.



Equipment
5L Sanitiser



Clear plastic screens for reception counters, manufactured to site specific measurements



APPENDIX B – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ's)

Q1 Who is guidance aimed at? Building Managers or all Managers?

A1 The guidance is aimed at managers but managers with responsibility for buildings also have an over-arching responsibility. Staff will also need to read/understand the guidance to ensure compliance while attending the workplace.

Q2 How is the guide going to be distributed to staff regarding their responsibilities?

A2 It is anticipated that an e-version of the COVID poster will be issued to staff via one of the regular staff updates together with a link to a document on 'Source' for managers/staff to access and acknowledge they have read/understood it.

Q3 Is there specific guidance for spaces such as lounges in Care Homes and classrooms in schools?

A3 This guidance does not cover all eventualities and/or spaces, it is designed to provide guidance for the 'workplace'. It will be for Service Groups address specific spaces in their unique settings by adopting the principles set out in the guidance for the workplace. Corporate Estates and Health and Safety officers will be happy to assist as and when requested.

Q4 How will I get to know what new site procedures are in place?

A4 Managers are responsible for undertaking specific risk assessments before staff return to their workplace and a mini induction process will be adopted by Service Groups to ensure that all site/building/behaviour related changes are communicated to all staff.

Q5 Are staff being subjected to unnecessary risk by being asked to attend work/the office?

A5 No, as occupation of offices and work places will have been subject to a risk assessment where mitigation processes have been identified and incorporated into the return to work procedure, i.e. distancing at desk locations, sanitising, controlled movement to ensure distancing.

Q6 Are we only testing visitor temperatures to buildings - why not all staff?

A6 Staff should only attend the workplace if they are not displaying symptoms. It is possible to check everyone but this would be time consuming and will take up dedicated resources.

Q7 What will happens if I develop Covid-19 symptoms while at work?

A7 You will be asked to leave immediately and obtain a test/self isolate as appropriate. Your immediate working area will need to be thoroughly cleaned before anyone else is permitted to use it.

Q8 Managers are responsible for ensuring enhanced cleaning regimes are adopted - what are they? A8 Corporate Estates have liaised with Cleaning Services and enhanced cleaning regimes have been agreed, managers need to check they are content with the regimes and request additional measures if required.

Q9 What are the cleaning procedures for deliveries to site?

A9 This depends upon specific site circumstances and the type of deliveries. Where possible, pre-determined knowledge of impending delivery which will assist in this process. Protective gloves and wipes may be used by recipients.

Q10 Who will inform Service Groups how many staff would be in a building/room/kitchen and toilet? A10 Corporate Estates will identify the maximum numbers in readiness for re-occupation.

Q11 Who will supply the new signage and equipment needed to re-occupy buildings?

A11 Corporate Estates have worked closely with Procurement colleagues and will be providing a pack of signs/equipment to Building Managers. Any additional signs required in the future can be obtained by contacting the Head of Operational Property.

Q12 Who is going to install the signage/equipment?

A12 Managers will be responsible for their 'spaces' and building managers will also have an over-arching responsibility. Corporate Estates staff will be available to assist wherever requested.

Q13 Will staff have to bring their own sanitiser/wipes to work?

A13 Sanitiser/wipes will be provided at relevant locations for example; receptions, entry/exit points, kitchens, printers, etc. All sanitiser wipes to be disposed of in clearly marked specific bins.

Q14 What if more than one person uses the same desk/workstation?

A14 Workstations/desks should be cleaned by the member of staff using it prior to commencing any work, and at the end of the working day. Cleaning materials will be provided in each office.

Where desks are shared, the most straightforward way of managing this would be to assign one workstation/desk to no more than two people, and label both the workstation/desk and chair with the name of the two allocated individuals. In this situation, the attendance of the two individuals who share a workstation/desk will need to be managed so that they do not attend the workplace at the same time. For such shared workstations/desks, the requirement for members of staff occupying the desk to clean at the outset and end of the working day should be very strictly adhered to.

Q15 How will I achieve and maintain the clear desk policy requirement?

A15 Upon request from a manager, appropriate numbers of recycling and confidential waste bags will be provided. Items left on desks at the end of the day should be cleared into bins for removal.

Q16 Have the buildings been suitably maintained during the period of closure?

A16 Routine statutory maintenance/testing and weekly checks have been undertaken to ensure compliance. Building managers must liaise with the Head of Corporate Maintenance prior to re-opening a building/site.

Q17 Will the ventilation system increase the risk of passing Covid-19?

A17 No, ventilation systems will be set to 'by-pass' which will ensure air is not re-circulated. Increasing the number of air changes in offices by opening windows will also reduce risks.

Q18 Will vending machines be in use?

A18 No

Q19 How will building opening and closing arrangements work with staggered staff arrival/departure time?

