



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Bydd cyfarfod rhithwir o'r CABINET yn cael ei gynnal ar
Dydd Iau, 25ain Mawrth, 2021 am 10.30 am**

**Dolen gyswllt: Hannah Williams - Blaen Swyddog Busnes Rheoleiddiol a
Gweithredol
(Rhif ffôn. 01443 424062)**

Os bydd cynghorwyr neu aelodau o'r cyhoedd yn dymuno cael cyfle i annerch y Cabinet am unrhyw fater ar yr agenda isod, rhaid iddyn nhw ofyn am gael gwneud hynny erbyn canol Dydd Mawrth, 23 Mawrth 2021. Rhaid iddyn nhw hefyd gadarnhau ai yn y Gymraeg neu yn y Saesneg y byddan nhw'n annerch.

Nodwch mai'r Cadeirydd biau'r penderfyniad i ganiatáu'r cais am annerch y Cabinet. Bydd pob cais yn cael ei ystyried ar sail y materion sy'n cael eu trafod ar yr agenda, buddiant y cyhoedd/y Cynghorydd ynglŷn â phob mater, a'r gofynion o ran y materion sydd i'w trafod ar y diwrnod hwnnw. I wneud cais, anfonwch e-bost i UnedBusnesGweithredolaRheoleiddiol@rctcbc.gov.uk

MATERION I'W TRAFOD

1. DATGAN BUDDIANT

Derbyn datganiadau o fuddiannau personol gan Aelodau, yn unol â gofynion y Cod Ymddygiad.

Nodwch:

1. Mae gofyn i Aelodau ddatgan rhif a phwnc yr agendwm mae eu buddiant yn ymwneud ag ef a mynegi natur y buddiant personol hwnnw; a
2. Lle bo Aelodau'n ymneilltuo o'r cyfarfod o ganlyniad i ddatgelu buddiant sy'n rhagfarnu, rhaid iddyn nhw roi gwybod i'r Cadeirydd pan fyddan nhw'n gadael.

2. COFNODION

Cymeradwyo cofnodion cyfarfod y Cabinet a gynhaliwyd ar 25 Chwefror 2021 yn gofnod cywir.

(Tudalennau 7 - 20)

3. RHAGLEN WAITH Y CABINET

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu, sy'n rhoi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf i Aelodau am y rhestr arfaethedig o faterion y mae angen i'r Cabinet eu hystyried yn ystod Blwyddyn y Cyngor 2020–21.

(Tudalennau 21 - 60)

4. DEDDF LLYWODRAETH LEOL AC ETHOLIADAU (CYMRU) 2021

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr, Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a'r Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth, Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu, sy'n crynhoi gwahanol elfennau ar Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol ac Etholiadau (Cymru) 2021 a dderbyniodd Gydsyniad Brenhinol ar 20 Ionawr 2021. Mae'r adroddiad yn nodi cyd-destun a gofynion y Ddeddf, gan fanylu ar sefyllfa bresennol y Cyngor ac yn ceisio nodi'r swyddog(ion) arweiniol priodol a fydd yn ymwneud â chyflwyno'r gofynion deddfwriaethol.

(Tudalennau 61 - 82)

5. TREFNIADAU CYN Y CAM CRAFFU O'R ADRODDIAD CYDRADDOLDEB BLYNYDDOL 2019-20

Derbyn adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu, sy'n cyflwyno adborth y Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Craffu i'r Cabinet ar ôl iddo ystyried Adroddiad Cydraddoldeb Blynyddol y Cyngor ar gyfer 2019-2020.

(Tudalennau 83 - 174)

6. DYLETSWYDD ECONOMAIDD GYMDEITHASOL (DEDDF CYDRADDOLDEB 2010)

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Materion Adnoddau Dynol, sy'n rhoi gwybodaeth i'r Cabinet am y Ddyletswydd Gymdeithasol-economaidd a ddaw i rym ar 31 Mawrth 2021.

(Tudalennau 175 - 178)

7. STRATEGAETH DDRAFFT Y CYNGOR 2021-2025 – MYND I'R AFAEL Â NEWID YN YR HINSAWDD AR GYFER YMGYSYLLTIAD CYHOEDDUS

Derbyn adroddiad y Prif Weithredwr, sy'n rhoi cyfle i'r Aelodau drafod Strategaeth Ddrafft y Cyngor - Mynd i'r Afael â Newid Hinsawdd - a chytuno i ymgysylltu ac ymgynghori â thrigolion a busnesau ar ymateb y Cyngor i Newid yn yr Hinsawdd.

(Tudalennau 179 - 202)

8. TREFNIADAU'R AWDURDOD LLEOL AR GYFER DIOGELU PLANT AC OEDOLION MEWN PERYGL

Derbyn adroddiad y Prif Weithredwr a'r Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran y Gwasanaethau Cymuned a Gwasanaethau i Blant, sy'n darparu trosolwg o'r gwaith a wnaed i gyflawni'r camau gwella a nodwyd gan Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru (Archwilio Cymru) mewn perthynas â chyfrifoldebau Diogelu Corfforaethol y Cyngor.

(Tudalennau 203 - 212)

9. DIOGELWCH MENYWOD MEWN MANNAU CYHOEDDUS

Derbyn adroddiad ar lafar gan y Cyfarwyddwr - Gwasanaeth Iechyd a Diogelwch y Cyhoedd, a Gwasanaethau Cymuned

10. CYNNIG I DDARPARU GWASANAETHAU CYNGHORI AR ADDYSG RANBARTHOL A RENNIR AR GYFER PLANT A PHOBL IFAINC Â NAM SYNHWYRAIDD

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr, Gwasanaethau Addysg a Chynhwysiant, sy'n gofyn i'r Cabinet ystyried cynnig sy'n gofyn bod Carfan Synhwyrdd Rhondda Cynon Taf, o fewn y Gwasanaeth Mynediad a Chynhwysiant, yn newid o fod yn wasanaeth synhwyrdd ymreolaethol ar wahân i wasanaeth cyngori isranbarthol, addysgol a rennir ar gyfer plant a phobl ifainc sydd â nam ar y synhwyrddau.

(Tudalennau 213 - 258)

11. ASESIAID DIGONOLRWYDD GOFAL PLANT – DIWEDDARIAD 2021

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr, Gwasanaethau Addysg a Chynhwysiant, sy'n rhoi diweddariad i'r Cabinet o adroddiad Asesiad Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant 2017-22 (CSA) a'r diweddariadau o ran y cynllun gweithredu blynyddol dilynol.

(Tudalennau 259 - 268)

12. RHAGLEN GYFALAF ARFAETHEDIG Y GWASANAETHAU ADDYSG A CHYNHWYSIANT 2021/2022

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr, Addysg a Chynhwysiant, sy'n darparu manylion ynghylch y gwaith cyfalaf i'w gymeradwyo ar gyfer 2021/22, fel rhan o Raglen Gyfalaf dair blynedd y Cyngor.

(Tudalennau 269 - 284)

13. RHAGLEN GYFALAF ATODOL 2021/22 AR GYFER Y PRIFFYRDD, TRAFNIDIAETH A CHYNLLUNIAU STRATEGOL

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran – Ffyniant, Datblygu, a Gwasanaethau Rheng-flaen sy'n darparu'r rhaglen gyfalaf fanwl ar gyfer y Prifffyrdd, Trafnidiaeth a Chynlluniau Strategol.

(Tudalennau 285 - 308)

14. CYNLLUN RHYDDHAD ARDRETHI ANNOMESTIG (NDR) AR GYFER Y DIWYDIANT MANWERTHU, HAMDDEN A LLETYGARWCH

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a Gwasanaethau Digidol sy'n rhoi manylion am Ardrethi Annomestig Llywodraeth Cymru - Cynllun Rhyddhad y Diwydiant Manwerthu, Hamdden a Lletygarwch ar gyfer 2021/22.

(Tudalennau 309 - 316)

**15. ADRODDIAD CYFLAWNIAD Y CYNGOR – 31 RHAGFYR 2020
(CHWARTER 3)**

Derbyn adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Digidol sy'n rhoi trosolwg o gyflawniad y Cyngor, yn ariannol ac yn weithredol, sy'n seiliedig ar naw mis cyntaf y flwyddyn ariannol yma (hyd at 31 Rhagfyr 2020).

(Tudalennau 317 - 342)

16. TRAFOD CADARNHAU'R CYNNIG ISOD YN BENDERFYNIAD

"Bod y cyfarfod hwn yn cadw aelodau o'r wasg ac aelodau o'r cyhoedd allan o ystafell y cyfarfod, dan Adran 100A(4) o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol (fel y'i diwygiwyd), yn ystod trafod yr agendwm nesaf, ar y sail y byddai'n debygol o olygu datgelu gwybodaeth eithriedig yn ôl diffiniad paragraff 14 o Ran 4 o Atodlen 12A i'r Ddeddf."

**17. CAFFAEL HEN SAFLE FFATRI CHUBB, YSTAD DDIWYDIANNOL
MAERDY, GLYNRHEDYNOG, RHCT, CF43 4AB**

Derbyn adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Materion Eiddo'r Cyngor sy'n ceisio awdurdod i gaffael budd Rhydd-ddaliadol tir sy'n cynnwys Hen Safle Ffatri Chubb, Ystad Ddiwydiannol Maerdy, Glynrhedynog, RhCT sydd wedi'i leoli mewn safle allweddol ger daliadau tir preifat a chynghorau, i hwyluso datblygiad Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg newydd a / neu ddatblygu'r safle i ddiwallu anghenion y gymuned leol.

(Tudalennau 343 - 350)

18. DATBLYGIAD GOFAL YCHWANEGOL DANMYNYDD (PORTH)

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran y Gwasanaethau Cymuned a Gwasanaethau i Blant, sy'n darparu diweddariad ar ailddatblygiad hen Gartref Gofal Danymynydd, Porth, ar gyfer darparu tai gofal ychwanegol fel rhan o raglen datblygu tai gofal ychwanegol y Cyngor, a gymeradwywyd yn flaenorol gan y Cabinet, ac sy'n ceisio cymeradwyaeth i'r gyllideb a'r cyllid cyfalaf gofynnol i gyflawni'r cynllun.

(Tudalennau 351 - 358)

19. MATERION BRYD

Trafod unrhyw faterion bryd y mae'r Cadeirydd yn eu gweld yn briodol.



Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu

Cylchrediad:-

Y Cynghorwyr: Y Cynghorydd A Morgan (Cadeirydd)
Y Cynghorydd M Webber (Is-gadeirydd)
Y Cynghorydd R Bevan
Y Cynghorydd A Crimmings
Y Cynghorydd M Norris
Y Cynghorydd J Rosser
Y Cynghorydd R Lewis
Y Cynghorydd C Leyshon
Y Cynghorydd G Hopkins

Swyddogion: Chris Bradshaw, Prif Weithredwr
Christian Hanagan, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu
Nigel Wheeler, Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran – Ffyniant, Datblygu, a Gwasanaethau Rheng-flaen
Paul Mee, Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran y Gwasanaethau Cymuned a Gwasanaethau i Blant
Richard Evans, Cyfarwyddwr - Materion Adnoddau Dynol
David Powell, Cyfarwyddwr Materion Eiddo'r Cyngor
Simon Gale, Cyfarwyddwr Materion Ffyniant a Datblygu
Andy Wilkins, Cyfarwyddwr y Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol
Barrie Davies, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Digidol
Louise Davies, Cyfarwyddwr – Iechyd a Diogelwch y Cyhoedd, a Gwasanaethau'r Gymuned
Gaynor Davies, Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant
Derek James, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Materion Ffyniant a Datblygu
Paul Griffiths, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Gwella

Tudalen wag

PWYLLGOR CABINET CYNGOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Cofnodion o gyfarfod y Cabinet a gynhaliwyd Dydd Iau, 25 Chwefror 2021 am 10.30 am

Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol - Cabinet Aelodau oedd yn bresennol:-:

Y Cynghorydd A Morgan (Cadeirydd)

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

Swyddogion oedd yn bresennol

Mr C Bradshaw, Prif Weithredwr
Mr C Hanagan, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu
Mr N Wheeler, Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran – Ffyniant, Datblygu, a Gwasanaethau Rheng-flaen
Mr P Mee, Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran y Gwasanaethau Cymuned a Gwasanaethau i Blant
Mr R Evans, Cyfarwyddwr - Materion Adnoddau Dynol
Mr D Powell, Cyfarwyddwr Materion Eiddo'r Cyngor
Mr S Gale, Cyfarwyddwr Materion Ffyniant a Datblygu
Mr A Wilkins, Cyfarwyddwr y Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol
Mr B Davies, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Digidol
Ms G Davies, Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant
Mr P Griffiths, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Gwella
Ms C Jones, Pennaeth Materion Mynediad a Chynhwysiant

Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol eraill oedd yn bresennol

Y Cynghorydd L Walker

58 DATGAN BUDDIANT

Yn unol â Chod Ymddygiad y Cyngor, cafodd y datganiadau o fuddiant personol canlynol eu gwneud:-

- Cyhoeddodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol i Oedolion a'r Iaith Gymraeg, Cynghorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol G Hopkins, y buddiant canlynol yn Eitem 4 ar yr Agenda - Ymatebion i'r Ymgynghoriad ar yr Ardoll Seilwaith Cymunedol (CIL): 'Rydw i'n Aelod o Gyngor Cymuned Llanharan';
- Cyhoeddodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Cymunedau Cadarn, Llesiant a Gwasanaethau Diwylliannol, Cynghorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol R Lewis y buddiant canlynol yn Eitem 8 yr Agenda - Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif - Diweddariad ar y Cynigion i wella Darpariaeth Addysg yng Nghwm Cynon: 'Fi yw Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr yn YGG Abercynon, y

- cyfeirir ato yn yr adroddiad',
- Cyhoeddodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Cymunedau Cadarn, Llesiant a Gwasanaethau Diwylliannol, Cynghorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol R Lewis y buddiant canlynol yn Eitem 14 ar yr Agenda - Cynllun Rheoli Asedau Corfforaethol 2018/23: Gwybodaeth interim: 'Cyfeirir at Neuadd Gymdeithasol Abercynon yn yr adroddiad ac rydw i'n aelod o'r Pwyllgor'; a
- Cyhoeddodd Cynghorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol L. Walker y buddiant canlynol yn Eitem 8 ar yr Agenda - Adolygiad o Ddarpariaeth Ysgolion Arbennig yng Nghyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf: 'Rydw i ar y Corff Llywodraethu Ysgol Tŷ Coch'.
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59 Cofnodion

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet gymeradwyo cofnodion y cyfarfodydd a gynhaliwyd ar 14 Ionawr 2021 a 28 Ionawr 2021 yn rhai cywir.

60 Cytundeb Dinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd - Pum Mlynedd yn Ddiweddarach

Rhoddodd y Prif Weithredwr ddiweddariad am gynnydd Cyd-gabinet Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd ('CCR') (y 'Cabinet Rhanbarthol' - cyd-bwyllgor), gan drafod goruchwyllo twf economaidd y Rhanbarth a chyflawni'r ymrwymïadau a nodir ym Margen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd.

Dywedodd y Prif Weithredwr wrth y Cabinet, o dan delerau ac amodau Bargen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd, fod y rhaglen ariannu yn destun Adolygiad Porth bob pum mlynedd. Esboniwyd bod yr Adolygiad Porth yn asesiad dan arweiniad Llywodraeth y DU, gyda chefnogaeth Panel Gwerthuso Cenedlaethol annibynnol, a gomisiynodd SQW i gynnal gwerthusiad o effeithiau'r buddsoddiadau a wnaed hyd yma gan Brifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd. Tynnwyd sylw'r Aelodau at yr atodiadau i'r adroddiad, lle manylwyd ar ddogfennau'r Adolygiad Annibynnol a'r Hunanwerthusiad.

Atgoffodd y Prif Weithredwr yr Aelodau fod y buddsoddiad CCR gwerth £1.2 biliwn yn cynnwys dwy elfen wahanol:

- £734 miliwn – cynllun METRO;
- £495 miliwn - Cronfa Fuddsoddi Ehangach y Cabinet Rhanbarthol.

Dywedodd y Prif Weithredwr wrth y Cabinet fod llawer o waith Bargen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd y tu allan i gwmpas yr Awdurdod Lleol, a olygai y gallai ychwanegu gwerth. Hysbyswyd yr aelodau o'r buddsoddiadau canlynol yn sgil Bargen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd, a oedd o fudd i RCT:

- Buddsoddiad 'Zipworld', gwerth £4 miliwn;
- Cyfnewidfa'r Porth;
- Adleoliad Trafnidiaeth Cymru i Bontypridd; a
- Gwelliannau i linellau'r Cwm.

Diolchodd yr Arweinydd i'r Prif Weithredwr am y diweddariad ac roedd yn falch o nodi lefel y buddsoddiad o safbwynt RhCT a'r Cymoedd. Soniodd yr Arweinydd am y buddsoddiad o £2.5 miliwn yng Nghyfnewidfa'r Porth, y rhaglen i raddedigion, 'Zipworld' - y mae disgwyl iddo gael ei ehangu, a thrafodaethau

mewn perthynas â gosod pwyntiau gwefru Cerbydau Trydan. Ychwanegodd yr Arweinydd fod y 10 Awdurdod Lleol, trwy'r Fargen Ddinesig, wedi dod ynghyd i roi llais cryfach i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru, a oedd wedi caniatáu iddyn nhw lobïo Llywodraeth y DU a Chymru ar gyfleoedd cyllido amrywiol.

Adleisiodd y Dirprwy Arweinydd sylwadau'r Arweinydd am y buddsoddiad cadarnhaol yn RhCT a'r Cymoedd, trwy Fargen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd, a nododd fod y rhyng-gysylltedd yn y Rhanbarth wedi creu rhagor o gyfleoedd a dewis. Dywedodd y Dirprwy Arweinydd fod yr adroddiad wedi cael ei ystyried gan Bwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu y Cyngor yn ei gyfarfod ar 23 Chwefror 2021 a lleisiodd ei chefnogaeth i'r adroddiad.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Nodi'r wybodaeth a ddarparwyd yn yr adroddiad, a'r cynnydd a wnaed gan Gyd-Gabinet Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd mewn perthynas â'r ymrwymïadau y cytunwyd arnynt a nodir ym Margen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd;
2. Adolygu a thrafod yr adroddiad a gomisiynwyd gan Lywodraeth y DU ar hynt Bargen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd i lywio'r Adolygiad Porth sydd ar ddod o Gronfa Buddsoddi Ehangach Bargen Ddinesig Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf, fel y nodir yn Atodiad A; a
3. Gofyn i ganlyniadau, casgliad ac argymhellion yr Adolygiad Porth sydd i ddod, sydd i'w cwblhau cyn 31 Mawrth 2021, gael eu cyflwyno i'r Cabinet yn y dyfodol, cyn gynted ag y daw'n ddogfen gyhoeddus.

61 Ymatebion i Ymgynghoriad yr Ardoll Seilwaith Cymunedol

Rhoddodd y Cyfarwyddwr, Materion Ffyniant a Datblygu, ddiweddariad i'r Cabinet am yr ymatebion sy'n deillio o ymgynghoriad yr Ardoll Seilwaith Cymunedol mewn perthynas â Rhestr Rheoliad 123 y Cyngor.

Esboniodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod y Cabinet, ar 17 Tachwedd 2020, wedi cymeradwyo'r Rhestr Rheoliad 123 wedi'i diweddaru, i'w chyhoeddi ar wefan y Cyngor am gyfnod o 28 diwrnod. Dechreuodd y cyfnod ymgynghori ddydd Mawrth 24 Tachwedd 2020 a daeth i ben ddydd Llun 21 Rhagfyr 2020.

Cafodd yr Aelodau wybod am yr ymatebion canlynol o ganlyniad i'r ymgynghoriad:

- Argymhellodd Cynghorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol Mark Adams y dylid ychwanegu estyniad Ffordd Liniaru Rhondda Fach i Maerdy at Restr Rheoliad 123; a
- Argymhellodd Cynghorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol Joel James ac Aelodau Cyngor Cymuned Llanilltud Faerdref fod gofyniad i wella/cynyddu gallu addysgol yn Ysgol Gynradd Maesybryn, Llanilltud Faerdref.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod swyddogion wedi ystyried yr argymhellion uchod mewn ymgynghoriad ag Addysg a Phriffyrdd ac wedi cyflwyno'r materion i'r Cabinet i'w trafod.

O ran yr argymhelliad am Estyniad Ffordd Liniaru Rhondda Fach, atgoffodd y Cyfarwyddwr yr Aelodau mai prwpas Rhestr CIL 123 oedd lliniaru effaith twf a datblygiad sylweddol, yn enwedig yr hyn sy'n gysylltiedig â'r Cynllun Datblygu Lleol. O ran Ffordd Liniaru Rhondda Fach, dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod nifer o

gynlluniau trafnidiaeth eisoes wedi'u cynnwys yn Rhestr 123, gyda'r nod penodol o liniaru effaith datblygiadau. Eglurodd y Cyfarwyddwr nad oedd y cynllun yn cyd-fynd ag egwyddorion Rhestr Rheoliad 123 ac felly, cynigiodd beidio ag ychwanegu'r cynllun at Restr Rheoliad 123, ond yn hytrach, ystyried llwybrau cyllido eraill.

O ran argymhelliad Ysgol Gynradd Maesybryn, dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr nad oedd unrhyw bwysau brys ar yr ysgol, a fyddai'n gwarantu ei chynnwys yn Rhestr Rheoliad 123 ar hyn o bryd, ond awgrymodd fod darpariaeth addysg, sy'n cyd-fynd â thwf, yn cael ei hystyried yn rhan adolygiad y Cynllun Datblygu Lleol.

Diolchodd yr Arweinydd i'r Cyfarwyddwr am y diweddariad a nododd, o ran argymhelliad Ysgol Gynradd Maesybryn, y gellid edrych ar hyn yn ddiweddarach pe bai'r sefyllfa'n newid. Gan gyfeirio at argymhelliad Estyniad Ffordd Liniaru Rhondda Fach, cydnabu'r Arweinydd nad oedd hyn briodol ar gyfer y rhestr ar hyn o bryd ond pwysleisiodd ei fod yn parhau i fod yn flaenoriaeth gan y Cyngor. Esboniodd yr Arweinydd fod maint y buddsoddiad yr oedd ei angen ar gyfer hyd llawn y ffordd yn fwy na £150 miliwn, ac o'r herwydd, byddai angen ystyried llwybrau cyllido eraill.

Cymeradwyodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Menter, Datblygu, a Thai y sylwadau a wnaed gan yr Arweinydd a dywedodd fod ymestyn Ffordd Liniaru Rhondda Fach yn bwnc trafod gyda thrigolion yr ardal, gan y byddai mynediad at drafnidiaeth gyhoeddus yn cael ei wella'n fawr. Cydnabu'r Aelod o'r Cabinet na fyddai'r estyniad yn briodol ar gyfer y rhestr gyfredol ac y byddai'r gwaith yn cael ei lywio'n well trwy'r Cynllun Datblygu Lleol.

Adleisiodd y Dirprwy Arweinydd y sylwadau blaenorol ac ychwanegodd fod y Cyfarwyddwr wedi mynychu cyfarfodydd y Pwyllgor Cyd-gysylltu â'r Gymuned yn aml i atgoffa'r Cynghorau Cymuned o'r rhwymedigaethau i gyflwyno Rhestr 123.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Nodi'r ymatebion ymgynghori a gafwyd gan Aelodau Etholedig a'r Cyngor Cymuned ym mharagraffau 5.2, 5.3 a 5.4 o'r adroddiad;
2. Nodi'r argymhellion mewn perthynas ag ymatebion yr ymgynghoriad a'r cynlluniau arfaethedig yn Adran 6; a
3. Mabwysiadu'r Rhestr Rheoleiddio 123.

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Deddf Rheoleiddio Pwerau Ymchwilio 2000 – Defnydd o'r Ddeddf yn 2019-20 gan Gyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf a Pholisi Gorfodi Corfforaethol y Cyngor

Rhoddodd Cyfarwyddwr y Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol yr wybodaeth flynyddol ddiweddaraf i'r Aelodau am ddefnydd y Cyngor o Ddeddf Rheoleiddio Pwerau Ymchwilio 2000 (fel y'i diwygiwyd) yn ystod y cyfnod 1 Ebrill 2019 tan 31 Rhagfyr 2020. Esboniodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod Swyddfa'r Comisiynydd Pwerau Archwilio (IPCO) wedi newid ei gyfnod dychwelyd blynyddol i gyd-fynd â'r flwyddyn galendr; ac awgrymodd fod yr adroddiad ar ddefnydd y Cyngor o RIPA yn cael ei ddiwygio yn yr un modd i gyd-fynd â'r flwyddyn galendr.

Atgoffwyd yr Aelodau y gellir cyhoeddi awdurdodiadau gwyliadwriaeth dan gyfarwyddyd lle bo hynny'n angenrheidiol ac yn gymesur er mwyn atal neu ganfod trosedd, neu atal anhrefn, lle gellir cosbi o leiaf un o'r troseddau trwy uchafswm cyfnod o garchar o leiaf chwe mis neu ragor, neu os yw'n ymwneud â

gwerthu alcohol neu dybaco/nicotin dan oed. Yn ystod y cyfnod 1 Ebrill 2019 - 31 Rhagfyr 2020, dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr y cyhoeddwyd pedwar awdurdodiad mewn perthynas â gwyliadwriaeth dan gyfarwyddyd; roedd pob un ohonynt mewn perthynas â Thipio Sbwriel. Yn ystod yr un cyfnod, ni chafwyd unrhyw awdurdodiadau ar gyfer defnyddio ffynonellau cudd-wybodaeth ddynol.

Parhaodd y Cyfarwyddwr i siarad am y gwaith cudd, nad yw'n dod o fewn y gofynion statudol ar gyfer RIPA. Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod y defnydd o dechnegau gorfodi cudd yn cael eu hasesu i sicrhau eu bod yn cael eu cyflawni yn unol â gofynion Deddf Hawliau Dynol 1998. Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr wrth y Cabinet y bu cynnydd yn y broses fonitro safleoedd rhyngwryd, yn enwedig o ganlyniad i bandemig Covid-19. Dysgodd yr Aelodau fod adolygiad o'r gweithrediadau a'r ymchwiliadau hyn yn dangos nad oedden nhw wedi arwain at effaith amhriodol ar hawliau dynol unigolyn ar unrhyw adeg.

Yna siaradodd y Cyfarwyddwr am archwiliad tair blynedd yr IPCO ar y defnydd priodol o RIPA yn Rhondda Cynon Taf, a gynhaliwyd o bell ar 7 Medi 2020. Roedd yn braf nodi bod yr adroddiad archwilio yn ategu'r defnydd a'r gweithdrefnau RIPA sydd ar waith yn yr Awdurdod Lleol.

Cyn gorffen, tynnodd y Cyfarwyddwr sylw'r Aelodau at Atodiad B yr adroddiad, a oedd yn manylu ar Bolisi Corfforaethol newydd y Cyngor ar gyfer Caffael Data Cyfathrebu, a gafodd ei ddrafftio o ganlyniad i ddyfodiad y Ddeddf Pwerau Ymchwilio.

Diolchodd y Dirprwy Arweinydd i'r Cyfarwyddwr am y diweddariad a rhoi sicrwydd i'r Aelodau bod y RIPA yn parhau i gael ei defnyddio mewn modd cyson a phriodol. Siaradodd y Dirprwy Arweinydd am y cyfeiriad at hyfforddiant yn y llythyr at y Prif Weithredwr a theimlai y byddai hyfforddiant yn fuddiol i'r holl Aelodau Etholedig yn y dyfodol agos.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Nodi cynnwys yr adroddiad.
2. Cydnabod bod RIPA wedi ei defnyddio mewn modd priodol sy'n gyson â pholisïau'r Cyngor, yn ystod y cyfnod 1 Ebrill 2019 tan 31 Rhagfyr 2020;
3. Cymeradwyo'r Ddogfen Polisi a Gweithdrefnau Corfforaethol wedi'i diweddaru ar Gaffael Data Cyfathrebu o dan Ddeddf Pwerau Ymchwilio 2016 (IPA) sydd ynghlwm yn Atodiad B i'r adroddiad; a
4. Cymeradwyo newid yn y cyfnod adrodd i flwyddyn galendr, i gyd-fynd â'r cyfnod dychwelyd ffurflenni IPCO.

63 Adroddiad Blynyddol y Cydwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Rhanbarthol 2019-2020

Cyflwynodd Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran y Gwasanaethau Cymuned a Gwasanaethau i Blant Adroddiad Blynyddol y Cydwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Rhanbarthol 2019-2020 i'r Cabinet.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran fod RhCT yn rhan o Gydwasanaeth Mabwysiadu'r Fro, y Cymoedd a Chaerdydd (VVC), y mwyaf o blith y pum cydweithrediad rhanbarthol, sy'n rhan o'r Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yng Nghymru (NAS).

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran wrth y Cabinet fod yr adroddiad wedi bod yn destun craffu gan Fwrdd Rhianta Corfforaethol y Cyngor a'r Pwyllgor Craffu -

Plant a Phobl Ifainc.

Yn ystod Blwyddyn y Cyngor 2019-20, dysgodd yr Aelodau fod y galw am fabwysiadwyr wedi lleihau rhywfaint yn RhCT, ond roedd hyn yn debygol o fod yn gysylltiedig â'r gwaith â ffocws a wnaed i leihau nifer y Plant sy'n Derbyn Gofal yn fwy cyffredinol.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran mai blaenoriaeth allweddol y cydweithrediad oedd cynyddu'r cyflenwad o fabwysiadwyr a phwysleisiodd bwysigrwydd gwaith recriwtio. Yn ystod y cyfnod, bu cynnydd o 35% yn nifer y mabwysiadwyr, sy'n galonogol, ond dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran fod angen gwaith pellach i gynyddu'r niferoedd. At ei gilydd, roedd y Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran o'r farn bod yr adroddiad yn tynnu sylw at ddarlun cadarnhaol a buddion y dull cydweithredol.

Diolchodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Gwasanaethau i Blant i'r Cyfarwyddwr Cyfadran am yr adroddiad calonogol. Siaradodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet am y gwelliant a wnaed i'r gwaith 'Taith Bywyd', a oedd wedi cynyddu o 44% i 60%, ond nododd fod cryn dipyn i'w wneud eto i gyrraedd y targed o 84%.

Aeth yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ymlaen i siarad am y gwaith sylweddol a wnaed i gynyddu nifer y mabwysiadwyr yn y Rhanbarth, a oedd wedi arwain at gynnydd o 35%. Roedd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet yn falch o nodi'r cynnydd, ond nododd fod angen gwneud gwaith pellach i gynyddu'r niferoedd, yn enwedig yn dilyn pwysau'r pandemig Covid-19.

Adleisiodd yr Arweinydd sylwadau'r Aelod o'r Cabinet a manteisiodd ar y cyfle i ddiolch i staff am ddal ati i recriwtio rhagor o fabwysiadwyr flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn. Siaradodd yr Arweinydd am y gostyngiad yn nifer yr atgyfeiriadau i'r gwasanaeth Plant sy'n Derbyn Gofal yn ystod y pandemig a chydabu, wrth i'r plant ddechrau dychwelyd i'r ysgol, y gallai'r atgyfeiriadau gynyddu eto. Dywedodd yr Arweinydd fod trafodaethau yn cael eu cynnal gyda Llywodraeth Cymru mewn perthynas â rhoi cefnogaeth ychwanegol i Awdurdodau Lleol i ddarparu ar gyfer unrhyw bwysau ychwanegol wrth ddychwelyd i'r drefn arferol.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Nodi cynnwys yr adroddiad.

64 Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif - Y Diweddaraaf am Gynigion i wella darpariaeth Addysg yng Nghwm Cynon

Cyflwynodd y Cyfarwyddwr, Gwasanaethau Addysg a Chynhwysiant, adroddiad sy'n rhoi diweddariad i'r Cabinet am y prosiectau i wella addysg yng Nghwm Cynon, yn dilyn yr adroddiad a ddaeth gerbron y Cabinet ym mis Medi 2018. Dyma'r prosiectau dan sylw:

- Y buddsoddiad mewn ysgol newydd ar gyfer Ysgol Gynradd Hirwaun; a
- Gwellu darpariaeth addysg Gymraeg yng Nghwm Cynon.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr, yn dilyn yr adroddiad i'r Cabinet ym mis Medi 2018, y gwnaed buddsoddiad sylweddol yn natblygiad Ysgol Gynradd Hirwaun, gwerth cyfanswm o £10.2 miliwn, ar ôl i Lywodraeth Cymru gymeradwyo'r cyllid. Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod adeilad yr ysgol bellach wedi'i gwblhau a bod staff a disgyblion wedi symud i mewn ar ôl hanner tymor ym mis Tachwedd 2020. Esboniwyd bod Cam 2 ar y gweill gyda dymchwel y bloc iau a bod y ddarpariaeth Dechrau'n Deg newydd ar y safle hefyd wedi'i chwblhau a'i hagar

ym mis Ionawr 2021.

O ran y buddsoddiad yn YGG Aberdâr, dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod Llywodraeth Cymru wedi cymeradwyo cyllid gwerth cyfanswm o £4.5 miliwn ers hynny, gan gynnwys y cyllid i greu Meithrinfa newydd. Hysbyswyd yr Aelodau bod ymgynghoriad yn cael ei gynnal ar hyn o bryd cyn cyflwyno cais cynllunio.

Aeth y Cyfarwyddwr ymlaen i siarad am y buddsoddiad yn Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun a'r cynlluniau i gynyddu'r capasiti. Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod cynlluniau wedi datblygu'n sylweddol a bod y cais cynllunio ar gyfer y prosiect wedi'i gyflwyno, a'r bwriad yw dechrau'r gwaith ar y safle ym mis Ebrill 2021. Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr mai cyfanswm y gost amcangyfrifedig a gyflwynwyd i'r Cabinet ym mis Medi 2018 oedd £ 10.2 miliwn ond yn dilyn datblygiad pellach, roedd cyfanswm costau'r prosiect ar gyfer y cynigion bellach yn £ 12.1 miliwn. Serch hynny, ychwanegodd y Cyfarwyddwr, yn dilyn newidiadau i'r pecyn cyllido, a olygai fod cyfradd ymyrraeth grant Band B Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif wedi cynyddu o 50% i 65%, mewn gwirionedd roedd cyfraniad y Cyngor i'r buddsoddiad cyffredinol wedi gostwng o tua £5.1 miliwn i £4.2 miliwn.

Ymhellach, cyfeiriodd y Cyfarwyddwr at y buddsoddiad ychwanegol canlynol a wnaed trwy'r portffolio Addysg:

- Buddsoddiad o fwy na £2 miliwn trwy Raglenni Cyfalaf a Moderneiddio Ysgolion y Cyngor, sydd wedi'u cyflawni'n llwyddiannus; a
- Sicrhawyd £250k o Grant Cyfalaf Cyfrwng Cymraeg Llywodraeth Cymru i ailagor Meithrinfa ar safle Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Abercynon.

Ar ôl gorffen cyflwyniad y Cyfarwyddwr, cynigiodd y Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a Gwasanaethau Digidol y diwygiad canlynol i argymhelliad 2.2 yr adroddiad, i'w drafod gan y Cabinet:

- Nodi a chymeradwyo'r amrywiadau i gynigion Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun ers yr adroddiad diwethaf *a chytuno i gynnig y dylid cyflwyno cyfraniad gofynnol y Cyngor trwy fenthycia darbodus i'r Cyngor (yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth yr Achos Busnes Terfynol).*

Diolchodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant i'r Cyfarwyddwr am yr adroddiad cadarnhaol ac roedd yn falch o gefnogi'r argymhellion gyda'r diwygiad. Dywedodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet fod yr adroddiad yn dangos ymrwymiad y Cyngor i fuddsoddi yn y portffolio Addysg a chynyddu darpariaeth Cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y Fwrdeistref yn sylweddol ac roedd yn falch o nodi, er bod cwmplas a chost datblygiad Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun wedi cynyddu, roedd cyfraniad y Cyngor wedi gostwng o ganlyniad i'r newidiadau a wnaed i Gyfradd Ymyrraeth Llywodraeth Cymru. Roedd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet yn edrych ymlaen at weld y gwaith yn cychwyn, ar ôl cwblhau Ysgol Gynradd Hirwaun yn llwyddiannus.

Croesawodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol i Oedolion a'r Iaith Gymraeg yr adroddiad ac roedd yn falch o nodi'r buddsoddiad pellach mewn cyfleusterau addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn RhCT.

Adleisiodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Cymunedau Cadarn, Llesiant a Gwasanaethau Diwylliannol sylwadau cynharach mewn perthynas â'r buddsoddiad sylweddol yn y ddarpariaeth Addysg. Siaradodd yr Aelod Cabinet am bwysigrwydd buddsoddi mewn addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg er mwyn gwneud yr ysgolion yn hygyrch trwy addysg y blynyddoedd cynnar, ac roedd yn falch o nodi

bod RhCT wedi parhau i gyfrannu at uchelgais Llywodraeth Cymru o sicrhau miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Nodi'r cynnydd a wnaed hyd yma ar y prosiectau; a
2. Nodi a chymeradwyo'r amrywiadau i gynigion Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun ers yr adroddiad diwethaf a chytuno i gynnig y dylid cyflwyno cyfraniad gofynnol y Cyngor trwy fenthycu darbodus i'r Cyngor (yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth yr Achos Busnes Terfynol).

65 Adolygiad o Ddarpariaeth Ysgolion Arbennig yng Nghyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf

Derbyn adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr, Gwasanaethau Addysg a Chynhwysiant, sy'n rhoi gwybodaeth i'r Cabinet am ymarfer casglu data a gynhaliwyd er mwyn hwyluso adolygiad manwl o ddarpariaeth ysgolion arbennig ledled y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Ystyriodd yr adolygiad hefyd effaith Deddf Tribiwnlys Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol ac Addysg (2018) o safbwynt cenedlaethol a lleol.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr mai pwrpas yr adroddiad oedd mynd i'r afael â'r galw am gapasiti ychwanegol mewn ysgolion arbennig yn Rhondda Cynon Taf i ddarparu ar gyfer y cynnydd yn nifer y disgyblion a chydabod bod y dyletswyddau statudol a osodir ar y Cyngor i gyflawni rhwymedigaethau Deddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a Thribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) (ALNET), a fydd yn cynyddu'r pwysau o ran capasiti yn y sector ysgolion arbennig.

Tynnwyd sylw aelodau at Adran 4 yr adroddiad, sef dadansoddiad manwl o'r galw cynyddol am lefydd ym mhob ysgol arbennig. Dangosodd y gymhariaeth ddata y bu cynnydd cyson yn nifer y dysgwyr, flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn ers 2016, yn Ysgol Hen Felin ac Ysgol Tŷ Coch.

Nododd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant ei bod yn anodd rhagamcanu galw wrth edrych i'r dyfodol, ond derbyniodd fod y data yn dangos cynnydd cyson. Dywedodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet fod cyfyngiadau ar rai safleoedd ysgolion ac, o ystyried y gwaith o weithredu deddfwriaeth newydd, Deddf ALNET (2018), ym mis Medi 2021, roedd yn bwysig cynnal adolygiad o'r ddarpariaeth.

Gyda chytundeb y Cadeirydd, siaradodd Cyngorydd y Fwrdeistref Sirol E. Webster am yr eitem yma.

Diolchodd yr Arweinydd i'r Cyngorydd Walker am ei sylwadau a
PENDERFYNODD Y CABINET:

1. Nodi cynnwys yr adroddiad;
2. Cydnabod y pwysau ar ein hysgolion arbennig a'r angen am adolygiad manwl o ddarpariaeth ysgolion arbennig ledled y Fwrdeistref Sirol;
3. Cyflawni gwaith cwrpasu ychwanegol gan gynnwys astudiaethau dichonoldeb lle bo hynny'n briodol, i lywio cynigion posibl ar gyfer newid; a
4. Derbyn adroddiad pellach yn cyflwyno canlyniad yr adolygiad, gan gynnwys argymhellion ar gyfer buddsoddiadau posibl yn y dyfodol.

66 Diweddariad ar Weithredu Deddf Tribiwnlys Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol

ac Addysg (2018) yng Nghyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf

Rhoddodd y Cyfarwyddwr, Gwasanaethau Addysg a Chynhwysiant, adroddiad sy'n rhoi diweddariad i'r Cabinet am weithrediad Deddf ALNET (Deddf Tribiwnlys Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol ac Addysg (2018)) a darparu gwybodaeth i'r Cabinet am oblygiadau'r ddeddfwriaeth newydd i'r Cyngor o safbwynt lleol.

Hysbyswyd y Cabinet am y newidiadau a gynlluniwyd yng Nghymru mewn perthynas â'r ddarpariaeth statudol sy'n ofynnol i ddiwallu anghenion dysgwyr ag Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig (AAA) / Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol (ALN) wrth weithredu deddfwriaeth newydd, Deddf ALNET (2018), ym mis Medi 2021. Derbyniodd Deddf ALNET (Cymru) 2018 (Deddf 2018) Gydsyniad Brenhinol ym mis Ionawr 2018.

Rhoddodd y swyddog fanylion i'r Cabinet mewn perthynas â'r fframwaith statudol newydd, a'r un ar ddeg nod craidd yn y Ddeddf, a amlinellwyd yn Adran 4 yr adroddiad.

Esboniodd y swyddog fod yn rhaid i Gyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol RCT fod yn barod i weithredu'r system ADY newydd yn unol â'r amserlenni rhagnodedig o fis Medi 2021 ac argymhellodd y dylid gwneud gwaith ychwanegol i hwyluso adolygiad manwl o'r adnoddau ychwanegol y mae Gwasanaeth Mynediad a Chynhwysiant y Sir, sicrhau bod RhCT yn gallu gweithredu gofynion statudol newydd Deddf ALNET yn llawn, a galluogi pob dysgwr ag ADY i gyflawni ei botensial trwy weithredu diwygio trawsnewidiol yn effeithiol.

Diolchodd Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant i'r swyddog am y diweddariad a dywedodd fod angen yr adolygiad i fynd i'r afael â'r galw am gapasiti ychwanegol i'r awdurdod lleol gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau statudol ehangach o dan y Ddeddf ALNET newydd, er mwyn sicrhau bod pob plentyn a pherson ifanc yn Rhondda Cynon Taf yn derbyn darpariaeth ADY o ansawdd uchel. Ychwanegodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ei bod hi'n edrych ymlaen at dderbyn canlyniad yr adolygiad ac ystyried y buddsoddiad posibl y gallai fod ei angen.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Nodi cynnwys yr adroddiad;
2. Cynnal adolygiad i gwmpasu'r adnoddau ychwanegol sydd eu hangen i weithredu'r ddeddfwriaeth ADY newydd; a
3. Derbyn adroddiad pellach yn cyflwyno canlyniad yr adolygiad, gan gynnwys argymhellion ar gyfer buddsoddiadau posibl yn y dyfodol.

67 Polisi Ffioedd a Thaliadau'r Cyngor 2021/22

Cyflwynodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau, Cyflawni a Gwellu, adroddiad i'r Aelodau sy'n amlinellu'r diwygiadau arfaethedig i lefelau ffioedd a thaliadau'r Cyngor ar gyfer 2021/21 (ar waith o Ebrill 2021 neu cyn gynted â phosibl wedyn), yn ogystal â rhoi gwybodaeth am y ffioedd a'r taliadau sydd eisoes wedi'u cymeradwyo y mae modd eu cynnwys yn y Strategaeth Gyllideb arfaethedig ar gyfer 2021/22.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth fod adolygiad y Cabinet o'r ffioedd a'r taliadau yn rhan o drefniadau cynllunio ariannol Tymor Canolig y Cyngor, a bod cynnig i roi cynnydd safonol o 1.7% ar waith o 1 Ebrill 2021, ac eithrio yn y

meysydd gwahanol:

- Hamdden am Oes - Dim cynnydd
- Taliadau Meysydd Parcio - Dim cynnydd;
- Ffioedd chwarae yr haf a'r gaeaf (Clybiau Chwaraeon) - Dim cynnydd;
- Pryd-ar-glud/Prydau Canolfannau Oriau Ddydd - 10c y pryd ac yna rhewi'r pris tan 2023
- Prydau Ysgol - Dim Cynnydd (a'r pris wedi'i rewi tan Ebrill 2023)
- Ffioedd Profedigaeth - Dim Cynnydd
- Y Lido/Parc Treftadaeth Cwm Rhondda - Dim cynnydd

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth fod y lefelau cyllid a dderbyniwyd trwy'r Setliad Llywodraeth Leol wedi cael eu trafod; goblygiadau penderfyniadau a gymeradwywyd eisoes; Meysydd blaenoriaeth y Cynllun Corfforaethol; adborth a dderbyniwyd yn rhan o'r broses ymgynghori; a rhagamcanu lefel chwyddiant ar gyfer y dyfodol. Esboniwyd y byddai effaith y cynigion uchod yn lleihau'r incwm o £185k mewn blwyddyn lawn.

Diolchodd yr Arweinydd i'r Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth am y diweddariad. Dywedodd yr Arweinydd fod y sefyllfa wrth edrych i'r dyfodol, o ran ffioedd a thaliadau, yn gadarnhaol ac yn falch o nodi bod yr ymgynghoriad a gynhaliwyd wedi dangos cefnogaeth eang i'r cynigion.

Aeth yr Arweinydd ymlaen i siarad am y peilot, a gymeradwywyd ym mis Tachwedd 2019, i gymhwyso ffi amlosgi is ar gyfer trefnwyr angladdau sy'n cynnig amlosgiad uniongyrchol yn Rhondda Cynon Taf. Esboniwyd bod y Cyngor wedi edrych yn sympathetig ar feysydd fel hyn, a oedd, yn anffodus, wedi codi o ganlyniad i bandemig Covid-19.

Roedd y Dirprwy Arweinydd yn falch o nodi'r gostyngiad parhaus arfaethedig o 25% i holl ffioedd profedigaeth y Cyngor a dynnir gan deuluoedd cyn-filwyr rhyfel ymadawedig a swyddogion y lluoedd arfog sy'n preswyllo yn Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Siaradodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Amgylchedd, Hamdden a Threftadaeth am bwysigrwydd plant yn cyrchu'r cyfleusterau hamdden ar adeg pan mae'n ddiogel gwneud hynny a chwestiynodd effaith ariannol rhewi taliadau caeau 3G, yn unol â thaliadau caeau chwarae. Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth pe bai'r Cabinet yn bwriadu rhewi taliadau caeau 3G, byddai'r gost flynyddol yn cyfateb i £2000.

Roedd Aelodau'r Cabinet yn gefnogol i'r gwelliant ac yn cydnabod bod y gost yn fach iawn o'i chymharu â phwysigrwydd i blant gael mynediad at gyfleusterau hamdden. Felly, **PENDERFYNWYD:**

1. Cymeradwyo'r lefelau diwygiedig arfaethedig ar gyfer holl ffioedd a thaliadau'r Cyngor fel sydd wedi'u hamlinellu yn adran 5 o'r adroddiad ac sydd wedi'u nodi yn Atodiad 1, yn amodol ar y diwygiad yma;
 - Rhewi'r taliadau caeau 3G ar gyfer 2021/2022 (ar gost o £2k);
2. Yn amodol ar gytuno ar gynigion ffioedd a thaliadau, cynnwys yr effaith gyllidebol net £ 187k (wedi'i diweddaru) ar gyfer 2021/22 yn y cynigion strategaeth gyllidebol i'w hystyried gan y Cabinet a'r Cyngor fel y bo'n briodol (paragraff 5.4); a
3. Nodi'r penderfyniadau ffioedd a thaliadau sydd eisoes wedi'u cymeradwyo a'u cynnwys yn Strategaeth Gyllideb arfaethedig 2021/22 (paragraff 5.5 / Tabl 2).

Cyllideb Refeniw'r Cyngor ar gyfer 2021/22

Cyflwynodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Digidol ganlyniadau ail gam yr ymgynghoriad ar y Gyllideb i'r Cabinet er mwyn i'r Aelodau ystyried a diwygio'r strategaeth gyllideb ddrafft yr hoffent ei hargymell i'r Cyngor yn y cyfarfod ar 10 Mawrth 2021.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod yr adborth wedi'i atodi i'r adroddiad a'i fod yn cynnwys adborth Pwyllgor Craffu - Cyllid a Chyflawniad y Cyngor a Fforwm Cyllideb yr Ysgol.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr wrth y Cabinet fod yr adroddiad yn cynnwys:

- Cynnydd arfaethedig yn y Dreth Gyngor o 2.65%, a fyddai'n cynyddu'r bwlch cyllideb sy'n weddill o £182,000;
- Cyllideb Ysgolion sydd â chynnydd o £2.2 miliwn o £161.6 miliwn i £163.8 miliwn er mwyn cwmparu yr holl bwysau chwyddiant a nifer y disgyblion yn llawn, gan gynnwys costau uwch Ardrethi Annomestig.
- Cyflawni arbedion effeithlonrwydd o £4.6 miliwn;
- Nodwyd nifer o feysydd ar gyfer adnoddau a buddsoddiad ychwanegol, gan gynnwys y canlynol:
 - Cynllun rhyddhad lleol - Ardrethi Annomestig
 - Costau parcio
 - Newid yn yr Hinsawdd a Lleihau Carbon
 - Graddedigion
 - Cefnogi Lles
 - Ffioedd a chostau
 - Gwasanaethau Iechyd a Diogelwch y Cyhoedd - Adnoddau Ychwanegol
 - Cymorth Atal Llifogydd
 - Carfan Torri Gordyfiant

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr, er mwyn mynd i'r afael â'r bwlch cyllidebol sy'n weddill, y cynigiwyd y dylid dyrannu £ 0.711 miliwn o'r gronfa Ariannu Drosiannol ar gyfer 2021/22, a oedd yn cynnwys penderfyniad y Cabinet i rewi taliadau caeau 3G ar gyfer 2021/22.

Diolchodd yr Arweinydd i'r Cyfarwyddwr a'r tîm ariannol am yr adroddiad cadarn gerbron y Cabinet.

Eglurodd yr Arweinydd fod y gefnogaeth arfaethedig o £50,000 i fusnesau yn ychwanegol at y gefnogaeth a ddarparwyd gan y Cyngor yn y flwyddyn flaenorol. Ar ben hynny, dywedodd yr Arweinydd fod y Cymorth Atal Llifogydd arfaethedig gwerth £50,000 yn ychwanegol at y refeniw ychwanegol o £0.5 miliwn a oedd wedi'i ymgorffori yn y gyllideb i ariannu timau Draenio parhaus ychwanegol a bod y Rhaglen Gyfalaf yn cynnwys £6-8 miliwn o ran y cynigion a gyflwynwyd i Lywodraeth Cymru mewn perthynas â gwaith lliniaru llifogydd.

O ran y cynnydd arfaethedig o 2.65% yn Nhreth y Cyngor, nododd yr Arweinydd, ei fod ymhlith yr isaf yng Nghymru a'i fod yn falch o nodi'r lefel uchel o gefnogaeth gan breswylwyr yn ystod yr ymgynghoriad.

O ran cyllid ar gyfer ysgolion, nododd yr Arweinydd fod y gyllideb arfaethedig yn amddiffyn pwysau ysgolion ond eglurodd fod angen buddsoddiad sylweddol mewn ysgolion o ran dal i fyny. Dywedodd yr Arweinydd y byddai Llywodraeth Cymru yn debygol o wneud dyraniad o fewn ei gyllideb, yn amodol ar gyhoeddi Setliad y DU.

Manteisiodd y Dirprwy Arweinydd ar y cyfle i ganmol y broses ymgynghori drylwyr a chynhwysfawr, gan gydnabod y dull digidol arloesol a gymerwyd oherwydd y cyfyngiadau. Nododd y Dirprwy Arweinydd fod y Cyngor wedi ymgysylltu â mwy na 1500 o drigolion trwy'r broses a bod y gefnogaeth i'r cynigion yn gadarnhaol ar y cyfan.

Roedd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol hefyd yn hapus i gefnogi'r adroddiad ac roedd o'r farn bod y broses ymgynghori wedi dangos bod trigolion RhCT yn cefnogi'r cyfeiriad a gymerwyd gan y Cyngor a'i flaenoriaethau ar gyfer gwella i raddau helaeth.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. Argymhell y Strategaeth Gyllideb i'r Cyngor ar 10 Mawrth 2021, yn ddarostyngedig i'r gwelliant a ganlyn:
 1. Er mwyn darparu ar gyfer penderfyniad y Cabinet i rewi taliadau caeau 3G ar gyfer 2021/22, mae'r dyraniad o £0.709 miliwn o Gyllid Pontio ar gyfer 2021/22 yn cael ei ddiwygio i £0.711 miliwn; a
 2. Awdurdodi'r Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a Gwasanaethau Digidol i newid lefel y cyfraniad o'r Gronfa Cynllunio Ariannol Tymor Canolig a Thrawsnewid Gwasanaeth, o ganlyniad i unrhyw newid i lefelau adnoddau'r Cyngor a gyhoeddwyd yn y Setliad Llywodraeth Leol Terfynol;

69 Rhaglen Gyfalaf y Cyngor 2021/22–2023/24

Rhoddodd Cyfarwyddwr y Gwasanaethau Cyllid a Digidol, adroddiad sy'n cyflwyno i'r Cabinet raglen gyfalaf dair blynedd arfaethedig ar gyfer 2021/22 hyd at 2023/24, a fydd yn cael ei chyflwyno i'r Cyngor i'w chymeradwyo, os yw'n dderbyniol.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod y rhaglen dair blynedd arfaethedig yn cynnwys:

- Rhaglen graidd gwerth £42 miliwn;
- Mwy na £12 miliwn i gefnogi Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif;
- Grantiau penodol o bron i £13 miliwn; a
- Dyrannu £27 miliwn i flaenoriaethau buddsoddi.

Diolchodd yr Arweinydd i'r Cyfarwyddwr am yr adroddiad a nododd fod y cynigion buddsoddi yn cyd-fynd yn agos â'r blaenoriaethau a amlinellwyd yng Nghynllun Corfforaethol y Cyngor.

Parhaodd yr Arweinydd a nododd y byddai'r Rhaglen Gyfalaf gyffredinol yn debygol o gynyddu'n sylweddol dros y misoedd nesaf oherwydd nifer o gynigion arfaethedig a gyflwynwyd gan y Cyngor i Lywodraeth Cymru.

Croesawodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol yr adroddiad a dywedodd fod y cynigion yn parhau â momentwm y buddsoddiad

sylweddol parhaus ledled RCT gan y Cyngor.

PENDERFYNODD y Cabinet:

1. 103 / 5000 Translation results Cynnig y rhaglen gyfalaf tair blynedd yn Atodiad A i'r Cyngor ar 10 Mawrth 2021 sy'n cynnwys:
 - Adolygiad a rhyddhau arfaethedig o gronfeydd wrth gefn wedi'u clustnodi fel sy'n cael eu manylu ym mharagraff 5.3 o'r adroddiad sydd ynghlwm;
 - Ailddyrannu adnoddau cyfalaf presennol fel y manylir ym mharagraffau 5.5 - 5.8 o'r adroddiad atodedig;
 - Blaenoriaethau buddsoddi arfaethedig fel sy'n cael eu manylu ym mharagraff 6.2 yr adroddiad atodedig;
 - Rhaglen gyfalaf graidd y Cyngor ;
 - Cyfanswm rhaglen gyfalaf y Cyngor, gan gynnwys cyllid ychwanegol sydd ddim yn gyllid craidd.
2. Awdurdodi'r Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a Gwasanaethau Digidol i newid lefel Adnoddau'r Cyngor sy'n ofynnol i ariannu'r Rhaglen Gyfalaf Tair Blynedd Graidd fel y dangosir yn Atodiad 2 o ganlyniad i unrhyw newid i lefelau adnoddau cyfalaf y Cyngor a gyhoeddwyd yn y Setliad Llywodraeth Leol Terfynol.

70 Trafod cadarnhau'r cynnig isod yn benderfyniad

PENDERFYNWYD: "Bod y cyfarfod hwn yn cadw aelodau o'r wasg ac aelodau o'r cyhoedd allan o ystafell y cyfarfod, dan Adran 100A(4) o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol (fel y'i diwygiwyd), yn ystod trafod yr agendwm nesaf, ar y sail y byddai'n debygol o olygu datgelu gwybodaeth eithriedig yn ôl diffiniad paragraff 14 o Ran 4 o Atodlen 12A i'r Ddeddf."

71 Cynllun Rheoli Asedau Corfforaethol 2018/23: Gwybodaeth interim

Yn dilyn trafod adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Materion Eiddo'r Cyngor, sy'n cynnwys Gwybodaeth Eithriedig fel y diffinnir ym Mharagraff 14 o Ran 4 o Atodlen 12A o'r Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol (fel y'i diwygiwyd), sef gwybodaeth ynglŷn â materion ariannol unigolyn penodol (gan gynnwys yr awdurdod sy'n dal yr wybodaeth honno), **PENDERFYNWYD:**

1. Nodi cynnwys yr adroddiad;
2. Derbyn adroddiad pellach gan Gyfarwyddwr Eiddo'r Cyngor yn dilyn adolygiad llawn o asedau adeiledig y Cyngor i sicrhau'r defnydd gorau posibl ohonyn nhw ar sail ein hanghenion gwasanaeth diwygiedig ar gyfer y dyfodol.

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 11.57 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Cadeirydd.**

Tudalen wag

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25th MARCH 2021

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2020 - 2021 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 on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Cabinet over the 2020-2021 Municipal Year. 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 Work Programme for the 2020-2021 Municipal Year (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 Leaders 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 The updated Work Programme is attached to this report for Members' consideration and covers the 2020-2021 Municipal Year.
- 3.4 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 2020 - 2021 Municipal Year, which is reported to Cabinet on a 3 month cycle to allow for regular updates and amendments.
- 4.2 An updated work programme is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 The 2020 - 2021 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.

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 An updated Cabinet work programme for the 2020-2021 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 MARCH 2021

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2020- 2021 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: 2020- 2021 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

Background Papers

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

Officer to contact: Emma Wilkins, Democratic Services



Cabinet Work Programme.

Forward plan of proposed Cabinet Business for the 2020/21 Municipal Year

Specific Period: -September 2020 – May 2021.

(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?
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Chief Executive

Cabinet Work Programme	In line with the Council's Constitution there is a need to advise and publish the Cabinet Work Programme.	Continuous		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'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 Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee following consideration by Cabinet

SEPTEMBER

Leader's Scheme of Delegation	To formally receive the Leader's Scheme of Delegation following the 2020 Council AGM	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Members
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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?
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Supplementary Capital Programmes – ‘Education and Inclusion Services’ and ‘Highways, Transportation & Strategic projects’	To provide details and obtain approval for phase 2 of the proposed supplementary capital programmes for Education & Inclusion Services and Highways, Transportation & Strategic Projects.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
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<div>Tudalen 27</div> <div>OCTOBER</div>							
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Medium Term Financial Plan Update	To provide Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2020/21 – 2023/24 (mid-year budget review)	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	
Corporate Performance Report	To consider the Council's Corporate Performance Report and recommend its endorsement by Council	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
Budget Consultation	To inform Members	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor M Webber	Open	

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?
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Report	of the proposed approach to resident engagement and consultation in respect of the 2021 /22 budget.				Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		

NOVEMBER

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							•
Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited – Annual General Meeting	To provide Members with details of the AGM in respect of the Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Ltd and Amgen Rhondda Ltd.	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillor A Crimmings Director of Legal Services - A Wilkins	Exempt	
Council Tax Base	To receive the report in respect of setting the Council Tax Base 2021/22	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

DECEMBER

Welsh Government Consultation: Draft	To update Members on the introduction	Complete	Cabinet	December 2020	Leader, Councillor A Morgan & Deputy	Open	
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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?
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Regulations To Establish Corporate Joint Committees	of Corporate Joint Committees (CJs) as provided for in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill which is currently awaiting Royal Assent (anticipated to be granted in early 2021)				Leader, Councillor M Webber. Chief Executive Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication		

JANUARY							
2021 Census Update	To provide an initial update for Members on the planning arrangements for the 2021 Census and the requirements on the Local Authority to work in partnership and assist the Office for National Statistics (ONS).	Complete	Cabinet	January 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber. Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication		
Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report	To consider the Annual report of the Corporate Parenting		Cabinet	January 2021	Cllr C Leyshon Service Director, Democratic Services &		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting Board Children & Young People Scrutiny

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?
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	Board.				Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		
Long Leasehold Interest Of Mountain Ash Town Hall, Mountain Ash CF45 4EU	To approve the grant of a lease for a term of 99 years of the former Mountain Ash Town Hall to Final Frontier Space Developments Limited (the Company) for an annual rental of £1 per annum to facilitate the creation of a new Business Hub.	Complete	Delegated Decision	January 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	•

FEBRUARY							
Acquisition of 31-32 Canon Street Aberdare CF44 7AP	To acquire the Freehold interest of two existing properties known as 31&32 Canon Street, Aberdare CF44 7AP which are located in a key position in a main retail location.	Complete	Delegated Decision	February 2021	Councillor M Norris Councillor B Davies Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	•
Regulation of Investigatory Powers	To enable Members to review the	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber.	Open	•

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?
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Act 2000 (RIPA) - Use of RIPA in 2019-20 by RCTCBC	Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA')				Director of Legal & Services – A Wilkins		
Corporate Asset Management Plan Interim Update	To brief members on progress with the plan	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	•
							•
Budget Report	The need to adopt a budget strategy to recommend to Council as the basis of the budget strategy for the financial year ending March 2022, following consideration of the consultation feedback	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	• Budget Consultation - Service Users, School Budget Forum and Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee.
Council Fees & Charges	The need to advise Cabinet of the proposed Council Fees and Charges for the financial year 2021/22	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

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?
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Capital Programme	To propose to Council the three year capital programme	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
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MARCH

Annual Equalities Report	To receive the report of the Director, Human Resources in respect of the Annual Equalities Report.		Cabinet	March 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans	Open	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
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The Socio Economic Duty (Equality Act 2010)	To provide information on the Socio economic Duty which will come into force on 31 March 2021.		Cabinet	March 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans	Open	
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APRIL

Built Asset Review Report	To receive the review of the Council's Built Assets to ensure optimum use of the Council's Built Assets		Cabinet	April 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell		Built Asset Review Report
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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?
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Digital Strategy Work - Update	To provide Members with an update in respect of the Digital Strategy Work Programme	Complete	Cabinet	April 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
General Data Protection Review Update	To receive an update in respect of the GDPR		Cabinet	April 2021	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

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MAY

Strategic Equality Plan	To provide Members with details of the Councils Strategic Equality plan		Cabinet	May 2021	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans	Open	
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ON GOING 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
RCT Flooding Update	To receive updates in respect of flooding in		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan,		

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?
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	Rhondda Cynon Taf in addition to statutory reporting requirements into flooding.				Chief Executive – C Bradshaw		
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	
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	
Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group Recommendations	To receive recommendations coming forward following consideration by the		Cabinet	When Applicable	Specific to the report	Open	

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?
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	Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group						
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	To update 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	

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?
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Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

SEPTEMBER

Tudalen 36	Review of Regeneration Business Support Grants	To seek approval to refocus the existing business support grant schemes delivered by the Regeneration Service, and to establish three further schemes – the Town Centre COVID 19 Recovery Grant, the Major Projects Investment Fund and the Flood Resilience Grant.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	
	Cynon Gateway North (Aberdare Bypass)	To update Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development &	Open	

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?
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	transportation project: Cynon Gateway North (Aberdare Bypass).				Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
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OCTOBER

Tudalen 37	Kick Start Scheme for Young People Aged 16-24 Years	To seek approval for an application to become a Gateway employer under the Department of Work and Pensions' Kickstart Scheme so that the Council will be able to make applications on behalf of small and medium-sized businesses with less than 30 placements for young people;	Complete	Delegated Decision	October 2020	Joint Decision of the Group Director, Prosperity & Development, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services and the Director of Human Resources	Open	
	Proposed introduction of a new Domestic Heating Grant	To provide a new Heating Grant funded from the Capital Housing Programme to support the strategic objectives contained	Complete	Delegated Decision	October 2020	Group Director, Prosperity & Development Councillor R Bevan	Open	

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?
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	with the Council's Warmer Homes: A Fuel Poverty Strategy 2009-2023.						
Active Travel: Review of Integrated Travel Map	To seek Members' approval to commence a review, including a public engagement exercise, of the Council's existing Active Travel Integrated Network Map (ATINM). This report also outlines the reasons for undertaking this exercise.	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor A Crimmings. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	

Tudalen 38

NOVEMBER

Highways, Transportation And Strategic Projects - Highway Asset Investment Strategy	To provide Members with the highway asset investment strategy	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
Community infrastructure levy	CIL regulations require a report to	Complete	Cabinet	November	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Performance 	

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?
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annual monitoring report	update Cabinet on the performance of CIL during the last year and make any amendments deemed necessary.			2020	& Development - S Gale	Scrutiny Committee	
Welsh Government's Targeted Regeneration Investment – Extension Of Funding To Include All Rct Key Town Centres	The proposal to extend the existing TRI Thematic Project to include all key town centres across Rhondda Cynon Taf.	Complete	Delegated Decision	November 2020	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		

DECEMBER

A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts	To update Cabinet on the current progress related to the development and delivery of the major transportation project: A4119 Ely Valley Road Dualling – Llantrisant Business Park to Coed Ely Roundabouts.	Complete	Cabinet	December 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
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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?
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JANUARY

Bus Emergency Scheme	To seek the agreement of this authority to sign up to the BES 2 scheme.	Complete	Cabinet	January 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
National Lottery Heritage Fund – Altered Images Project	To submit a project plan and completed permission to start forms on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to the NLHF for the Altered Images project.		Delegated Decision	January 2021	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	

FEBRUARY

Community Infrastructure Levy “CIL” Consultation Responses	To update Cabinet on the responses resulting from the Community Infrastructure Levy “CIL” consultation in respect of the Council’s Regulation 123 List		Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	
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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?
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Tudalen 41	MARCH							
	Supplementary Capital Programme - Highways, Transportation & Strategic projects	The need to seek approval for detailed investment within the service following Council's approval of the 3 year Capital Programme.		Cabinet	March 2021	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
	APRIL							
	MAY							
ONGOING UPDATES								

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?
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	Processing Of Mixed Kerbside Recycling	To provide Members with an update in respect of the opportunities of investment into processing of Mixed Kerbside Recycling		Cabinet		Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Exempt	
Tudalen 42	Highways Investment Scheme	To receive regular updates in respect of the Highways Investment Scheme		Cabinet		Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
	Review of Mainstream School Transport Provision	Need to provide Cabinet with the outcomes of the periodic review of the Council's mainstream School Transport Provision		Cabinet	Periodic Review / when applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	

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?
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Porth Town Centre Strategy	To receive updates as and when applicable		Cabinet	When appropriate	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
Taff Vale Update and Business Plan	Taff Vale Update Report.		Cabinet	When appropriate	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	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

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?
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Community & Children's Services

SEPTEMBER

Establishing a Social Letting Agency	To inform Cabinet of the proposal to establish a Social Letting Agency.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
Approval for RCT Theatres to produce a Digital Christmas Performance	To provide Cabinet Members with information in relation to the proposal for RCT Theatres to produce a digital Christmas performance to share online in December 2020.	Complete		September 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	