A19 Building opening and closing times will be amended if necessary by dialogue between building managers and the Head of Operational Property.

Q20 Will there be new first aid kits?

A20 First aid kits will be replaced at each location.

Q21 Will the hot desk sites still operate?

A21 All dedicated hot-desking areas will remain closed and not available for agile working.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Officer to contact:

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH JUNE 2020

COVID 19 – FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Author: Barrie Davies, Director of Finance and Digital Services - 01443 424026

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides Members with an initial assessment of the financial implications for the Council arising from COVID 19.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the financial implications arising from COVID 19 on the Council;
- 2.2 To agree to receive a Mid-Year Budget Review in September alongside an updated and interim Medium Term Financial Plan; and
- 2.3 To note the arrangements for the preparation and audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The ongoing response to COVID 19 continues with significant disruption across Council Services with many repurposed, reduced or suspended fully. Whilst the assessment of the financial implications is ongoing this report sets out the initial view of the impact upon the Council.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council's Revenue Budget Strategy for 2020/21 and the Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23 were agreed by Council on the 4th March 2020.
- 4.2 Within a very short space of time the COVID 19 crisis escalated with the subsequent lockdown announced and effective from the 23rd March 2020.

- 4.3 On the 18th March, an urgent decision of the Leader of the Council was made which set out the current emergency planning arrangements for COVID 19 at UK, Wales and locality levels and set out the potential implications for Council services when the outbreak escalated and the action the Council would take.
- 4.4 Since this time, there has been significant disruption across Council Services with many repurposed, reduced or suspended fully. At the time of writing, the restrictions in Wales are beginning to be relaxed, albeit cautiously.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Significant work continues to be undertaken on the assessment of the financial implications across all Council services.
- 5.2 The WLGA have coordinated a survey across the 22 councils in Wales to identify early and initial estimates of the financial implications for the 3 months of April to June 2020. For this Council, the estimated impact for the 3 month period is shown below.

		£M
Expenditure	Net of cost savings	£6.4
Income	Net of cost savings	£7.2
	TOTAL 3 MONTH COST	£13.6
	AVERAGE MONTHLY COST	£4.5

- 5.3 Put into context the all Wales 3 month initial estimated cost is £185M.
- 5.4 The above initial estimate was at a point in time and there are a number of emerging cost pressures which are continuing to arise :
- Supporting the sustainability of the social care sector;
 - Council Tax Collection;
 - Ongoing increases in Council Tax Reduction Scheme claimants;
 - Contractual extension of time claims (capital);
 - Waste Management costs as a consequence of increased volume and changing composition of kerbside waste;
 - Increasing numbers of Children Looked After;
 - Ongoing and longer term PPE requirements;
 - Provision of support (eg food parcels) to the vulnerable;
 - Ongoing cost of cover where staff are “shielding” or have caring responsibilities;
 - Enabling and supporting different ways of working, including ICT costs associated with homeworking;
 - External / Grant Funding risks.
- 5.5 Neither does it begin to factor in the ongoing cost implications arising from

reconfiguring services to adhere to ongoing social distancing requirements (eg Home to School Transport) and ongoing and potentially longer term income reductions across services which cannot be envisaged as returning to “normal” for some considerable time (eg Leisure).

- 5.6 Forecasting the financial implications beyond the short term is clearly dependent upon numerous assumptions which are subject to change on a regular basis as Welsh Government continue to review the restrictions and arrangements within Wales. It is important that we continuously refresh our modelling alongside working with WG to find funding solutions for Wales.
- 5.7 It is also important that we continue to do all that we can locally to mitigate the financial implications and recognise that where services have been and continue to operate at reduced levels that the associated savings are set aside to offset our cost pressures.
- 5.8 In this regard and in line with legal advice, we have taken advantage of the Governments Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and have registered over 670 staff against this scheme with effect from the dates which they have been stood down from duties. Staff registered have been identified in line with legal advice and are in roles funded in the main from income from fees and charges for services, in particular Leisure and Catering. The value of our claims (March, April and May) amounts to £0.855M, which will partly offset our loss of income in respective services. Importantly, all staff continue to receive full pay and continuity of employment throughout this process.
- 5.9 Equally we are already planning and starting to deliver the recovery phase, as we begin to plan and re-open for example our schools and libraries alongside our already successfully re-opened Community Recycling Centres. All Council services are now preparing Service Recovery Plans, seeking to ensure we take advantage of the position in which we find ourselves.
- 5.10 Local Government is also playing a lead delivery role in the contact tracing process, which has commenced fully with effect from 1st June. Whilst caseload levels can only be estimated at this stage, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) region has put in place a scalable model which can be flexed to meet demand over time. Initially resourced from existing resources, as our services are reintroduced there will be a need for staff to return to substantive roles and replaced with new recruits. The cost implication of the Test, Trace, Protect strategy across Wales have been estimated at around £100M, and locally (CTM) approximately £15M subject to requirements of scale. The funding solution for this work remains to be clarified.
- 5.11 The variability of the financial implications on the Council can be clearly seen by the number of variables which are all moving at pace. However, at this juncture, the Council is well placed insofar as we are continuing to mitigate our increased cost base wherever we can and discussions with WG in relation to funding continue to be positive.
- 5.12 Our increased costs incurred to date are being claimed back through the funding already made available and with regard to income loss funding has been identified

and the process for claiming this is currently under consideration.