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?
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Proposed Extension and Variation to Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC's Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Orders	To inform Members of the outcomes of the public consultation exercise and to seek authority to extend the two Public Spaces Protection Orders relating to dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf (the Dog Control PSPO's).	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Cllr R Lewis Cllr C Crimmings Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services		
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OCTOBER

Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Plan	To receive the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Plan	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor G Hopkins, Cllr T Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Firework Controls	To receive information on Firework Controls following the Council NOM.	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
Social Services Annual Complaints Report	Provide Cabinet with an overview of the operation & effectiveness of the	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor G Hopkins Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Corporate Parenting Board

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?
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	Council's Social Services complaints procedure						
Funding for Food Banks and Mental Health Support during 'firebreak' lockdown	To approve £25,000 to support local food banks and mental health support during the Welsh Government's national "firebreak" lockdown and the subsequent weeks ahead.	Complete	Delegated Decision	October 2020	Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services Councillor R Lewis Councillor A Morgan	Open	

NOVEMBER

Bereavement Services – Concessionary Charges In Exceptional Circumstances	That a financial concession is to be afforded to families requiring multiple funeral services within their close family circle. This concession is to be applied during exceptional circumstances (e.g.	Complete	Delegated Decision	November 2020	Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services Councillor R Lewis	Open	
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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?
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	global pandemic).						
Director Social Services Annual Report	To receive the final report of the Director, Social Services prior to its publication	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillors G Hopkins & T Leyshon. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee •
Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report	In accordance with the SSWB Act, the need to report the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Report to the Cabinet, setting out their priorities for the coming year.	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillor G Hopkins & Councillor C Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	• Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board
Cwm Taf Carer's Annual Report	To approve for submission to WG the annual report.	Complete	Cabinet	November 2020	Councillor G Hopkins & Group Director Community & Children's Services - G Isingrini	Open	multi agency Cwm Taf Carers Partnership
Publication of 2020 Air Quality Progress Report	To publish the 2020 Air Quality Progress Report	Complete	Delegated Decision	November 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	

DECEMBER

RCT Together – Community Asset	To approve the transfer of the	Complete	Delegated Decision	December 2020	Cllr R Lewis Cllr M Norris	Open	
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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?
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Transfer of the Cana Centre (Penywaun) to Coalfields Regeneration Trust (Charity and Private Limited Company by guarantee without share capital).	former Cana Centre, Penywaun to Coalfields Regeneration Trust by way of a Freehold Transfer (restricted for community use).				Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services Director, Corporate Estates		
RCT Together – Community Asset Transfer of the Muni Arts Centre to Awen Cultural Trust (Registered Charity and Private Limited Company by guarantee without share capital)	To approve the leasehold transfer of the Muni Arts Centre to Awen Cultural Trust (Registered Charity and Private Limited Company by guarantee without share capital) by way of a 30 year lease as set out in paragraph 5 of the accompanying officer report, subject to the conditions in Phases 1 and 2 being met (as detailed in the officer report).	Complete	Delegated Decision	December 2020	Cllr R Lewis Cllr M Norris Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services Director, Corporate Estates	Open	

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?
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JANUARY

Application for funding for a Transformation Capital Grant to Museums, Archives and Libraries Division	To approve the submission of an application for capital funding of £128,400 to Welsh Government's Museums, Archives and Libraries Division.	Complete	Delegated Decision	January 2021	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
National Adoption Annual Report	To receive the National Adoption Annual Report		Cabinet	January 2021	C Leyshon and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	

FEBRUARY

Regional Adoption Annual Report	To consider the Regional Adoption Annual Report		Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor G Hopkins, Group Director Community & Children's Services – P Mee		

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?
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MARCH

Extra Care Business Case - Danyymynydd	To receive the proposal for Danyymynydd		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor G Hopkins, Group Director Community & Children's Services – P Mee		
The Safety of Women in Public Spaces	To receive the verbal update of the Director, Public Protection and Community Services.		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor R Lewis, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services – L Davies		

APRIL

Hires and Prices Reviews	To receive information of the review of Hires and Prices		Cabinet	April 2021	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – L Davies		
The Council's response to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation	To receive the Council's response to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation		Cabinet	April 2021	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – L Davies		

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?
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Specialist Placements including the Development of Bronllwyn	To receive information on Specialist Placements.		Cabinet	April 2021	Councillor C Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – P Mee		
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MAY

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ONGOING UPDATES

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		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's		

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?
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	transformation agenda				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	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	To provide details		Delegated	Continuous / When	Councillor R Lewis	Open	

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?
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Management Reports	of the Local Air Quality Management Reports		Decision	Applicable	Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services		
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 & Inclusion Services
SEPTEMBER

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?
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Tudalen 54	21 st Century Schools and Colleges Programme – Mutual Investment Model Welsh Education Partnership Strategic Partnering Agreement	To provide Members with an update on the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) funding element of Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme and to inform Members of progress Welsh Government has made in procuring a private sector partner to assist with the delivery of education and community facilities in Wales, under the MIM 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.	Complete	Cabinet	September 2020	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	

OCTOBER

Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2&3 and Key Stage 4 outcomes for 2019	To provide Members with initial feedback on the Foundation	Complete	Cabinet	October 2020	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G	Open	
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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?
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	Phase, Key Stage 2, 3 & 4 outcomes for 2019.				Davies		
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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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JANUARY

Proposals to replace Tsgol Llyn y Forwyn	To seek consent to develop proposals for a replacement school	Complete	Cabinet	January 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	
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Update on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	This report provides an update on the progress made in delivering the WESP	Complete	Cabinet	January 2021	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services G Davies		Children & Young People Scrutiny
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FEBRUARY

Update On The Implementation Of The Additional Learning Needs And Education Tribunal Act (2018) In Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	Provides the Cabinet with an update on the implementation of the ALNET (Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal) Act (2018) from and to provide Cabinet with	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services G Davies	Open	
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	information on the implications of the new legislation for the council from a local perspective.						
Review of Special School Provision	The report will highlight key pressures in special school placement and will seek approvals to develop proposals around possible investment in this area	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services G Davies	Open	
21st Century Schools Programme - Update On The Proposals To Improve Education Provision In The Cynon Valley	Provides an update to the Cabinet on the projects to improve education in the Cynon Valley, following the report brought before Cabinet in September 2018.	Complete	Cabinet	February 2021	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services G Davies	Open	

MARCH

A Proposal To Deliver Shared Regional Education Advisory	To consider a proposal for Rhondda Cynon Taf's		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services - G		

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?
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Services For Children And Young People With A Sensory Impairment	Sensory Team within the Access and Inclusion Service to move from a separate and autonomous sensory service to a shared sub-regional, educational advisory service for children and young people with a sensory impairment				Davies; Childcare Officer - D Humphries		
Childcare Sufficiency Update	The need to provide details of the Childcare Sufficiency Audit undertaken, in line with Welsh Government Requirements		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services - G Davies; Childcare Officer - D Humphries	Open	
Supplementary Capital Programme – Education & Inclusion Services	The need to seek Cabinet approval for further detailed investment within the service following Council's approval of the 3 year Capital Programme.		Cabinet	March 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services - G Davies	Open	

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?
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APRIL

Planning of school places south of the County Borough	To identify any potential pressures on school places and consider planning and financial implications		Cabinet	April 2021	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services - G Davies	Open	
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MAY

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ONGOING UPDATES

Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	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	

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?

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25th MARCH 2021

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES & THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

AUTHOR: CHRISTIAN HANAGAN

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the various elements of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 which received Royal Assent on the 20th January 2021.
- 1.2 The report sets out the context and requirements of the Act, detailing the Council's current position and seeks identification of the appropriate lead officer(s) to respond, support and implement the introduction of the legislative requirements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the update provided in this report.
- 2.2 Note the Council's position statement outlined within the report in respect of the requirements of the Act and agree that the appropriate officers identified are charged with taking forward the required actions in line with the timescales stipulated within the Act or as relevant regulations are made by Welsh Government.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need to provide an overview of the duties placed upon the Authority through the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which received royal assent on the 20th January 2021.
- 3.2 In accordance with the requirements of the Act, a number of actions will need to be addressed to ensure RCT comply with the legislative requirements. This report seeks to initiate this work through the identification of lead officer(s) in accordance with legislative guidelines.



4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Local Government and Election (Wales) Act (The Act) received Royal Assent on the 20th January 2021.
- 4.2 The Act was one of only two Bills in the Welsh Government's legislative programme to continue during the Covid -19 pandemic. The Bill was prioritised given the timescales required to introduce the planned reforms in respect of the 2022 local government elections.
- 4.3 A link to the Act can be found [here](#) and explanatory notes found [here](#).

5. PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT BY WELSH GOVERNMENT

- 5.1 The Act has been developed following engagement with local government over several years through:
- Draft Local Government Bill Wales – [Nov 2015](#)
 - Consultation on Electoral Reform – [Oct 2017](#)
 - Reforming Local Government: Resilience & Renewed White Paper – [Jan 2017](#)
 - Consultation on Powers and flexibilities – Jan 2018
 - Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People – Welsh Government Green Paper – [June 2018](#)
 -
- 5.2 Most recently the Council has considered and commented upon the following elements:

Overview of the Bill

- Council - [27th November, 2019](#)
- Council – [15th January 2020](#)

Webcasting

- Democratic Services Committee – [8th January 2020](#) ; [1st October 2020](#)

6. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021 SUMMARY

- 6.1 While the general focus of discussions in respect of the Act, has been based around the creation of Corporate Joint Committees (CJC) this substantive piece of legislation will change the way we operate across a range of areas from electoral reform, public participation, governance and performance management, democratic processes and stronger working arrangements with Town and Community Councils.
- 6.2 The Act includes provisions for:
- Reforming electoral arrangements for local government, including:

- Extending the voting franchise to 16- and 17-year olds and foreign citizens legally resident in Wales,
- Changes to voter registration,
- and enabling a principal council to choose between the 'first past the post' or the 'single transferable vote' voting systems;
- A general power of competence for principal councils and eligible community councils;
- Reforming public participation in local democracy;
- The leadership of principal councils, including to encourage greater diversity amongst executive members and establishing a statutory position of chief executive;
- Strengthening Scrutiny arrangements and arrangements for member conduct;
- The development of a framework and powers to facilitate more consistent and coherent regional working mechanisms;
- A new system for performance and governance based on self-assessment and peer review, including the consolidation of the Welsh Ministers' support and intervention powers;
- Powers to facilitate voluntary mergers of principal councils and restructuring a principal area;
- Local government finance including non-domestic rating and council tax;
- Miscellaneous provisions relating to:
 - Support provided for Community Councils
 - Executive arrangements
 - The status of the Head of Democratic Services
 - information sharing between regulators,
 - abolition of community polls,
 - fire and rescue authorities,
 - the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, and
 - Public Service Boards.

6.3 The 'Coming into Force' provisions of the Act are complex, with some provisions coming into force within days of Royal Assent, others within two months and the majority via Ministerial statutory instruments.

7. **PART 1: ELECTIONS**



Extension of the right to vote in local government elections - Extending the vote franchise to 16- & 17-year olds and foreign citizens legally residents in Wales (Section 2)

- 7.1 The Act provides for the extension of the local government franchise to allow 16 and 17 year-olds to be able to register to vote in Welsh local government elections and any poll in Wales which uses the local government franchise such as mayoral elections and referendums. The Act also allows for 'qualifying foreign citizens' to be included in the extended franchise
- 7.2 The Act places a duty on principal Council's to promote awareness of how to register to vote at local government elections amongst 'relevant young people' and to take whatever action the Councils think is necessary to help them to register.

Position Statement:

The Democratic Services and Engagement Officer, sitting under the Council Business Unit is working with YEPS and the Director of Education and Inclusion to take forward engagement with young people to increase awareness regarding the right to vote. A social media campaign is being developed in collaboration with young people to ensure the message is effective.

Some of the work intended to be taken forward has been disrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however alternative engagement provisions are being taken forward. A 'diversity in democracy' Member working group has also been created which will look in part at the engagement opportunities.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications & Director of Legal Services

Two Voting systems - Enabling councils to choose between a 'first past the post' (FPTP) or a 'single transferable' (STV) voting system (Section 5)

- 7.3 Post 2022 the Act will introduce the opportunity for individual Councils to determine their own election arrangements.
- 7.4 Supporters of FPTP take the view that the voting and counting procedures are simple, familiar and relatively cheap, and therefore this system provides a straightforward relationship between where a candidate finishes in the tally of votes and whether or not they are elected.

- 7.5 The White Paper 'Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed' contained the proposal to allow individual principal councils to choose their voting system, the choice being between the FPTP system or the STV system.
- 7.6 STV is a preferential voting system, which means voters are asked to rank the available candidates in order of preference, using numbers. Voters may choose to rank all the available candidates or only as many as they wish. STV is considered to be a system of proportional representation
- 7.7 Welsh Government highlight that each election of a principal council is a separate election confined to the area of the council. Welsh Government has therefore determined that it is appropriate that the council should decide on its voting system, which best reflects the needs of their local people and communities.
- 7.8 The Act provides that each principal council may decide for itself on the voting system to use, whether FPTP or STV. A principal council will continue to use the existing FPTP voting system until such time as it may decide to change. A decision to change voting system will require the support of at least two-thirds of the total number of councillors on the council (whether or not present and voting on a proposal to change). If a council has considered and rejected a proposal to change the voting system, the council may not re-visit the issue during the same electoral cycle.
- 7.7 Provision is made to prevent a principal council, having changed to a different voting system, from moving back until at least two ordinary elections have been held under the new system.

Position Statement

RCT comply with the current voting system of first past the post. A change from one voting system to another would require a Full Council decision and a fresh electoral arrangement review of the council area, which would be undertaken by the Local Democracy & Boundary Commission for Wales.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Director of Legal Services & Service Director Democratic Services & Communications

Change of electoral cycle from 4 years to 5 years (Section 14).

- 7.8 The Act changes the electoral cycle of principal councils and community councils from four to five-year terms. This would bring local government elections into line with the five-year terms for the UK Parliament (as set in the



Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011) and for the Assembly in the Government of Wales Act 2006.

- 7.9 70% of respondents to the main electoral reform consultation agreed the term should be set at five years.
- 7.10 The Act also seeks to provide a regulatory provision to increase the flexibility available to the Welsh Ministers, subject to consultation, to alter the date on which that election is held.

Position Statement:

At the 2017 local government elections, Elected Members were elected on a 4 year term. Under section 37ZA(2) and (3) of the Wales Act 2017, the day of an ordinary local government election in Wales cannot take place on the same day as the Assembly ordinary general election, therefore Members terms of office was extended for a 5 year period, until May 2022. The standard five year term provided under the Act would not only allow a consistent approach to terms of office across the democratic process but would also allow Members a further year to gain experience and knowledge for the benefit of their residents and the Council.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Director of Legal Services

Disqualification for election and being a member of a local authority (section 20)

- 7.11 The Act provides the ability for council officers and employees, other than those holding politically restricted posts, to be entitled to stand for election to their own council. They will only be required to resign their paid employment with the council if they are elected. Welsh Government believe this will widen the pool of potential candidates while ensuring there is no conflict of interest once the candidate is elected.
- 7.12 If a council officer or employee makes a declaration of office following the Election the person must resign from their position. This resignation will have immediate effect irrespective of any notice period required.

Position Statement

Currently officers within the Council are unable to stand for election within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Going forward, the Senior Leadership Team will need to be mindful of any succession planning needed to ensure the role and duties of a candidate are continued if they are elected.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Senior Leadership Team

Candidacy

- 7.13 The Act amends the eligibility criteria for candidates at local government elections to allow a citizen of any country to stand for election. This is subject to the other qualifying criteria, such as age and residence. All other disqualification criteria will continue to apply.
- 7.14 The Act amends the disqualification provisions in Wales to disqualify individuals, from standing for election, or holding office as a member of a principal council or community council in Wales, if they are subject to a bankruptcy or debt relief restrictions order, a person guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice, a person subject to the notification requirements of, or an order under, Part 2 of the sexual offences act 2003 and a person convicted, during a period of 5 years before the election of an offence for which he or she has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 3 months or more.

Position Statement

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria and not prohibited from standing by any of the disqualification provisions.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Director of Legal Services

Meeting expenditure of returning officers (section 22)

- 7.15 The Act clarifies that Returning Officers can only claim expenses properly incurred in the running of a local government election in Wales.
- 7.16 Personal fees in respect of services rendered during the conduct of a local government elections cannot be claimed as they are not "expenses". It is proposed that the personal fee will also be removed for National Assembly for Wales elections when an order is next made under article 23 of the National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007 (currently the National Assembly for Wales (Returning Officers' Charges) Order 2016 is in force).

Position Statement:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf the Returning Officer does not claim for costs incurred as part of local elections. The Chief Executive has not fulfilled the role of Returning Office since 2014

Identified Lead Officer(s)

None applicable



8. PART 2 - GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

- 8.1 The Act provides principal councils and eligible community councils ('qualifying local authorities') with a general power of competence, with the aim of bringing about more effective, capable and innovative local government.
- 8.2 The general power will allow qualifying local authorities to act in their communities' best interests, generate efficiencies and secure value for money outcomes. They will also be able to raise money by charging for discretionary services and to trade in line with existing powers.
- 8.3 In addition, the general power will allow qualifying local authorities to engage in activities potentially judged to be outside the remit of well-being power within LGA 2000. It is considered the general power will allow qualifying local authorities to be more innovative, and move away from a position where they have to identify a specific power in order to undertake a particular activity, to one in which it is assumed they can do something unless there is a statutory restriction preventing it.
- 8.4 Specifically in relation to 'eligible community councils', the general power will empower this tier of local government, so it is better placed to be part of the Welsh public service in the future and can better contribute to local well-being and community resilience. Access to the general power will enable them to be ambitious and innovative.
- 8.5 The restrictions on the use of the general power are in line with similar restrictions placed on councils in England in relation to their use of the general power of competence in the form that has applied in England since 2012.

Position Statement

The Council continually work with the best interests of residents in mind, working to achieve value for money and efficient services across the County Borough. The general power of competence will further embed this principle, allowing greater opportunities for the Council to explore.

Work will need to be taken forward to support RCT's Town and Community Councils with the eligibility criteria and exercising of the general power (if eligible to do so), with the platform of the Community Liaison Committee assisting with this support.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Senior Leadership Team

9. PART 3 – PROMOTING ACCESS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 9.1 The Welsh Government is keen to encourage a more diverse range of members of the public to engage with local democracy. The majority of respondents to the draft Bill consultation agreed that improved public participation in local government was valuable. The Act places a statutory requirement upon principal councils to encourage public participation in their decision-making and scrutiny procedures for the first time. The proposals are also intended to support openness and transparency.
- 9.2 The Act includes a duty to encourage local people to participate in local government (and to produce a strategy to that effect);
- Duty to make petition scheme (and repeal of community polls);
 - Duty to broadcast certain meetings;
 - Greater flexibility around remote attendance of members.

RCT have already been approached by Welsh Government to assist in the development of the guidance that will accompany Chapter 4 of the Act in respect of public participation and transparency.

Public Participation Strategy (section 42)

- 9.3 Principal councils will be required to encourage local people to participate in local government. In addition, councils will be required to prepare, consult on, publish and review a 'public participation strategy', with the aim of making it easier for members of the public to understand how local government functions; how it makes decisions; and how local people can follow proceedings, input their views, and have them taken into account.

Position Statement:

In 2018 the Council introduced a public engagement strategy to support positive engagement in the work of scrutiny. This will provide a useful basis to comply with this requirement. Work is also being taken forward with the 'Bang the table' consultation platform which will assist in addressing participation and consultation in the democratic process going forward.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication and the Director of Legal Services

Petition scheme (section 43)

- 9.4 The Act requires a principal council to make a petition scheme setting out how it will handle and deal with petitions, including e-petitions. Such a proposal is similar to schemes already in place within a number of public bodies in Wales, such as the Assembly.

**Position Statement**

In 2019 the Council adopted a Petitions criterion allowing publication of the outcome of petitions received at Council meetings. This process will provide a useful basis to comply with this requirement.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication

Publication of Official addresses (Section 44)

- 9.5 Elected members should be freely accessible to local people. A duty will be placed on principal councils to publish an electronic and postal address for each member of the council on its website to support this objective. A council address may be used if the member wishes to protect the privacy of their home address

Position Statement

The Council already publishes this information on the Council website under each of the Members portfolio. Council policy recommends that Members should use their Council email address when contacting residents and officers within the Council, rather than a personal email address. In addition, the Council already assists members to direct constituent correspondence through Members Services, if a Member has requested the removal of their home address from the website

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications

Constitution Guides (section 46)

- 9.6 The Act will require principal councils to prepare and publish a guide to their constitution, which explains in ordinary language the content of their constitution. This will be a layperson's guide to the constitution, enabling the general public to understand how the council operates and makes decisions. The intention is to make it easier for local people to understand how their council functions.

Position Statement

The Council's Constitution is available on the Council website and a copy of the document is available at the Council Headquarters. Hard copies of the constitution are also provided to members of the public if requested for a nominal charge.



Monitoring Officers & Heads of Democratic Services are discussing the development of an easy-to-read explanation of rules of procedure and other relevant information

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications and Director of Legal Services.

Electronic Broadcasts of meetings of certain local authorities (Section 47).

- 9.7 The Act places a duty on principal councils to put in place arrangements for a broadcast of council meetings so that members of the public who are unable to attend are able to see and hear proceedings as they happen. Recordings of meetings should also be publicly available for a reasonable period after the meeting.

Position Statement

The Council has recently invested in broadcasting technology in anticipation of the requirements of the Act and due to the current virtual meeting process (in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations), recording of Committee meetings are available on the Council website. A retention policy on the availability of these recording will need to be produced going forward.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications

Conditions for remote attendance of members of local authorities (section 48)

- 9.8 The Act modifies the provisions in the 2011 Measure with the intention of making it easier for remote attendance to operate. Essentially, the conditions attached to the operation of remote attendance within the 2011 Measure are removed, in favour of leaving the principal council's standing orders to specify the conditions about how it should operate within that council. In addition, the chair of the meeting will need to be happy that the conditions for remote attendance are satisfied in the case of any particular meeting before business should proceed.

Position Statement

The Council has recently invested in broadcasting technology in anticipation of the requirements of the Act. The Council Business Unit is in the process of developing arrangements to integrate our virtual meeting arrangements into the newly introduced Public-I technology to enable hybrid meetings once restrictions allow.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications

Notice of local authority meetings to be published electronically (paragraphs 2-8)

- 9.9 The Act also makes provision in relation to notices of principal council and community council meetings. Much of the legislative provision governing the meetings and proceedings of council business is contained in section 99 of, and Schedule 12 to, the 1972 Act and reflects the practices of the time. Provision for access to meetings and documents of certain authorities, committees and sub-committees is set out at Part VA of the Act. While many of the provisions remain relevant, there is scope to modernise them. Schedule 12 predated the internet and the production of electronic documents and use of electronic communications. Provision has been made to amend the law relating to meetings in order to modernise the rules governing the meetings and proceedings of principal councils and community councils. For example, notices of meetings may be published electronically by the Proper Officer, instead of with the consent of an individual member.

Position Statement

The Council already complies with this requirement with publication of Committee papers electronically at least three clear working days prior to a meeting. Publication of Committee papers are provided on the Council website and through the restricted Modern Gov app. Work is being undertaken to make the Modern Gov a public app for public view.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications

10. Part 4 Local Authority Executives, Members, officers and committees

REFORMING DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES & LEADERSHIP

- 10.1 The Act changes or enhances a number of requirements in respect of Local Authority Executives, Members, Officers and Committees. The changes include:
- Appointment of Chief Executives (rather than a head of paid service) with specific duties;
 - Appointment of assistants to cabinets and allowing job-sharing leaders or cabinet members;
 - Updating family absence provisions in line with those available to employees (via regulations);

- Requiring leaders of political groups to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of their groups.

Chief Executives (Section 53)

- 10.2 The term “chief executive” (occasionally “managing director”) is widely used throughout local government in Wales to denote the head of a principal council’s administration, but the title is not found in local government legislation. The principal responsibility of chief executives is to ensure the operational effectiveness of their council so that the organisation is capable of delivering the executive’s objectives and discharging the other statutory functions of the council, in a way which is lawful and fiscally appropriate. The Act replaces the statutory post of the ‘Head of Paid Service’ with the statutory post of ‘Chief Executive’.
- 10.3 The amendments contained within the Act make clear that the leader, not the chief executive, is the spokesperson for the council on policy matters, while the chief executive is responsible for management of the principal council and its staff, who are charged with carrying out the decisions of the council and its leadership.

Position Statement

The Council already have an appointed ‘Chief Executive’ and the current arrangements effectively support positive working relationships between the Senior Leadership Team and Council Members.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Director of Human Resources

Appointment of assistants to executive and job sharing (sections 56 and 57)

- 10.6 The Act makes provisions for Welsh Ministers to issue guidance designed to encourage good practice in relation to equality and diversity. The Leader will be obliged to have regard to the guidance when exercising functions relating to executive arrangements, including the appointment of executive members.
- 10.7 The Act also requires local authorities to include in their executive arrangements provision enabling two or more councillors to share a cabinet post, including the position of executive leader. This will offer more councillors the opportunity to participate as a cabinet member and enable executives to reflect the diversity of their relevant area.
- 10.8 The Act also makes provision to allow principal councils operating executive arrangements to exceed the limit on cabinet size in order to accommodate job-shared cabinet posts.

Position Statement

The Council's current Executive arrangements will enable the Council to swiftly respond and positively utilise these provisions. The cabinet have previously supported the arrangements for deputy cabinet members under previous regulations and will positively look to utilise the opportunities provided under the Act.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communications following a decision of the Leader.

Family absence for members of local authorities (Section 60)

- 10.9 The 2011 Measure introduced a system of family absence for principal councils in Wales. The system was intended to require local authorities to extend to councillor's similar family absence entitlements available to officers of those authorities. The objective was to remove some of the barriers which restrict the ability of people with family responsibilities from seeking to become candidates.
- 10.11 Changes in employee statutory family leave arrangements have, in part, been updated.
- 10.12 As there has been no corresponding change in the provisions for family absence set out in the 2011 Measure and the underpinning regulations the arrangements for family absence for councillors of principal councils are now out of step. The provisions in the Act remove the obstacles which might prevent the regulations from being able to keep in step with UK employment law.

Position Statement

The Council already complies with the current family absence arrangements.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication

Duties of leaders of political groups in relation to standards of conduct. (Sections 61 and 62)

- 10.13 The Act will require the leaders of political groups to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their group. In doing so, a group leader must co-operate with the council's standards committee in the exercise of its functions to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. In turn, a standards committee has new functions under the Act to ensure group leaders have access to advice and training to support their new duties and to monitor group leaders' compliance with those duties.

- 10.14 Standards committees will be required after the end of each financial year to make an annual report to the authority describing how the committee's functions have been discharged during the financial year and setting out an overview of conduct matters within the council. The council will be obliged to consider the report and any recommendations made by the standards committee within 3 months of receipt.

Position Statement:

The Council has an established Standards Committee which considers both the code of conduct in respect of the Council and Community and Town Councils within RCT. The Committee already publishes a Standard's Committee Annual Report, which is reported and presented to Council by the Chair of the Committee.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Director of Legal Services and Service Director Democratic Services & Communications

Making information available to Overview & Scrutiny

- 10.15 The Welsh Government consulted in the White Paper 'Power to Local People' on proposals to make the role of scrutiny within a principal council more effective and to ensure the local community has a greater involvement in the scrutiny of council policies.
- 10.16 Section 22(10) of LGA 2000 enables the Welsh Ministers to make regulations requiring the provision of information about decisions the executive have made or intend to make. In England regulations have been made regarding what are commonly known as 'key decisions', that is, decisions which have a significant financial implication or a significant effect on local communities. To date, the Welsh Government has not made such regulations. As indicated in 'Power to Local People', the intention is to do so, in order to ensure scrutiny committees are given sufficient notice of important decisions before they are made, so they may scrutinise the executive more effectively. The Act amends section 22(10) of LGA 2000, so that regulations may require that scrutiny committees and their sub-committees are given such notice.

Position Statement:

In 2015 the Council enhanced the provision of information to enable wider engagement by elected members in the key decisions of the Council. The inclusion of the role of Head of Democratic Services as part of the Senior Leadership team has provided the opportunity to cite the requirement of scrutiny in advance of key decisions. In addition to this quarterly meeting between Scrutiny Chairs and the relevant Cabinet Member portfolio holder are taken forward to discuss the forward work programme of the Cabinet to identify areas for future scrutiny.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication

Power to require authorities to appoint Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committees

10.17 The Act amends a regulation-making power in the 2011 Measure so that regulations may require principal councils to establish a joint scrutiny committee. The amended regulation-making power could be used to require councils to establish a joint scrutiny committee where services are being provided across those councils' areas. The purpose of this provision is to ensure effective and efficient scrutiny of services delivered in collaboration.

Position Statement

The Council has positive experience of supporting and hosting joint scrutiny committees and is currently host for the Cwm Taf PSB JOSC and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal JOSC.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication.

11. PART 5 - COLLABORATIVE WORKING BY PRINCIPAL COUNCILS.

Application by principal councils to establish a corporate joint committee (Section 69)

- 11.1 This provision enables two or more principal councils to make a corporate joint committee to exercise specific functions in relation to the principal areas of those Councils.
- 11.2 Cabinet and the Council's Overview Scrutiny Committee recently considered a joint report in respect of the powers for councils to initiate the establishment of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) covering the *four functions of economic wellbeing, transport, strategic planning and school improvement*
- 11.3 The Council responded to the consultation on these regulations and a copy of the report can be found [HERE](#). The corresponding responses are attached at appendix XXX

12. PART 6 - PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE OF PRINCIPAL COUNCILS

Performance, performance assessments and intervention – chapter 1

- 12.1 The Act seeks to establish a more regularised performance and governance system which will place an onus on the principal council to take 'ownership of

its own improvement', and should seek to build reflection on performance and action to improve into its system.

- 12.2 This will now entail a system that requires annual self-assessment of performance by principal councils and a periodic review to provide an external, expert perspective on the council's performance and its progress in improving its performance.
- 12.3 The Act also makes provision for the Welsh Ministers to provide support and, where necessary, to intervene in principal councils facing significant problems. The Welsh Ministers will be able to provide support to principal councils to address difficulties they are facing. In more serious cases, the Welsh Ministers will be able to intervene to enable improvement.
- 12.4 The support and intervention provisions develop the existing legislative framework set out in the 2009 Measure (which will be repealed). The new provisions include a power for the Auditor General for Wales to carry out a special inspection that is similar to his existing power. The purpose of a special inspection is to support a principal council in meeting or increasing the extent to which it is meeting its performance requirements.

Position Statement

We are well placed to respond to these new duties within our current performance processes. There is a mature performance culture in place across the Council which is underpinned by being clear about our strengths and where we can improve.

Our current arrangements are evidence based and inform the allocation of resources, and enable the Council to both formulate a set of medium term priorities, as included within the Corporate Plan, and monitor, scrutinise and evaluate progress and impact on an on-going basis. The arrangements also have a positive track record of supporting compliance with performance related legislation and responding to recommendations arising from Regulator reports.

In developing our performance arrangements for 2021/22 we have considered the detailed requirements of the Act to ensure they can all be met within existing arrangements across the Council. This includes widening and strengthening our opportunities for residents' feedback and considering how we apply the new Public Sector Equalities. We are also currently considering how we can best prepare to meet the requirement to undertake our first Panel Performance Assessment following the Local Government Elections in 2022

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Director of finance & Digital Services.



Governance & Audit Committees (Chapter 2)

- 12.1 The Act enhances the remit of the Audit Committee, renaming the committee as the Governance and Audit Committee. The reforms increase lay representation and the role of Chair must be performed by one of the Lay members. The Committee will also have additional responsibilities in respect of reviewing the Council's Complaints procedures to ensure its 'adequacy.' These measures become a requirement from 2022.
- 12.2 The Act repeals the 2009 Measure duties, replacing the audit and reporting duties with a self-assessment and panel assessment process (peer review).

Position Statement

Implementation of the amendments proposed with the Act have been identified. The Committee's current membership incorporates one lay member which will need to be built upon to fulfil the requirements of the act.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication and Head of Regional Internal Audit Service

PART 7 - MERGERS AND RESTRUCTURING OF PRINCIPAL AREAS

- 13.1 In line with the Welsh Ministers' commitment to assist principal councils wishing to merge, the Act makes provision for the voluntary merger of principal councils.
- 13.2 The Bill provides for two or more principal councils to submit a joint application to the Welsh Ministers for the voluntary merger of their respective areas and councils. The Welsh Ministers would be enabled to make regulations ("merger regulations") to give effect to the abolition of the principal councils which had submitted the joint application and for their replacement by a single new area and council.

Position Statement

The Council have developed positive joint working arrangements across local authorities to produce a more efficient, robust and value for money service.

Identified Lead Officer(s)

Senior Leadership Team

14. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

The Act includes regulations in respect of Non-domestic rating and Council Tax and the imprisonment of debtors. A separate report advising of this detail will be presented at a future date.

15. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

- 15.1 Part 9 of the Act includes miscellaneous provisions relating to a range of matters, which Welsh Government will believe will strengthen and modernise the operation of local government.

Information sharing between regulators

- 15.2 The Act includes information sharing provisions similar to those in the 2009 Measure which facilitate the sharing of information between the Auditor General for Wales, Estyn and the Welsh Ministers).
- 15.3 The purpose of this addition is to ensure that regulators are able to share information for the purpose of exercising their specified functions in relation to a principle council.
- 15.4 The Act also provides that the Welsh Ministers and the Auditor General for Wales may request information for the purposes of their functions relating to collaborative working by principal councils, performance and governance of principal councils, and the restructuring of principal areas.

Head of Democratic services

- 15.5 The 2011 Measure introduced provisions requiring principal councils to appoint a democratic services committee with various functions, including the duty to designate one of the council's officers as the head of democratic services.
- 15.6 The 2011 Measure made no determination as to the level of officer that should fulfil the duty. Welsh Government have noted that in many Welsh local authorities, the head of democratic services is at middle management with insufficient authority within the council to deliver the wishes of the Democratic Services Committee. The Welsh Government believe that scrutiny must have appropriate and sufficient support, in the form of skilled officers and its own budget.
- 15.7 The Act amends the 2011 Measure and the Localism Act so that the head of democratic services is treated as a chief officer and afforded appropriate statutory protection.

The Council's Head of Democratic is already appointed as a Chief Officer and is a member of the Council's Senior Leadership Team. The statutory opinion of



the Head of Democratic Services is that the support provide to Scrutiny and non-executive members is sufficient.

Abolition of community polls

- 15.8 The Act provides for the abolition of community polls, and implementation of a system of petitions in their place.
- 15.9 The exception is community governance polls, those which enable a community to hold a poll in respect of a proposal to establish or dissolve a community council or to group with other communities under a common community council.

Public Services Boards

- 15.10 The WFG Act enables Public Services Boards to merge, if they consider it would assist them in contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals. The Act also states that Welsh Ministers may direct two or more Boards to merge if the Welsh Ministers consider it would assist the boards in contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals.
- 15.11 However, the WFG Act does not currently explicitly enable Public Services Boards which have merged to demerge, or partially demerge, at a later date. This means there is a potential lack of flexibility for Boards. The provisions in the Act aim to address this inflexibility and to provide for steps to be taken following merger and demerger.

Town & Community Councils

- 15.12 The Act includes a number of provisions which enhance the profile of Town and Community Councils and the support a Principal Council is encouraged to provide. The new provisions placed upon Town and Community Councils mirror those now required by a Principal Council in respect of Public Participation and broadcasting. In addition specific requirements in respect of Members Training and support and how principal Councils support this work are included.

In 2020 the Council adopted a new Community Charter to support positive working relationships and share good practice in the best interest of local communities.

Fire & Rescue Authorities

- 15.13 The Welsh Government proposes to introduce a new performance management system to reflect the operating contexts and challenges which each fire and rescue authorities face.

- 15.14 FRSA 2004 requires the Welsh Ministers to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework, setting priorities, objectives and guidance to fire and rescue authorities on the discharge of their functions.
- 15.15 The Act provides powers for the Welsh Ministers to make regulations requiring fire and rescue authorities to develop and publish strategic plans in relation to the exercise of their functions, and the objectives and priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework. These regulations may also specify the performance management arrangements to be used to assess a fire and rescue authority's performance against these plans.

16 **SUMMARY**

- 16.1 The 'Coming into Force' provisions of the Act are complex, with some provisions coming into force within days of Royal Assent, others within two months and the majority via Ministerial statutory instruments.
- 16.2 An updated and more detailed timeline will be shared when available, but in general it is anticipated that CJC regulations will be introduced in the Senedd during February-April 2021, for commencement in the summer (and first meeting of CJsCs planned by end of September 2021), subject to further consideration by the Minister given the ongoing consultation on this issues.
- 16.3 Remote attendance and related matters will be commenced from April 2021 (when the current emergency coronavirus meeting regulations end);
- 16.4 Performance and governance arrangements will be commenced from April 2021 (with the final performance report from the 2009 Measure published by 31st October 2021).
- 16.5 Most of the electoral reforms will be introduced in time for implementation at the 2022 local elections; and
- 16.6 The power of general competence, public participation duties, broadcasting of meetings and new councillor duties will apply from the 2022 local elections.
- 16.7 As stated above, the Welsh Government has already consulted on the draft Regulations to Establish CJsCs and the regulations of General Application and statutory CJC guidance. The Welsh Government is currently also consulting on draft statutory guidance on the 'performance and governance of principal councils. RCT have already been approached by Welsh Government to assist in the development of the guidance that will accompany Chapter 4 of the Act in respect of public participation and transparency.
- 16.8 In addition to the statutory guidance on CJsCs and performance and governance, it is anticipated that several sets of statutory instruments will be laid and a further 5 statutory guidance notes will be produced during the next 12 months (covering public participation, executive members' duties on equality



and diversity, collaboration, mergers as well as updated scrutiny guidance and the role of the Head of Democratic Services and the independence of that role. (based on the 2011 Measure).

17. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 The regulatory impact assessment relating to the Act contains Welsh Governments costs analysis of the implementation of the provisions within the Act.
- 17.2 Where the costs of implementation by the Council of the required measures in the Act are not drawn from existing budgets then these will be the subject of future reports.
- 17.3 Separate reporting will be required in relation to the matter of CJC's and new performance measure costs.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH, 2021

PRE SCRUTINY – ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2019/2020

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet Members on the Annual Equality Report 2019-2020 following Pre-scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 17TH March, 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the comments and observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- 2.2 Subject to any further comment by Cabinet Members, endorse the recommendations outlined within the Annual Equality Report 2019/20 as attached to the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need for Members to be aware of the comments and observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to their consideration of the Council's Annual Equality Report, for the year 2019/20.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Annual Equality Report has been developed to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties.
- 4.2 The report contains progress made in year 2019/20 in meeting the equality objectives contained in Council's Strategic Equality Plan.
- 4.3 Members of the Overview & Scrutiny were provided with the opportunity to undertake pre scrutiny on the Annual Equality Report in advance of Cabinet's consideration at its meeting on the 25th March 2021.

5. PRE-SCRUTINY OF THE ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2019/20

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on the 17th March 2021, to consider the Annual Equality Report for the year 2019/20.
- 5.2 At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members discussed the Annual Equality Report and overall, were pleased with the content of the report and the Council's commitment to the principles of equality and diversity.
- 5.3 Members made comments and sought assurance that work was being undertaken in respect of the following areas to improve equality and diversity:
- The collection and analysis of data for bullying incidents in schools;
 - The Welsh Language;
 - The barriers of closing the gender gap; and
 - The barriers of awareness raising events given the large geographical area of the Borough.
- 5.4 It was noted from the report that moving forward, it would be important to respond to emerging issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement. In view of recent events in the media, Members spoke of the need to include the emerging issues of the safety of women in public spaces. It was agreed that a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, sitting in its role as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee be convened to consider the safety and inequalities experienced by women in relation to the UK justice system.
- 5.5 Referring to the Hate Crime data detailed within the report, Members stated that they would be interested to compare local figures post Covid-19.
- 5.6 The Committee spoke of the long-term dangers of emotional abuse and was pleased to note the action contained within the report, which stated that as part of Education's Well-being Strategy a programme for schools would be developed about raising awareness of emotional abuse in relationships.
- 5.7 Members discussed the role of the Democratic Services Working Group: Diversity in Democracy, which had recently been established to support the Council in achieving diversity in democracy in line with Welsh Government's agenda; and to consider what opportunities and engagement would benefit the future of diversity in advance of the 2022 local government elections in encouraging participation in principal authorities and Community and Town Councils. It was noted that an action plan had been developed to further improve the diversity of the Council.

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. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The report contained within Appendix B has been presented to Scrutiny for pre scrutiny prior to consideration by Cabinet.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 Any financial implications are outlined within Appendix B of the report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The Council's Annual Equality Report has been developed in line with legislative requirements and guidance produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

10. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 10.1 Equality considerations feature throughout Corporate and National priorities and specifically the contents of this report contributes to a More Equal Wales and a Wales of Cohesive Communities.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 It is recognised that scrutiny is a vital component of good governance and improves Councils' decision making, service provision and cost effectiveness.
- 11.2 The undertaking of pre-scrutiny by the Overview and Committee in this area will strength accountability and assist Cabinet Members in taking any future decisions on these matters.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Overview and 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 MARCH 2021

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
COMMUNICATION**

Item: **PRE SCRUTINY – ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2019/20**

Background Papers

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17th March, 2021.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2019/2020

**REPORT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR MAUREEN WEBBER, DEPUTY
LEADER**

**Author(s): Melanie Warburton, Diversity and Inclusion Manager,
Telephone 01443 444531**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information on the Council's Annual Equality Report, for the year 2019/20.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

Agree to publish the Annual Equality Report 2019/20.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Annual Equality Report has been developed to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties.
- 3.2 The report contains progress made in year 2019/20 in meeting the equality objectives contained in Council's Strategic Equality Plan.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales, which came into force on 6th April 2011, included a requirement for public authorities (including Local Authorities and Schools) to report annually on how it has met the General Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.

4.2 Reporting requirements are set out in the following regulations;

- Regulation Seven Collection and publication of information
- Regulation Nine Employment monitoring reporting
- Regulation Sixteen Reporting on compliance with the General duty

4.3 The Council must report the above information on an annual basis, and publish by 31 March each year.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

6 CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

Consultation is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

The Council's Annual Equality Report has been developed in line with legislative requirements and guidance produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

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

Equality considerations feature throughout Corporate and National priorities and specifically the contents of this report contributes to a More Equal Wales and a Wales of Cohesive Communities.

10 CONCLUSION

The Annual Equality Report must be published by 31 March 2021 in order to comply with legal requirements.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Annual Equality Report

1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

This report is available in Welsh and can be made available in alternative formats and languages.

To make a request please telephone 01443 444529 or email equality@rctcbc.gov.uk

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APPENDICES

Employment Monitoring Data	APPENDIX ONE
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1. Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Council's annual equality monitoring report, which represents the Council's approach to providing information on its work in respect of equality and diversity.

The Council is required, under the Wales Specific Equality Duties to report annually on how it has met the General Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010, and this document contains the information required in order for the Council to meet these duties.

Publishing the information in one report covering all requirements will make it easier for interested parties to identify how the Council is delivering on its commitment to equality, its legal obligations and the action plans contained within its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP).

Each section of the report looks at the Council's progress and the final section contains details of future work the Council needs to do.

Once again Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has continued to make our County Borough a more equal place for people to live, work and access services, however we recognise that there are and will continue to be areas for improvement. Publishing this Annual Report will not only help the Council to meet its obligations under the Wales Specific Equality Duties, but will assist you, as citizens to identify these areas and monitor progress on them.

Councillor Maureen Webber
Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Council Business

2. Who We Are

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council covers a wide geographical area and has a population of over 234,000 people. The Council is the largest employer in the local area and the third largest local authority in Wales, over 80% of employees live within the Council boundaries.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity and we work to ensure that this is demonstrated in our service delivery and in our employment practices.

The Council reviewed its Corporate Plan in 2020. The Council's proposed priorities set out in the [Corporate Plan 2020-2024 'Making a Difference'](#) are:

- Ensuring **People**: are independent, healthy and successful;
- Creating **Places**: where people are proud to live, work and play;
- Enabling **Prosperity**: creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.

The plan puts residents at the centre of what we do.

The Council is governed by 75 elected Members and operates a Cabinet system. It has a Senior Leadership Team headed by the Chief Executive and attended by Senior Directors, and employs over 10,000 employees in a variety of service areas and roles based within the following groups:

- Chief Executives
- Community & Children's Services
- Education & Inclusion Services
- Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services.