- 5.13 WG are now reviewing the increased cost of the national Council Tax Reduction Scheme, where we have already seen an increased caseload across Wales of over 9,500. Also under review is the impact of lower Council Tax collection rates already being seen over the initial 2 months of the financial year.

6. WELSH GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- 6.1 Positive discussions continue with Welsh Government on funding in respect of the unprecedented financial pressures which all councils in Wales are facing. To date a £188.5M Hardship Fund has been agreed at an all Wales level, as set out in the WG Supplementary Budget (27th May 2020), which includes :

Support for Homelessness	£10M
Funding for Adult Social Care	£40M
Free School Meal Funding	£40M
Loss of Income	£78M
Support to create temporary facilities to handle the increased number of deaths during the pandemic	£7M

- 6.2 The agreed process for accessing funding is through a monthly claims process, aimed at ensuring that the funding gets to where it is needed. This has been in preference to an allocation basis across councils.
- 6.3 The claims are based on cash paid out during each calendar month and so there is an inherent timing delay between services being delivered and cost being incurred and reimbursed.
- 6.4 The all Wales claims for March and April amounted to £2.4M and £18.8M respectively. This Council's claims have amounted to £0.8M and £1.6M respectively and more recently £4.2M for May.
- 6.5 Discussions regarding the funding arrangements for the period beyond the end of June are ongoing.

7. BUDGET STRATEGY FOR 2020/21 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

- 7.1 We will continue to model and monitor the projected out-turn position alongside confirmed funding sources as and when we have confirmation. Clearly there are many variables and uncertainties at present.
- 7.2 It is clear that the budget as set in March 2020 will not be an appropriate basis against which to deliver our services for the remainder of the financial year and over the next couple of months we would hope to have greater clarity over what the recovery phase and service delivery requirement will be beyond the immediate

term.

- 7.3 Finance officers will work with services across the Council over this period to put in place a revised budget for 2020/21 alongside their Service Recovery Plans and it is proposed that this **Mid-Year Budget Review** be reported to Cabinet and Council in September. This will be alongside and informed by our Quarter 1 Performance Report.
- 7.4 It is further proposed that an updated interim Medium Term Financial Plan is presented alongside this Mid-Year Budget Review in order to begin to inform our budget strategy deliberations for the financial year 2021/22.

8. YEAR END 2019/20

- 8.1 The quarter 3 out-turn position was reported to Cabinet in March 2020, and represented a projected overspend position of £0.539M for the year.
- 8.2 The Councils General Fund Balances at 31st March 2019 amounted to £10.498M. After the £1.5M allocation for Storm Dennis, the remaining balance is £8.998M.
- 8.3 Finance teams are currently working effectively (from home) and compiling the year end position. Whilst we were initially targeting the 31st May to prepare a draft Statement of Accounts (to be audited by July) this target date has been re-set to balance and enable focus and priority to be afforded to assessing the ongoing financial implications on the council as set out above.
- 8.4 In England the Statutory Date for the production of accounts has been relaxed, from the 15th June to the 31st August, to be audited by the 30th November 2020. In Wales there is already provision in the regulations to delay production of accounts and to disclose a reason for doing so on council websites. WG do further recommend Welsh authorities adopt a timetable for the 2019-20 accounts in line with the revised English requirements.
- 8.5 We are currently targeting early July to certify our draft accounts and are working closely with Audit Wales to integrate the audit process as efficiently as possible. The important role of Audit Committee through this process is also being considered, along with the practicalities of making our accounts publicly available for inspection.
- 8.6 A statement has been placed on the Council's website clarifying the above in line with WG and Audit Wales advice.
- 8.7 The Councils year end position will be set out in the quarter 4 performance report which will be reported to the July Cabinet, in line with the normal quarterly reporting timelines.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no Equality and Diversity Implications.

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 There are no consultation requirements arising from this report.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The financial implications are set out in this report.

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

12.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to set a balanced budget.

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

13.1 The 2020/21 Revenue Budget Strategy was formulated to support the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities, as set out within the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020, and the new Corporate Plan "Making a Difference" 2020 – 2024. These documents are aligned to the goals and principles included within the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.

14 CONCLUSION

14.1 This report sets out the financial issues and implications on the Council arising from COVID 19. There are clearly a large number of variables, including funding sources, which are being monitored on an ongoing basis.