3. Reporting on Equality

The main purpose of this Annual Report is to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that all public authorities covered under the specific duties in Wales should produce an Annual Equality Report by 31 March each year. This report covers the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

What the regulations require:

The Annual Report for 2019-2020 must set out:

- The steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information;
- How the authority has used this information in meeting the three aims of the general duty;
- Any reasons for not collecting relevant information;
- A statement on the effectiveness of the authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information;
- Specified employment information, including information on training and pay;
- Progress towards fulfilling each of the authority's equality objectives;
- A statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives.

4. The General Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general duty on the Council (and other public sector organisations) when making decisions and delivering services to have due regard in how to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained below);
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Protected Characteristics

This is the term used in the Equality Act to identify the types of people who are more likely to experience detrimental treatment and/or discrimination simply because of who they are. The law is designed to protect them, they are:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender Reassignment;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or Belief;;
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation.

When thinking about how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, the Council also has to think about the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and are connected to that characteristic;
- Meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The Council also has to particularly think about how it will tackle prejudice and promote understanding. This report includes information on what the Council has done in order to meet the General Duty.

5. How We Meet The General Equality Duty

To demonstrate how the Council has met the General and Specific Duties relevant information is considered which may include data from local and/or internal sources such as customer surveys, community forums or Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), as well as data from national and/or external sources such as census information, research reports and statistics on hate crime.

Identification and Collection of Relevant Information

When considering how to identify what information should be included in this report, the Council first looked at the information it considered when reviewing its SEP. This allowed the Council to reflect and monitor whether the information is still appropriate in assisting the Council to deliver on the General and Specific Duties.

When reviewing the Equality Objectives we looked at monitoring reports and emerging issues and trends from the previous Annual Equality Reports to identify whether the objectives were still relevant.

Full details can be found in the SEP which can be accessed on the Council website at: [Strategic Equality Plan | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council](#)

The information identified is still very relevant to the delivery of the General and Specific Duties; internal documents provide statistical information that can be used for determining action and enable comparison to identify improvements or areas for further improvement. Internal strategies and their action plans provide information on how the Council is delivering its priorities.

External information, including that with a national context, provides the Council with a raft of data that can assist in developing appropriate and relevant policies and approaches.

The Council recognises that the SEP is not the only area that can identify relevant information and that whilst it is very useful, service areas would also hold information that could assist the Council in identifying how it's meeting the General and Specific Duties. To collect this information a survey was undertaken to obtain relevant information from service areas.

The Council has an EIA process in place, the results of which contribute to the information contained within this report.

Employment monitoring data as provided from the Council's HR system - Vision and the e-recruitment system have also been included as part of the relevant information. It should be noted that employment monitoring information also includes teachers and all school based employees.

The Council's Performance

The Council's main strategic plan is the [Corporate Plan 'Making a Difference'](#). This Plan was implemented in March 2020. This plan sets out the Council's priorities for the 4 years between 2020-2024. The detailed actions to deliver these priorities are monitored and scrutinised by Councillors every quarter as part of the [Council's Performance Reports](#) to Cabinet. At the end of the year, the plans are also subject to more in depth challenge, review and evaluation, the results of which are then included in the Council's annual [Corporate Performance Report](#).

Non Collection and Effectiveness of Information

Whilst considerable relevant information has been collected for this report, it is acknowledged that it is sometimes difficult to collect and monitor all information in a Council as large as Rhondda Cynon Taf. A number of cross-Council networks already exist such as the Disability Officers Group to ensure that information and good practice are monitored and shared, however it is recognised that improvements can always be made to encourage a consistent approach in information sharing.

Use of Information

When considering what information should be used it was important that areas of good practice were identified across service areas to demonstrate that a commitment to delivering equality exists throughout the Council.

Information used in this report includes:

- The Council's Corporate Plan (2016-2020);
- Service delivery/projects (2019- 2020);
- Employment practices;
- Consultation and engagement programme;
- EIAs (2019-2020);
- Employment monitoring information (2019-2020);
- Monitoring and delivery of the SEP action plan (2019-2020).

Equality Information from Service Areas

Many service areas have examples of good practice which help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duties. The information is normally obtained through our internal performance management systems, however, it has been a challenge to obtain this information over the last year. This is because the Council's normal reporting processes have been reprioritised due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council service areas had to initiate emergency response measures and all work has been re-prioritised to ensure the safety and welfare of our citizens and communities, particularly to those who are most vulnerable to the pandemic.

This section highlights a brief snap-shot of some of the good practice examples that the Council has in place to demonstrate our compliance and commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duties.

- Our Sport RCT Team successfully gained the Silver Insport Award from Disability Sport Wales demonstrating inclusive sport and physical activity has become commonplace in the Sport RCT Team. This has been achieved by investing significant energy in supporting the personal skill development of those engaged in the delivery and support of inclusive sport from employed staff to voluntary coaches and extended workforce;
- Mobiloos are used at all our large scale events to aid accessibility;
- Our @homelibrary service is available for people who find it difficult to visit a static library or the new Mobile Library Service;
- The Adult Education Service continues to offer learning opportunities to people with learning disabilities;
- Reasonable adjustments are routinely made for the public throughout our front-line services;
- Our One4All Centres are accessible and offer a hearing loop function;
- Our contact centre adopts Barrier Free Call Guidelines as recommended by the Business Disability Forum;
- We offer a sensory line which promotes dedicated 'text phone' for Deaf customers and those hard of hearing;

- We are working with the Welsh Local Government Agency (WLGA) to look at ways to increase the diversity of local councillors in the 2022 Local Government elections;
- Our schools have a number of key strategies to improve inclusion and well-being. These include strategies on Accessibility, Additional Learning Needs and Well-being. These strategies support under-represented groups including LGBTQ+, NEET and ethnic minorities including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, and pupils who face socio-economic disadvantage;
- We provide 247 designated parking spaces in our paid car parks for disabled users which equates to over 7% of the total spaces, and exceeds the number recommended in guidance. Disabled users are not charged for parking in these designated bays;
- We undertook engagement on the review of polling stations;
- We've made improvements to our crematories including accessible toilet facilities, accessible ramps and doorways and hearing loop availability within the chapels.
- We have committed to the development of a 'Changing Places' facility at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park;
- We provide simultaneous Welsh EIA translation which has allowed residents to access events that they would otherwise have been unable to attend due to a language barrier;
- We are partners in the Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS). During 2019-2020 there were 313 bookings made through the service using 20 languages and BSL interpreters. The five most requested languages during 2019-2020 were Portuguese, Mandarin, BSL, Arabic and Turkish;
- We have continued to develop our RCT wide Youth Forum that links with the Council's District Youth Forums and representatives from school councils.

Delivery of Council Strategies

The Council consults and engages with its residents to collect information that is used to plan and prioritise, identify areas for improvement and service change, set and monitor performance standards and measure satisfaction on the quality of the services we provide.

The Council has developed an ongoing face-to-face approach to engagement with residents which has continued in 2019 and aims to provide a conversation with our residents. It helps the Council and its partners find out what residents think about where they live and the services they receive. This face-to-face approach is complemented by a wide range of other methods including online questionnaires and engagement through social media. The aim is to reach out to all residents and enable everyone to give their views.

During 2019, we supported or managed 69 engagement activities/consultations and supported over 37 face-to-face engagement events. This included a large scale service change proposal for residential care, where we engaged with the residents and relatives of all our in-house care homes, as well as the general public, via meetings, information provision, surveys, online promotion and the use of easy to read materials.

Examples of how residents and communities have been involved in the Council's work in 2019 include;

- Engaging with over 4,000 residents on our budget consultation;
- Engaging with our Youth Forums on a wide range of issues and filming the feedback of the participants answering short questions on what it's like to live in RCT to help develop the Corporate Plan;
- Involving residents in developing a new Corporate Plan to improve the well-being of the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf. We held 15 public face-to-face engagement events in venues and locations across Rhondda Cynon Taf. Members of the public were able to share their views on the priorities and suggest any additions or general comments;
- Continued engagement and involvement with residents and communities in matters that affect them so that their voices are heard in Council decisions.;
- Engagement with empty property owners during a public consultation, to find out their views on the Council proposal to introduce a premium on certain properties to help the Council's long-term goal to bring empty properties back into use;
- Conversations with the Older People's Advisory Group about issues that could support their ability to get out and about;
- Regular discussions with disability groups and also involving the Council's Disability Forum in discussions about how we can improve access to Council services and facilities;
- Expansion of our Citizens' Panel, and reviewing the membership so that it more fully represents the communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

We have continued to use online and social media engagement as one of our methods to obtain resident views and promote consultations. We have used Twitter polls to ask questions during the budget consultation and used Twitter and Facebook to promote all consultation events. We have also built upon the success of our support to the 50+ Forums, with increased engagement with the groups and specific events. We have supported the Older Peoples Advisory Groups (OPAG) at an event attended by 150 older people, including the Older Persons Commissioner in 2019, where we trialled a new approach with members of the older person community as part of our Corporate Plan engagement. This involved filming on a one to one basis, asking a short number of questions about where the individual lives, to inform the priorities of the Corporate Plan.

All consultation and engagement documents are available in the Welsh language. We have introduced a new question to be used on all service change consultations to assess the impact that any change will have on the Welsh language or Welsh speakers, which is in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act.

At all consultations that we undertake we attempt to engage with the widest range of people that we can. We aim to capture the views of all groups that live within the Borough and aim to represent all their opinions and concerns. We have introduced a new question for service change consultations that allows the Council to assess the impact of any changes on a number of protected characteristics. We have also introduced Easy Read versions of all service change consultations, working with Learning Disability Wales. There is a regular slot on the agenda of the RCT Disability Forum, where we consult and provide information and a link to the Council for group members.

We are working towards the requirements of the Future Generations Commissioner, ensuring our Involvement and Engagement Strategy aligns with the Commissioners “Journey to involvement 2019”.

6. Equality Objectives

In 2019 we launched our Strategic Equality Plan (2019-2022). To aid the development of appropriate and relevant equality objectives the Equality and Human Rights Commission report ‘How Fair is Wales 2018’ was the main reference source. Equality objectives were aligned to well-being goals contained in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, specifically a ‘More Equal Wales’ and a ‘Wales of Cohesive Communities’.

A comprehensive engagement process was undertaken with the public and targeted engagement was undertaken with community groups that reflect the ‘protected characteristics’ contained within the Equality Act 2010. The full engagement report can be found [here](#).

From this engagement and consultation with a number of Council service areas the following equality objectives were identified and published in the [Strategic Equality Plan 2019-2022](#). The equality objectives are:

- Objective 1 To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive;
- Objective 2 To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities;
- Objective 3 To promote safe communities;
- Objective 4 To reduce the gender pay gap;
- Objective 5 To create an inclusive workforce.

An action plan has been developed outlining specific actions in relation to each equality objective. These actions will be monitored through service area delivery plans.

Outlined below, we show our progress towards the equality objectives. It should be noted that not all actions were due to commence in the financial year 2019-2020 and these will be progressed in following years.

Objective 1 – To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive

Within this equality objective there are a number of areas that require action. The progress towards these actions are outlined below.

Action 1 - Identify community groups that represent the full diversity of the citizens of Rhondda Cynon Taf and develop accessible communication channels with them.

The Council has many well established links with community groups across RCT, for example, youth forums, Older People's Advisory Groups and the Disability Forum. The focus of this action is to engage with under-represented minority groups and individuals that have not had regular communication routes with the Council.

Black History Month Event

In October 2019 we hosted a Black History Month Event at Aberdare Library with the aim to engage with black residents of RCT and raise awareness of black history for the wider public. South Wales Police Hate Crime Officers also supported the event. The coffee morning focussed on celebrating black history through literature, and promoted different books by black authors. During the month of October our libraries displayed books for all ages, written by black authors.

The event provided a valuable space to discuss institutional racism in the UK, and how the Council can educate it's staff and residents on black history. Importantly it opened the eyes of members of staff attending the event to the lived experience of being a black resident in the borough.



Black History Month Display at Aberdare Library.

Cohesion Cricket Match

The Community Cohesion Team supported a cohesion cricket match between South Wales Police and members of the Aberdare Mosque. It was a great opportunity to make links with the Mosque and learn more about Islamic culture.



Images of the cricket match between members of Aberdare Mosque and South Wales Police.

Disability Forum

We continue to facilitate the Disability Forum. Members of the forum include people with disabilities and also parents of disabled children. Some members represent other organisations and networks such as Accessible Wales, Older People Advisory Group, Rhondda Hard of Hearing Group, Citizens Advice and Dewis. Our forum members have been involved in a number of consultations including the annual budget review and dog fouling scheme.

One forum member has actively worked with our Highways Team to highlight inaccessibility issues with pavement and roads in the borough. As a result a programme of works for improvements was made.

Last year members of the forum visited Ynysangharad War Memorial Park to review its overall accessibility for disabled users. This visit helped to inform a programme of work to make it easier for people with sensory and mobility loss to get around the park and enjoy the facilities on offer. Sadly in February 2020, the park was badly flooded in Storm Dennis so progress has understandably been delayed.



Members of the Disability Forum at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park.

Pride Cymru

We attended Pride Cymru along with 8 other Welsh Council's under the banner of 'Proud Councils'. Our purpose is to promote that our Council's are actively trying to be a more inclusive place to work and live. Many of our elected members, staff and network members attended this event. We consulted with the public to gain a better understanding of how they felt about the services the Council provide.



Members of Proud Councils at Pride Cymru.

Project Unity

Funding was secured from the Welsh Government to support [Project Unity](#) to hold an event to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month. The event was held in Cynon Valley Museum. The Community Cohesion Team continue to attend coffee mornings with Project Unity.

Rhondda Pride

September 2019 saw the first Rhondda Pride which was held in Treorchy. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Andrew Morgan opened the event with a speech highlighting whilst significant and welcome changes had been made towards LGBTQ+ inclusivity, these had been relatively recent, therefore it is important that we continue to address the barriers that still exist for members of the community. Council staff attended the day and heard from many people, including large amounts of local young people about perceptions of LGBTQ+ people in the community and in schools. The Council continues to work with Rhondda Pride.



Community engagement at Rhondda Pride in Treorchy.

Turn Pontypridd Blue

We supported a Turn Pontypridd Blue event, with the aim of increasing awareness of dementia and memory loss. The Dementia Choir performed. During the event Community Cohesion Team engaged with over 100 RCT residents.

Valleys Ethnic Minorities Support

We have worked with the support group - Valleys Ethnic Minorities Support (VEMS). We have referred a number of Syrian refugees in to the support group and understand that support has been provided in relation to accessing employment and access to benefits as well as a 'befriending' service.

Working with VEMS we planned a social event at St David's Church, Pontypridd. The event aimed to bring together members of the BAME community to celebrate diversity and inclusion through the medium of dance and music embracing various cultures.

The event was planned for 21 March 2020, but unfortunately had to be cancelled due to national lockdown restrictions.

Veterans

We have continued to develop our engagement with veterans across the borough. After successfully gaining funding from the Armed Forces Covenant we launched the Veteran Advice Service across Cwm Taf in April 2019. The service covers a range of areas, including benefits, adult social care, finances, employment and housing.

As well as the service attending local veteran groups such as Valleys Veterans in Ton Pentre, it is also being delivered at RCT Leisure Centre's. New relationships have been developed with the Ministry of Defence Transition Service and Citizen Advice to improve outcomes for veterans. The service has been promoted widely throughout the borough, for example in supermarkets and at local events.

During 2019-2020 there were 251 veteran referrals received for the Cwm Taf area. 176 were for RCT and 75 for the Merthyr areas. The majority of veterans (86%), accessing our service are male, 61% had served in the British Army and 57% are aged 51 to 80 years old.

We have provided successful support to veterans on several subjects; blue badge and bus pass applications, benefit and pensions claims, referrals to the Royal British Legion, SSAFA, Veterans NHS Wales, Admiral Nurses and many more. We have provided support with housing applications and as a result successfully housed veterans and family members, in certain cases we provided support to obtain household furnishings.

On 5 November 2019 we held a special event at the Park and Dare Theatre where we screened the film Zulu for Armed Forces families. The film was chosen by the local veterans group '[Valleys Veterans](#)'. This idea was developed following discussions with veterans about how fireworks on Bonfire night can be a trigger of PTSD symptoms. The event attracted over 100 people and was deemed a huge success by all. It also attracted [significant media coverage](#).



Councillor Maureen Webber, Deputy Leader and Armed Forces Champion with Paul Bromwell the organiser of Valleys Veterans.

More information on the Armed Forces Covenant is available on the following link:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/ArmedForcesCovenant/CovenantGeneralInformation.aspx>

Action 2 - Identify the number of refugees living in Rhondda Cynon Taf that are not already included in settlement programmes.

Work on this area did not commence in financial year 2019-2020.

Action 3 - Undertake an employment needs assessment which will inform specific action points relating to young people, disability and ethnicity.

During 2019-2020 the Welsh Government requested a review on how we collect, record and report Communities for Work Plus (CfW+) client information which included those with a work limiting health condition and disability. We were also required to make changes to the ethnicity information collected specifically for those that enter employment.

At the end of quarter 2 in 2019, 15% of those engaged on the CfW+ programme had a work limiting health condition or disability, and at that time we were unable to show how many of these people had progressed into employment. Following the process review, appropriate changes were implemented and by the end of 2019-2020 the number of people engaged in this category had increased to 20% and we were able to report that 13% of the total number of clients that had entered employment had a work limiting health condition or disability.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, delivery of the employment support programmes are currently being provided remotely.

In 2019-2020 there were 61% of adults engaged and 20% of those that entered employment that had a work limiting health condition or disability. There were 21% of young people engaged and 10% of those that entered employment that had a work limiting health condition or disability.

A full assessment of individuals' needs is undertaken at the initial point of engagement and repeated on a regular basis throughout the time they're engaged on the employment support programmes. Please see below further information on the staff review that was undertaken and actions taken to address common issues and barriers.

A scoping exercise was carried out by our central team staff during 2019-2020 of current employment support/provision available to people with a disability or learning difficulty. Links were made with organisations such as Remploy, Elite, Vision Products and the meetings held with Job Centre Plus Disability Officers to encourage cross referral of clients, identify opportunities and improve employment outcomes in the future. A list of Disability Confident employers was also collated and shared with all employment support staff.

Adult Services also carried out a review of provision for people with a learning disability or difficulty which highlighted areas of priority, one being employment. We currently have representation on the 'Transformation' Group and will support the development of the action plan, specifically around providing employment support in the future.

The collection, recording and reporting of ethnicity information to Welsh Government was also included in the process review undertaken in quarter 3 of 2019-2020. Whereas, until this time equality and ethnicity information was collected anonymously, this didn't then allow us to identify the individual's progress and ultimately report ethnicity data for those who had secured employment. As such, our recording and reporting processes were amended so that in 2020-2021 we can report an ethnicity breakdown for clients when they are initially engaged on our mentoring programme, as well as when they enter employment.

Predominantly, most people engaged on our employment support programmes have been 98% white and British/Welsh consistently. Therefore, 2% of programme clients are made up of all other BAME, which is in-line with the population representation. It is hoped that this percentage figure can be increased in the future, however, no further work has been done to specifically target this client group to date.

Action 4 - A community profile to be undertaken for all library areas to better understand the needs of customers.

The Library Service has been using a range of methods to better understand the needs of their customers and to capture information on what they want from our services.

A community profile of each library area was undertaken in 2015-2016 and these have been developed further as an important aspect of branch reviews. Alongside the customer feedback gathered as part of the MALD customer satisfaction survey, as well as informal feedback from customers provided to branch librarians or directly to managers, the following have been implemented:

- New community room installed at Hirwaun library to allow private appointments to take place. This was requested in customer satisfaction surveys and consultation meetings;
- Mountain Ash library relocated to a more central position, closer to a car park, and designed to include a separate training room, meeting rooms and improved children's area. This was identified through formal and informal consultation with library users. A disabled toilet and Adult Changing Place has also been included to make it more accessible for people with a range of disabilities;
- Ferndale library has been re-located to yr Hwb and now has some disabled parking bays, disabled toilet and a range of facilities including a separate IT suite and meeting room and an improved children's area. Lack of parking and no meeting room were identified as areas that required addressing in the feedback received through our customer satisfaction survey;
- Porth library has been moved to the ground floor of Porth Plaza and has enhanced facilities including an Adult Changing Place and disabled toilet facilities.
- A dedicated disabled parking space and disabled toilet has been included at Rhydyfelin library;
- The ramp up to Pontyclun library has been resurfaced and hand rails provided following customer feedback on accessibility;
- Work has been undertaken to improve the disabled access at Tonypany library and a disabled toilet installed as part of its renovation. Again this has been undertaken in response to customer feedback;
- An online membership form has been developed which allows people to become digital members so that they can access our collection of e-books, e-audio books and e-magazines;
- Our collection of e-materials has been greatly increased to meet demand;
- Self-service kiosks have been made available at 6 libraries and are shortly to be rolled out to all libraries;
- The criteria for the 'At Home' service was relaxed in February 2019 to allow greater access to the service to include:
 - People who suffer from mobility problems;

- People who suffer from long-term illness;
- People who live in excess of 2 miles from a library service point (static or mobile);
- Full-time carers.
- Mobile library vehicles fitted with wi-fi and longer stops introduced so that people who have no access to the internet at home and do not live near a library can access it (currently suspended due to COVID-19).

Action 5 - Undertake research as part of the local housing market needs assessment into the demand for housing needs for disabled people.

The Council applies the data set out in the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) when determining the mix of new schemes/properties that are being built with the use of the social housing grant (SHG). The service continues to apply this method in order to tackle the demand for housing among disabled people, which will allow them a stable home to enable them to thrive regardless of the barriers they may face. The LHMA is due a full review in 2022-2023.

Action 6 - Undertake a review of the Homestep Scheme to ensure equality monitoring questions are appropriate to identify specific needs with an emphasis on the identification of housing needs for young disabled people.

Our Housing Strategy department are in the process of remodelling the Homestep application process, in line with the department's digitisation of services agenda. It is within this process that the service plans will include questions in respect of young disabled people accessing open market housing that is affordable for them in line with the affordability test carried out at the application stage. The service aims to complete a full review by September 2021.

Action 7 - Improve and develop the collection and recording of customer equality monitoring information across Council service areas.

It had been identified in the previous Strategic Equality Plan that equality monitoring was an area where progress had been slow. Therefore, in September 2019 we recruited an officer as part of the Council's Graduate Programme to specifically work on an equality monitoring project.

In September 2019, a timeline for the equality monitoring project was developed. The timeline included actions for each step of the project and included the creation of a managers toolkit for equality monitoring that aimed to increase awareness of the importance and purpose of monitoring, as well as a new monitoring form with best practice questions.

Thorough research on past monitoring systems and past projects about monitoring in the Council was undertaken. As part of this research, the project officer looked at other monitoring forms and collected information from various papers from different organisations and charities, including Stonewall, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Welsh Government.

A draft new monitoring form was completed after compiling best practice examples. The new form reflects current best practice wording, question ordering and response options and takes into consideration GDPR requirements.

A pilot of the implementation of the new equality monitoring form was agreed with Leisure Services for them to gain a greater understanding of customer needs. The pilot would allow for internal staff data and external customer data to be collected, and allow for changes to be made to the proposed collection method (internal – staff questionnaire after training, external – membership registration and app notification). The pilot allowed the project extra time to work out any issues that arose, and would mean that when a full rollout of monitoring was implemented across the board, data would be more complete and therefore robust. It was decided that the pilot would begin around April 2020 in order to coincide with training due to take place with leisure staff around the same time, and preparations for the trial began. Unfortunately due to COVID-19, restrictions meant that public facing services like leisure services were closed, which meant that the planned pilot was put on hold.

Action 8 - To evaluate the experience of disabled people who are on the Homefinder register to understand any barriers to accessing adapted accommodation and to identify improvements to the process as a result.

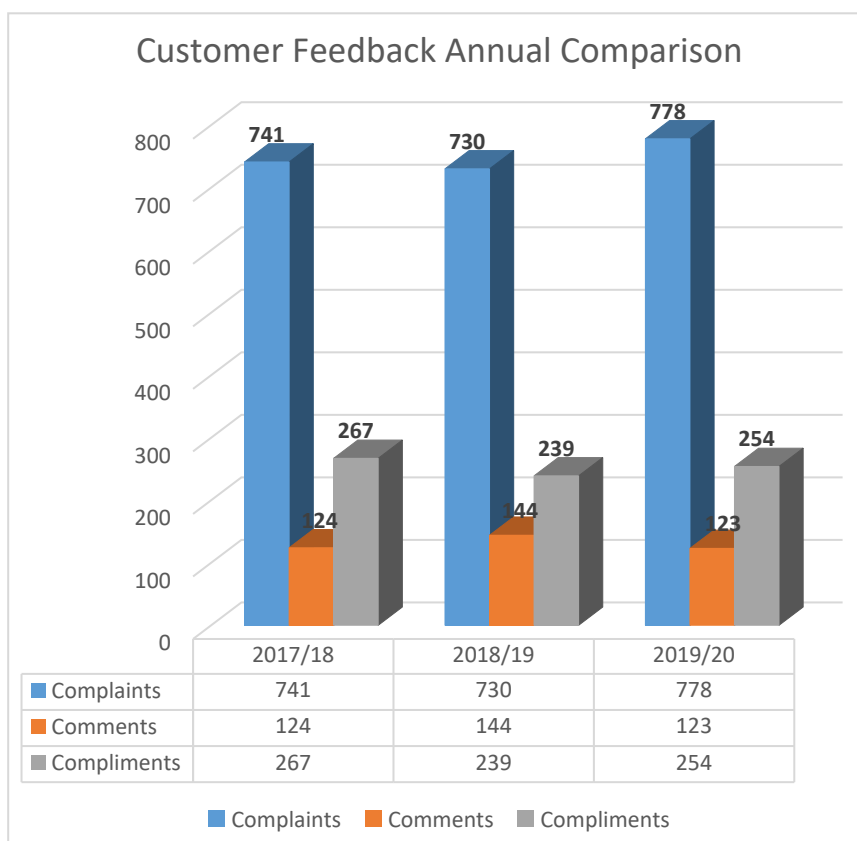
Work on this area is due to commence in the 2020-2021 financial year.

Action 9 - Improve and develop monitoring of customer complaints.

Throughout 2019-2020 the Customer Feedback and Engagement Team has been proactively monitoring the number of complaints that are left open or unsolved on the CRM database and this has resulted in the number of complaints showing as outstanding at 6 months reducing from 6.6% in 2018-2019 to 2.4% in 2019-2020. This work will continue with the expectation that the timeliness of complaint handling will improve over the coming years. To assist this, the Customer Feedback and Engagement Team will be liaising with Customer Care in relation to the development of a new customer feedback system which can be tailored to meet the requirements of the Council and improve the flexibility of the system, particularly for frontline services.

Moving forward the Customer Feedback and Engagement Team will continue to support service areas with their management of customer feedback with more focus on using available data to improve performance. Whilst improvements in some areas have been slow I hope this report will evidence the journey that has been made in 2019-20 by the Customer Feedback Team engaging successfully with service areas and improving the quality of data that is available on feedback received from our customers.

Key Themes for Customer Feedback



A total of 1,155 feedback items, which include complaints, comments and compliments were logged for 2019-2020. This number is slightly higher, but consistent with the previous two years and is likely to be an underestimate of the actual amount of feedback received with compliments in particular being under reported.

There has been a small increase on the number of complaints received in comparison to previous years and this was anticipated due to the training for staff on accurate identification and recording of complaint issues.

65% of feedback was received via the Council's website with only 0.7% of customers choosing to provide feedback face-to-face. 18.5% of customers provided feedback by telephone and 9.5% by letter. Email correspondence accounted for 8.5% of the feedback received.

22.5% of feedback items logged on the CRM system are not allocated to a service area and this indicates that they have not been allocated or closed properly. Further work is required on developing a more flexible system particularly for frontline services.

EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINTS AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Complaint Area	Complaint Detail	Service Improvement
Housing Advice	Complaint about delays in customers being dealt with at walk in Housing Advice centre.	Internal review of the service to be undertaken to include the views and suggestions of customers on how the service can be improved and in particular waiting times reduced.
Council Tax	Complaint regarding length of time waiting for a refund, leaving customer short of money.	The frequency of payments increased to ensure refunds provided as quickly as possible.
Heritage Services	Customer of an autistic child complained of poor experience during visit to Santa's Toy Mine in the Heritage Park.	Relevant training on autism to be provide to all relevant staff including seasonal employees irrespective of length of employment contract. Parent to be involved directly in sharing her view on how attraction can be improved for users with autism.
Crosscutting	Complaint regarding lack of knowledge of customer advisor on the purchasing/general advice relating to residential parking permits.	All advisors advised that for any future queries customers should be directed to the policy available on the website thus ensuring correct and consistent information is provided.
Leisure	Complaint from parent regarding incident where daughter was refused access to pool inflatable despite her being a competent swimmer. Refusal was based on existing policy and child's age.	Policy to be reviewed to take account of child's ability and not just age when considering use of pool inflatables.
ESG Rubbish/Litter	Complaint regarding amount of litter in area (Maerdy) and need for more bins.	More litter bins provided in area.
Crosscutting	Complaint regarding misinformation given by customer advisor regarding Discretionary Housing Payments	Customer Advisors to receive training on the DHP policy to ensure accurate advice and information is provided in the future.
Education	Complaint regarding delay in responding to a query regarding college funding.	Improvements made to CRM system in ensuring information is allocated correctly. Feedback team

Complaint Area	Complaint Detail	Service Improvement
		updated, college funding arrangements fall within the remit of Careers Wales and not the Council.
Regeneration and Planning	Complaint regarding involvement of surveyor in Housing Grant application.	All staff reminded of the correct process in offering another surveyor where urgent planning request is received and allocated surveyor unavailable.

The Customer Feedback and Engagement Team will continue to review the effectiveness of the Customer Feedback Scheme ensuring that the Council not only provides customer focused services but also uses feedback received to both understand our customers' needs and to develop and improve services across RCT. Below are some of the priorities for 2020-2021:

- Improved complaints training;
- Improved reporting;
- Public facing information;
- Improved customer feedback.

Action 10 - Improve local access to information advice and assistance provision for children, young people and families to promote their participation and engagement.

This action outlines the progress made by the Resilient Families Service and Youth and Participation Service to meet the objective.

Resilient Families Service

How much did we deliver during 2019-2020?

- No. of community based sessions – 222
- No. of referrals to access youth provision – 42
- No. of referrals to access Care to Play – 3

- No. of individual families supported – 239
- No. of individual contacts – 1257
- No. of community settings engaged with Community Support – 44

What impact did these interventions have?

Quarter 1-3 – from the 112 closed cases:

- 52% closed with improved resilience (58)
- 4% step up to Children's Services (4)
- 3% closed with lower resilience (3)
- 33% disengaged pre action plan (37)
- 6% disengaged post action plan (7)

Quarter 4 – from the 156 closed cases: (data split due to impact of COVID-19 restrictions)

- 38% closed with improved resilience (60)
- 3% step up to Children's Services (4)

- 4% closed with lower resilience (7)
- 26% disengaged pre action plan (41)
- 10% disengaged post action plan (15)
- 19% Placed on hold (COVID-19) (29)

Overview

During 2019-2020 staff established positive working relationships within local communities across RCT, working closely with community groups, local providers and members of the public to better understand the needs of the communities with a focus on improving access to family support services. Members of the Resilient Families Service established working relationships with a number of stakeholders including:

- RCT Schools
- Valleys Kids Community Partnerships
- Interlink
- Sports Development
- Rhondda & Aberdare Colleges
- Rhondda Fach Neighbourhood Network
- Communities for Work
- Anti Social Behaviour Meetings
- Heat and Save
- Rhondda Fach and Fawr Community Practice
- South Wales Fire Service Prevention
- Dan Heman Penrhys Provisions
- Job Centres – Treorchy, Tonypandy, Aberdare, Pontypridd & Porth
- Ferndale Hwb
- Cwm Clydach Community Centre
- Flying Start Centres
- Autism
- Challenging Behaviour
- Men's Sheds
- Gareth Tarrent – South Wales Autism and Behaviour Support
- NAS RCT
- Salvation Army – Pentre
- Llamau
- Cruise
- Wish upon a Star
- SAND – Still Births Support
- Blue bells – Miscarriage Support
- Umbrella Cymru
- Save the Children

- Taff Ely – Community Hub
- Taffs Well Hub – Community Library – links
- Connect Pontypridd – St Catherine’s Church
- Glyncoch Community Centre
- Our Place Project
- Newydd Housing/Inclusion Support Team – Housing – links established
- BAROD/Next steps
- Little Lounge – funding
- Penrhiwceiber Community Partnership
- St Winifreds Church Penrhiwceiber
- Cynon Valley Museum.

The targeting and development of local arrangements was informed by local needs assessments and analysis of Community and Well-being data. The need identified by the service provided the focus of the work undertaken with partner agencies with the joint aim of removing barriers to accessing services.

In addition to the direct work undertaken by the service, staff also contributed towards the development of Community Hubs across the borough, providing further opportunities for families to access the right support at the right time in the right place.

To improve the support we were able to offer within communities, staff attended training which included:

- challenging behaviour,
- restorative approaches and
- Solution Focused Therapy.

This enabled us to offer a strengths based approach to supporting communities. It also provided staff with the confidence and ability to up skill other key personnel within the communities enabling them to consider different models of intervention and subsequently improving their local resilience.

As the information indicates, community engagement was significantly increased over the year. The new developments were positively received and proved successful in removing some barriers to engagement with the service. We plan on building on these successes and arrangements are in place to further extend the areas and partners engaging. With continued focus on this key objective, the medium term aims are:

- Further improve community based access to early intervention and prevention services that seek to increase individual and family resilience in order to prevent children, young people and families requiring statutory intervention;
- Increase the number of families with improved resilience as a result of involvement with RFS to actively engage and participate in community life.

Focusing effort on these aims has already and will continue, to increase the number of service users accessing support, increase the type of support offered, increase partner engagement in delivering early interventions and subsequently improved positive outcomes for families in need.

Where families have been supported, we have improved the overall resilience for the majority that have completed a programme of intervention. We have also improved their participation in local activities and improved their experience of living in their local area.

CASE STUDY Penrhiwceiber – Resilient Community Meetings

In addition to the activities detailed above, our Resilient Communities Partners Officer had undertaken extensive work within Penrhiwceiber, including:

- Development of a needs assessment to inform discussions and identify local priorities
- Community Profile
- Arranged and chaired a local partnership group that included key people (20+ attendees)
- Facilitated discussions to identify local priorities.

The outcome of the above activities was a list of high level priorities that we identified and agreed by the local partners. The priorities are:

- Debt & budgeting.
Establish a credit union within the local community, access to financial support services locally.
- Consult with young people.
Create and distribute a young persons survey locally. Establish what engagement opportunities young people would like locally.
- Mental Health and Well-being.
Improve knowledge and awareness of mental health and well-being locally, increase engagement with early intervention and prevention services, build

upon links with professionals, groups and organisations, establish a local network group, reduce loneliness and social isolation.

- Parity of services across the ward.
Develop 'talking cafe' model locally, develop 'community connector model, building upon good practice locally and identifying local champions.

Youth Engagement and Participation Service

Your Voice Survey

During 2018-2019, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS) launched its first Your Voice / Eich Llais consultation to capture the views of young people aged 11-25 on the matters that impact their lives. Young people were given the opportunity to complete a series of interactive questions based on a range of thematic areas using an online survey platform. Almost 5,000 young people completed the survey in schools, colleges, youth clubs and other community settings across the county borough, representing the diversity of young people living, being educated or working in RCT.

The findings of this comprehensive survey were collated into a report at the beginning of 2019-2020, with the headlines being shared with the Council's Senior Leadership Team and partner organisations, together with the action plan to address the matters that arose from the responses. The aim of this report was to improve the way the Council and partner organisations deliver services for young people in the area.

The report outlines the findings of the consultation across a number of individual thematic areas:

- Education, employment and training;
- Welsh language provision and support;
- Community – opportunities, safety, engagement;
- Well-being;
- Information, advice and guidance;
- Bullying;
- Participation and right;
- Activities available and requested;
- Social media and online presence.

As well as a holistic report representing views from across RCT and of all age ranges, specific reports were also collated for respondents aged 16 years and over, for each secondary school and for those who responded outside of school.

It was clear from the findings that there was a great deal of support and provision that young people were satisfied with, enjoyed taking part in, and were positive about their contribution and involvement. There were however, clear areas where it was evident that young people needed more to be done to ensure they felt part of their community, listened to and made to feel respected and safe. Therefore, multi-agency working groups were established to review and prioritise actions for the key matters that had arisen from the survey. These were combined into four main groups:

Priority 1 – Education, employment and training

A focus on providing more effective guidance to young people making post 16 decisions regarding further education, employment or training, in order to reduce the number of young people unsatisfied with the decisions made and requiring further information.

Priority 2 – Well-being support, information, advice and guidance

To increase the influence of our online information platforms, through social media and the Wicid Website, by increasing the volume of information and advice we provide while effectively signposting to sources of information, advice and assistance on and offline.

To more effectively promote the well-being and advice services offered through the YEPS service, to increase the understanding of young people of the breadth of the roles of the YEPS staff. To ensure young people are more aware and feel more confident of who they can talk to, to access advice services.

Priority 3 – Consultation with young people (young people's voice)

Increase the influence of both the County Youth Forum and the Local Youth Forums, ensuring a clear communication strategy for the promotion of all forums including mechanisms for young people to contact them.

Priority 4 – Raising awareness of community activities and opportunities

Increase the awareness of sporting, leisure and cultural opportunities and increasing availability of 9-11 years' provision through the development of structured transition events across RCT.

Each group, chaired by a senior member of YEPS, developed an action plan to address the findings of the survey. These action plans were ongoing and had started to evidence clear progress in the co-delivery of many of the key areas when the nation entered the Coronavirus pandemic in March 2020. Since then, the rate of development against many of the above priorities has actually accelerated due to the

nature of the service the Council's youth service has needed to provide. Whilst some partners may have been re-directed to provide essential support in other areas, new partners have joined YEPS in its efforts to provide young people with the necessary well-being support, information, advice and guidance. The Service's web and social media presence has increased exponentially, with almost 30,000 hits on the sites in the first 5 months. Full details of the outcomes will be reported in the 2020-2021 Annual Equality Report.

Pontyclun Consultation Project

During a Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee, the elected Member for the Pontyclun ward raised a query about community groups' involvement in providing youth provision in their ward. Subsequently, the Youth Engagement and Participation Service worked alongside the Pontyclun Community Council to undertake a series of consultation sessions with young people in the local area to determine what they liked about their area, what they participated in, what they'd like to see more of, and how they may want to become involved in shaping a new youth provision in the town and surrounding area. Over the course of 3 weeks, 43 young people responded to the consultation that was undertaken face-to-face in the evenings and on weekends. The findings were fed back to the Community Council and work had begun to utilise the community centre in the centre of the town as a 'safe space' for young people to use on two evenings a week. Unfortunately, these developments had to be placed on hold due to the pandemic, but work will continue once it is safe to do so.

RCT Youth Vote

With the voting age in Wales being dropped from 18 to 16 years, the Council's Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS) identified that many young people were not aware of the electoral process. This follows findings in the previous year that suggested 76% of young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf felt there was not enough education or information on how to vote when they reach voting age. Also, it revealed that 67% of young people in the county borough wished to vote at the age of 16. Therefore, the Service introduced the 'RCT Youth Vote' initiative.

The project aimed to tackle potential barriers for young people wishing to vote. It replicated the full process of an official local or national vote, where young people needed to register to vote in their local area (school or youth club). They were issued with a polling card and were given details of their polling stations to cast their vote.

The RCT Youth Vote 2019 took place from Monday, 8 July, to Friday, 12 July, when polling stations were created in 22 youth clubs located across the County Borough. Every school council in Rhondda Cynon Taf also took the opportunity to run a polling station at their school on Thursday, 11 July.

The young people voted to invest £10,000 into one of the following project areas:

- Tackling youth homelessness in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- Exploring the fear of knife crimes in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- Raising awareness and supporting positive mental health in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The project area with the most votes, mental health of young people, became the subject of a £10,000 project, which was subsequently facilitated by the Council's Youth Service.

Youth Ambassadors

A working group was set up to create a Youth Ambassador programme to be rolled out to secondary schools and further education facilities within RCT. The programme evolved from a youth initiative focussing on under-represented and minority ethnic pupils. It will allow the ambassadors to signpost other students to support services around a wide range of social issues that are either provided by the local authority or by third sector support charities. 33 pupils have completed the training, which includes awareness of subjects including equality and diversity, mental health and LGBTQ+.

OBJECTIVE 2 – To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities

Within this equality objective there are a number of areas that require action. The progress towards these actions are outlined below:

Action 1 - A comprehensive review of the recruitment and selection process to increase the diversity of applicants.

A corporate recruitment improvement action plan has been developed with the aim of making our processes more accessible and attractive to job applicants from all backgrounds. The action plan covers the following areas:

- job analysis and job design
- advertising
- applications and selection
- appointment and induction
- alternative recruitment processes
- communication and training
- monitoring and evaluation.

As part of this project the diversity and inclusion working group has been established to advise on how we can enhance diversity and inclusion throughout the recruitment process.

This is a long-term project, and this year the focus has been on research and identifying best practise examples.

Action 2 - Recommend within the adapted housing review that the Council commits to increasing the number of adapted and accessible homes being built in the area across all tenures.

The draft RCT Adapted Housing Review makes a number of recommendations aimed at increasing the supply of adapted and accessible homes being built across all tenures. This includes exploring opportunities for the provision of adapted accommodation on Council owned land. This involves working closely with private developers to understand the barriers that exist in developing adapted bungalows on private housing developments and the implementation of new Supplementary Planning Guidance which will require that a certain amount of private housing to be adapted or accessible. The review also recommends setting a local target for the number of adapted houses built per annum in the borough, as well requesting Low Cost Home Ownership bungalows as part of the affordable housing contribution.

The draft RCT Adapted Housing Review was due to go to Cabinet in March 2020, however this has been delayed due to the pandemic. Therefore, the review and recommendations have not been approved by Cabinet and are therefore not yet public.

Action 3 - The implementation of the Develop, Invest and Grow project to improve Well-being and equality and diversity outcomes in over 100 small medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Our Staying Well at Work (formally Develop Invest & Grow) project is part funded by the European Social Fund and aims to provide support to small businesses and their employees. The support is offered at no cost and focusses on a bespoke range of products to improve employee health and well-being and provide support to businesses to manage employees with disabilities/work limiting health conditions.

Initial delays to the start date of delivery of the project impacted on the ability to deliver the agreed outcomes as well as those detailed in the Strategic Equality Plan. Furthermore, during this period RCT was affected by Storm Dennis in February 2020 and subsequently the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, which still pervades our businesses and lives. Storm Dennis decimated the high streets and led to many businesses closing operations. Secondly, just as businesses were recovering from Storm Dennis, the COVID-19 pandemic commenced with many staff placed on furlough leave. Naturally, these events have been the main concerns and priorities

for businesses throughout the past year and made engagement by the project more challenging and had a significant impact on the projects ability to engage in the way that it had up to this point.

For RCT the impact of these two events was devastating, firstly in relation to the 70% of SME's based in RCT whose premises and livelihoods were decimated by the storm, and of course the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the ability of those same businesses to trade.

The project quickly responded to these challenges adapting delivery of the services and building the infrastructure to continue to engage with new and current stakeholders.

Engagement with SME's will continue to be a challenge due to ongoing closures and furlough scheme extension. As the majority of the work the project completes with SME's is policy review and advice/support this can and has been over recent months delivered via email or virtually through Microsoft Teams and similar platforms.

The outcomes delivered

88 SME's received direct support from the project to encourage a cultural change in organisations towards a more diverse and healthy workforce and the adoption of flexible working practices.

Employers were encouraged and supported to adopt flexible work practices, as well as adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems. Activities with employers included promoting the benefits a healthy workplace can bring to an organisation, addressing health related issues within the workforce and develop or improve appropriate work place or occupational health programmes.

Shown in the chart below (Table 1a) are the activities undertaken with 70 SME's that have been through internal compliance checks and adopted or improved their strategies and/or monitoring systems.

27 have completed the project and recorded outcomes against the project indicators, of which 6 were early leavers, and 43 are still actively engaged in the project.

Table 1a

Outcome	Referrals	Participants
01. Adoption or improvement of HR and Health & Safety Policy that supports and monitors attendance and well-being in the workplace	<u>16</u>	<u>16</u>

02. Adoption or improvement of an Absence Management Policy	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>
03. Adoption or improvement of Equality and Diversity Policies and/or procedures in place which make reference to the Equality Act 2010	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>
04. Adoption or improvement of systems and/or procedures that support flexibility in the workplace?	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
05. Adoption or improvement of Assessments and/or Monitoring Systems in place to support the Health and Well-being of staff?	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
06. Adoption or improvement of policy, procedure or intervention that supports health, work and well-being of employees.	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
07. Has the business adopted or improved systems to monitor the impact of work on health, for e.g. ergonomic assessment, health surveillance?	0	0
08. Does the business now have training in place to promote health awareness and well-being	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Early Leaver	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
No Outcome Recorded Yet	<u>43</u>	<u>43</u>
Total	70	70

Workplace Health Programmes

Prior to COVID-19 workplace health programmes were delivered face-to-face from Ty Penygawsi or in the workplace. Service delivery will need to adapt during national lockdown to webinar delivery.

Employee Participant Activity

This part of the project involves directly supporting employees with their well-being, with the aim being they return to work following a period of absence. The support offered has been more holistic, more in-depth and over a longer period of time than was expected. As a consequence the impact on participants has been more far reaching and is likely to have greater longevity as a result.

The project was designed to support individuals with mild/moderate conditions such as anxiety, however during delivery it quickly became apparent that participants have presented with far more complex issues than anticipated. Therefore the interventions provided by the clinical team, which includes nurses and counsellors have needed to

respond appropriately. Consequently, the duration of the client intervention period has been longer due to the need to access multiple interventions to deal with different issues.

Participant feedback highlighted as a strength the high quality and holistic nature of delivery. Over 50% of participants returned to work following a period of absence. A number of participant's feedback to project staff that the support they received from the project was vital in getting them to return work.

Up to 31 December 2020, 335 employee participants have enrolled with the project. 277 employee participants have completed their engagement with the project, 137 of those participants have returned to work. The reasons for referral are detailed above in Table 1a and a breakdown of the outcomes recorded are detailed below in Table 1b.

Table 1b Reason for Referral

Reason	Referrals	%	Participants
In Work Support	<u>58</u>	21%	<u>58</u>
Support Ret. to Work -28 Days	<u>48</u>	17%	<u>48</u>
Support Ret. to Work 28 Days+	<u>171</u>	62%	<u>171</u>
Total	277	100%	277

Table 1c Outcome

Outcome	Referrals	%	Participants
Early Leaver	<u>88</u>	32%	<u>88</u>
NO-RTW 4 wks after completion	<u>18</u>	6%	<u>18</u>
Remained in Work	<u>34</u>	12%	<u>34</u>
RTW - Different	<u>2</u>	1%	<u>2</u>
RTW - Same	<u>132</u>	48%	<u>132</u>
RTW 4 wks after completion	<u>3</u>	1%	<u>3</u>
Total	277	100%	277

Table 1d Participant Breakdown

	2019-2020 Cumulative Total	
Participant Breakdown	Total	%
Disabled/Disability	54	19.5%
Work Limiting Condition (Includes MSD & MH)	223	80.5%

Female	213	76.9%
Male	64	23.1%
Care/Child Responsibilities	76	27.4%
Over 54	103	37.2%
Migrant/Non EU	0	0.0%
BME	0	0.0%
Total Referrals	277	100.0%

Action 4 - To provide accessible information to the public through a variety of formats with a specific focus on improving accessibility of information for the Deaf community.

We offer multi-channel access to information and Council services. This is provided via a range of formats and facilities including:

- Text Phone/Sensory Support Line number promoted via our website
- BSL Interpreters available to attend One4aLL appointments
- Hearing loop systems in place at One4aLL appointment desks
- Enquiries received via the Text Relay Service
- Material available in alternative formats e.g. application forms, consultation documents
- Browsealoud available on our website providing accessibility tools such as:
 - Text to speech (read aloud)
 - Screen mask
 - Text magnifier
 - Web page simplifier
 - MP3 maker (convert online content to audio)
 - Picture dictionary.

During 2019-2020 work has commenced towards meeting WCAG 2.1 web accessibility standards.

Action 5 - Undertake development of the use of assistive technology within the Digital Strategy.

The Lifeline Monitoring Centre provides support to vulnerable customers, responding to telecare alerts and providing proactive contacts. During 2019-2020 there were:

- 3,500 Lifeline clients
- over 22,000 alarm calls received
- approx. 23,000 outbound calls made to clients e.g. welfare checks, prompts to test lifeline units etc.

During the year a responder service was added to enhance the experience of Lifeline users. Responders are tasked as appropriate by the Monitoring Centre following an alarm call to support clients in need of help e.g. following a fall. The emergence of new Assistive Technology solutions continues to be reviewed as part of the council's Digital Strategy.

Action 6 - To strengthen existing Homefinder processes to take into account equality and diversity best practice.

Work on this area is due to commence in 2020-2021.

Action 7 - To further develop an inclusive approach to apprenticeships.

We continue to work closely with Elite Supported Employment Agency, further education colleges and other support agencies to promote apprenticeship and graduate opportunities to people from diverse backgrounds and to those with additional needs. We developed an information video to promote opportunities and inform individuals about the support we offer.

We are already a Disability Confident employer and as such we routinely offer reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process and in the workplace. Though we recognise that for our apprenticeships and graduate programme to be fully accessible additional measures were required. Therefore we have adjusted various stages with the recruitment process to support individuals and as a result we have recruited a number of apprentices with additional needs.

We have delivered a number of workshops to the Department for Work and Pensions, external training providers and further education colleges to explain our recruitment process to enable them to support candidates who wish to apply for jobs in the Council.

Working in partnership with Coleg Y Cymoedd and Elite we are delivering the [Gateway to Employment programme](#). This programme provides work experience placements to individuals with learning and physical disabilities.

We have also offered a new programme - Access to Employment. This is a 1 year employed programme for individuals who need additional support, nurturing and development to progress onto an apprenticeship programme. We currently have 3 individuals on this programme, one progressed from the Gateway to Employment programme. The outcomes have been positive and Tomos' success is outlined below:

Case Study – Tomos Churchill

We are delighted to offer Tomos full time paid employment with RCT Council based at Ynysangharad Park as a Horticultural Trainee.

During his placement with us on the Engage to Change Gateway to Employment programme, Tomos showed great enthusiasm and commitment, quickly established a great rapport with his team mates and placement managers. Tomos was always keen to learn and go over and above what was asked of him.

Tomos started work with us on 7th September and it meant he had to get to the park by 7.30am every day, this didn't faze Tomos even though his public transport options have been restricted during COVID-19. He continues to arrive promptly each day.

The Employment, Education and Training Team (EET) at the Council will continue to support Tomos, conducting regular reviews and implementing a training plan to further develop his skills and experience. Tomos would like to improve his literacy skills and we have encouraged and supported this by linking him with our community literacy programme and authorising him to be released from work one afternoon a week.

We wish Tomos every success on his employment journey with us at RCT Council.

Below is a quote from Tomos:

'This is my first ever job as I felt employers wouldn't employ me because of my disability. I'm very grateful for the opportunity and the best thing I've ever done is enrolled on the Engage to Change Gateway to Employment Programme. I know, without this opportunity I wouldn't be doing anything right now. Now, I've got lots to look forward to. I want to learn to drive and I recently got engaged so now I can start saving for our wedding'.



Tomos with Emma Brabon, Senior EET Co-ordinator.

You can watch Tomos share his story on this [You Tube link](#).

Action 8 - Strengthen the scrutiny process for the Equality Impact Assessment process.

This action was due to commence in financial year 2019-2020 to support the Council's compliance and commitment to the Welsh Government's implementation of the Socio economic duty. Due to the pandemic the implementation date has been delayed to 31 March 2021. Therefore work in this area will be undertaken in the next financial year.

Action 9 - Encourage the uptake of Free School Meal (FSM) entitlement through reviewing service delivery models and an effective marketing strategy.

The 21st Century school modernisation programme has included the redesign of secondary school kitchens and dining halls to improve the dining experience and promote learner engagement and attendance. Evidence suggests the investment in school facilities is having a significant impact on the take up of school meals with an increase of 13,136 meals at primary level and 90,110 meals at secondary level during 2019-20. Free school meal take up has remained at the same level in primary schools but has increased by 5.3% in secondary schools.

Breakfast service has been extended to the majority of secondary schools in order to encourage all pupils to eat a healthy breakfast and help promote early arrival in schools. Pupils FSM allowance is updated at the start of each school day to enable them to access this service.

An extensive choice of menus has been developed to assist in the take up of FSM. Secondary menus have been created with a wide range of products with flexible pricing options which allows pupils to purchase food items during breakfast, morning break and lunchtime. In addition RCT provide bespoke menus for pupils with allergen requirements, during 19-20 we created menus for 218 learners with more complex requirements. A vegan menu has also been created for primary and secondary schools and is accessible to all pupils.

Online payments have been implemented in all secondary schools to reduce the requirement of pupils bringing cash to schools. This reduces bullying and ensures that money provided to pupils is actually spent on breakfast or lunch, the use of cashless systems also ensures pupil FSM anonymity.

Links to the online FSM application form have been included on the catering services website to encourage parents to apply.

Action 10 - Take a strategic approach to our town centres which will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive and accessible environment for local businesses, shoppers, residents and visitors.

The Prosperity and Development's Service Delivery Plan set out a number of key service priorities for 2019-2020. One included modernising our town centres and building on their role as centres for social inclusion, local economic opportunity and the provision of services. By recognising their changing role from retail centres to social destinations and we were able to support retailers to adapt to changes in economic and customers' expectations.

In supporting the delivery of local economic activities whilst promoting social inclusivity, the Council has engaged with a variety of groups and stakeholders in delivering new projects and initiatives across our town centres and to seek their views on implementing temporary measures, such as those implemented by way of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Early response to COVID-19

In response to new government guidance brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council implemented a series of temporary measures across our town centres by way of ensuring public safety through social distancing. Through a "Signs and Lines" approach, the measures included:

- where necessary, directional arrows placed on the footways to direct pedestrian movement throughout the town centres;
- where necessary directional arrows to ensure social distancing is maintained on pedestrian routes in and out of Council car parks, to and from the town centres;
- removal of some street furniture from town centres where possible, or where not, the construction of barriers to prevent larger gatherings of people in close proximity;
- signage placed at bus stops/shelters throughout the town centres re-enforcing social distancing measures;
- signage located on litter bins throughout the town centres re-enforcing social distancing measures.

In implementing the above measures a number of stakeholders were consulted with including the RCT 50+ Forum, Older Persons Advisory Group (OPAG), RCT Disability Forum and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB). This considered the impact of the measures on accessibility and pedestrian movement and enabled the Council to implement a range of considerate and appropriate measures. It also enabled the Council to provide appropriate advice and guidance to businesses, to safeguard customers.

We have also promoted a number of initiatives:

Hop, Shop and Save Scheme

In 2019 the Council worked in partnership with Stagecoach South Wales to develop and implement the **Hop, Shop and Save Scheme**. The scheme, which is the first of its kind in Wales, enables Stagecoach passengers to receive a discount on a range of products and services across RCT town centres, upon the production of a valid bus ticket. Whilst the scheme is available for all residents of RCT, those with a “bus pass” may not ordinarily be included. Many older people and disabled people rely on a bus pass to travel to town centres, whether to shop or access services. The Council therefore worked with Stagecoach and the business community to ensure those in receipt of a bus pass would also be able to fully access the scheme.

50+ Discount Scheme

The Council have worked with the 50+ Forum in RCT to promote the previously developed **50+ Discount Scheme**. The scheme enables those over the age of 50 to access a range of discounts at participating businesses across RCT town centres, usually on specific days of the week. The Council have worked in partnership with individual businesses and business organisations, such as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Chambers of Trade and Business Forums to increase membership of the scheme. This has resulted in an increase in the number of businesses and particularly cafes participating in the scheme, and has enabled additional options to

encourage more people to leave their homes to visit town centres, whether to shop and/or socialise with other people.

OBJECTIVE 3 – TO PROMOTE SAFE COMMUNITIES

Within this equality objective there are a number of areas that require action. The progress towards these actions are outlined below.

Action 1 - Review, develop and re-implement the Hate Crime Strategy.

The Crown Prosecution Service defines a Hate Crime as:

“'hate crime' can be used to describe a range of criminal behavior where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

These aspects of a person's identity are known as 'protected characteristics'. A hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property. The perpetrator can also be a friend, carer or acquaintance who exploits their relationship with the victim for financial gain or some other criminal purpose.”

During 2019, 405 hate crimes were recorded in the Cwm Taf area (Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil).

The tables below show the breakdown across the 5 characteristics, area and month:

Table 1a. Hate Crimes by characteristic

Disability	72
Race	238
Religion	17
Sexual Orientation	89
Transgender	13

Table 1b. Hate Crimes by area

Rhondda	106
Cynon	89
Taf	134
Merthyr	76

Table 1c. Hate Crime by month (2019)

January	19
February	36
March	37
April	40
May	29
June	38
July	31
August	37
September	33
October	27
November	46
December	32

Tackling Hate Crime in Rhondda Cynon Taf

We have continued to work closely with partner agencies including South Wales Police (SWP). Increased partnership working has enabled us to ensure that residents get a positive and consistent response.

Education and Early Intervention

During 2019-2020 emphasis has been placed on education and early intervention. We have worked with schools across the borough to deliver training sessions to pupils. Training sessions aim to raise awareness of hate crime and how to report it. The sessions aim to increase inclusion and reduce discrimination and inequality within schools. Within the session there is discussion around the protected characteristics as follows:

1. Disability – pupils discuss all aspects of disability including physical disability, mental health awareness, learning difficulties, dementia and autistic spectrum disorder;
2. Race – pupils are encouraged to engage in discussions about race and the issue of racism. Pupils are reminded that race related Hate is an offence, and that the age of criminal responsibility in the UK is ten years old;
3. Religion – pupils are encouraged to engage in discussions about different forms of religion as well as other cultures;

4. Sexuality – pupils are encouraged to talk about sexuality and discuss celebrities or those in the public eye, who are openly lesbian, gay or bisexual;
5. Gender identity – pupils are encouraged to think about and discuss different gender identities including those who identify as non-binary and gender fluid. The pupils are given guidance on the use of pronouns.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, 1,600 school pupils received this training.

Further Education

A number of 'drop in' clinics have been held in local colleges with the aim of increasing awareness of hate crime and how to report it. A total of 114 students were engaged with, over the 3 campuses across RCT.

SWP Police Volunteers

A session was provided to SWP Police volunteers. 29 volunteers attended.

Adults with Learning Disabilities

We have worked closely with Adult Day Services to compile a training package which was then delivered to adults with learning disabilities. The focus was around potentially becoming a victim of hate crime, how to recognise hate crime and how to report it. The sessions were held in 2 day centres across RCT. This was then used to create a 'music video' with the support of Mosaic Minds. The film was launched in December 2019 in Hawthorn Leisure Centre and is available on [this YouTube link](#).

Awareness Raising Events for Residents

Events have been held in local libraries and leisure centres to raise awareness for the general public. The events have been supported by SWP and again look at increasing awareness of what hate crime is and how to report it. At least 1,429 residents were engaged with during 2019-2020.

Staff Training

Hate crime awareness training sessions have been delivered to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team. 13 staff members attended. 74 Council staff received training between 31 March 2019 and 1 April 2020. Training was also delivered to 50 Trivalis staff and to 16 Communities For Work Plus staff members.

South Wales Police (SWP)

Awareness training sessions have been held at SWP stations to ensure officers are compliant with the hate crime process. This ensures that referrals are dealt with appropriately and that we get an accurate picture of the figures around hate crime.

E-Learning

We have developed an e-learning module on Hate Crime Awareness and how to report any concerns around incidents or tensions.

National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019

- 29 events were held across the Cwm Taf region, with 20 held in RCT.
- 451 residents took part in our survey, a much greater (unrecorded) number were engaged with on a more informal basis.
- RCT's Community Cohesion Officer and a SWP Hate Crime Officer appeared on GTFM radio on prime time/drive time to discuss hate crime and how to report it. In addition to this, daily events were published during breakfast radio. The drive time slot has an average of 40,000 listeners and GTFM have 250,000 followers on Social Media.
- Photos of the majority of events appeared on RCT Council and SWP Northern Twitter pages.
- SWP officers attended Aberdare Mosque and engaged with members of the Mosque, providing advice in relation to crime reduction and the importance of reporting hate crime.
- The week culminated with televised events being held at both Pontypridd RFC and Merthyr RFC. Both rugby clubs printed information in their programmes. Photos were taken with the players, mascots, SWP and Council Community Safety Officers, with the 'be heard' banner. Photos were shared on Instagram.
- Pontypridd RFC released an article entitled 'The House of Pain – No Place for Hate' – outlining national statistics and the worrying rise of hate crime in sport. Although it is impossible to quantify the number of people who read the article, 100's of people attended both games and each person was provided with a programme.
- SWP had use of the 'Pride car' for the duration of Friday the 18th October; the car was taken to 2 events across Cwm Taf, and received great interest from members of the public. It was reassuring to hear so many positive comments in relation to the LGBTQ+ community.
- RCT Community Cohesion Officer attended 2 schools in the Cynon Valley to deliver hate crime awareness sessions to school pupils.

- RCT Community Cohesion Officer attended Coleg Y Cymoedd, Aberdare campus to deliver hate crime awareness sessions to 5 classes, a total of 41 students.
- As a result of close partnership working with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, events held at Prince Charles Hospital, Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Ysbyty Cwm Cynon and Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda were all well attended and supported by staff and patients alike.
- Council Community Cohesion Officer's attended Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and Merthyr Tydfil College to deliver hate crime awareness sessions to SWP youth volunteers.
- An event was held at St Catherine's Church Pontypridd with an emphasis on acceptance and increase of awareness of religious based hate crime.
- An event was held at Ferndale Hub, which was supported by 2 members of RCT People First. [RCT People First](#) are a charity for people with learning disabilities who live in the borough. The main aim of RCT People First is to empower people with learning difficulties to challenge prejudice and discrimination through training education and support, so this was a fantastic opportunity to include people who belong to one of the protected groups in the events held.



Hate Crime awareness raising at Pontypridd Rugby Club.

Action 2 - Review the existing approach to tackling modern slavery.

Funding from Welsh Government has been obtained to outsource Modern Day Slavery training from [BAWSO](#). The training was due to be delivered to Council staff at the end of March 2020. This was subsequently cancelled due to national COVID-19 restrictions.

Action 3 - As part of Education's Well-being Strategy we will develop a programme for schools about raising awareness of emotional abuse in relationships.

The Senior Educational Psychologist for Well-being is working with Barnardos, the Police and Education representatives to develop a programme of support for schools. Project development will continue next year with the aim of releasing information to schools in the Summer Term.

The Senior Educational Psychologist a member of the Cwm Taf Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation safeguarding group.

Action 4 - Pilot the PERMA model in secondary schools.

Embedded in Positive Psychology, Seligman's PERMA model is suggested as an effective framework for understanding and promoting well-being. Furthermore, PERMA tools are suggested as an easily understood measure which can assess various dimensions of pupil well-being and can account for fluctuations in well-being over time.

According to Seligman's PERMA model:

- **Positive emotions** refer to hedonic feelings of happiness (e.g. feeling joyful, content, and cheerful).
- **Engagement** refers to psychological connection to activities or organisations (e.g. feeling absorbed, interested, and engaged in life).
- **Relationships** include feeling socially integrated, cared about and supported by others, and satisfied with one's social connections.
- **Meaning** refers to believing that one's life is valuable and feeling connected to something greater than oneself.
- **Accomplishment** involves making progress toward goals, feeling capable to do daily activities, and having a sense of achievement.

Seligman proposes that these five pillars contribute to individual well-being.

PERMA tools (Well-being Tool and MiSpace App) have now been set up in 11 secondary schools in RCT. Baseline data has been collected on 2,359 pupils and has provided useful information for targeted work in schools. Data shows that pupils in Year 9 and 11 report the lowest sense of well-being across the 6 areas monitored. Particular trends include:

- Boys relationships are reportedly lower than girls;
- Pupils with attendance above 85% report higher sense of well-being in all 6 areas as compared to pupils with lower attendance;
- Children looked after (CLA) pupils report lower scores for both relationships and accomplishment than non CLA pupils;
- Free School Meal (FSM) pupils report increased negative emotions than non FSM. Pupils who have special education needs reported lower well-being in all 6 areas monitored.

Additional support for schools from the Educational Psychology Service has been put in place through a Welsh Government Grant to develop whole school approaches to supporting the well-being of learners. This means that two Assistant Educational Psychologists will be supporting schools to respond appropriately to the data they collect and to monitor pupils that may be deemed at risk.

Further development work is underway to improve the PERMA tools based on feedback from schools.

Action 5 - Strengthen collection and analysis of data for bullying incidents in schools.

Bullying data is discussed as part of termly Behaviour Data meetings held by Education's Access and Inclusion department. Very few bullying incidents are reported which makes meaningful data analysis difficult. Individual incidents are followed up with schools. The low reporting indicates the need for further training and advice to be delivered to schools. Updated training for schools on bullying has been delayed due to COVID-19 but will be incorporated into the education well-being forums for schools.

In the next 12 months the use of Microsoft Forms will be introduced to improve the ease of reporting and analysis.

A training programme for Governors focusing on the new Welsh Government Anti Bullying guidance 'Rights, Respect, Equality' has been developed and is ready to incorporate into the Governor Training Programme.

Action 6 - Further develop the freedom programme with Women's Aid to better understand specific needs for victims of domestic violence from underrepresented groups.

Referrals from the Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities remains consistently low, however course materials, such as handouts can be provided in a number of languages to support those where English is not their first language.

To be able to provide courses to male victims of abuse, the team are due to undertake training and a male domestic abuse programme will begin next financial year.

OBJECTIVE 4 – TO REDUCE THE GENDER PAY GAP

Within this equality objective there are a number of areas that require action. The progress towards these actions are outlined below.

The Gender Pay Gap

An organisation's gender pay gap is the difference between the average male and female pay rates. It is calculated by dividing the average female hourly pay rate by the average male hourly pay rate.

The Council is required to publish the gender pay gap between male and female employees. It is also required to publish this data separately on employees in Education (teaching employees).

The Equality and Human Rights Commission strongly advise publishing separate full-time and part-time gender pay gaps. It is considered that any pay gap of 5% or more is considered significant and in need of further analysis.

The Equal Pay Audit identified the following Equal Pay gaps:

2020	Combined Gap	Full-Time Gap	Part-Time Gap
All Employees	10.41%	-12.19%	4.09%
Non-Teaching	11.38%	-10.65%	3.53%
Teaching	5.06%	4.59%	5.68%

The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees. A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

The pay award on April 1st 2019 for employees on NJC terms and conditions saw a significant increase in the rates of pay at the lower grades. As around 88% of employees in these lower grades are female, this had an impact on the gender pay gap calculations for 2019-2020 as the average pay for females increased by 3.66% whereas the average pay for males increased by 2.18%. This had an impact of reducing the gender pay gap from 11.66% in 2018-2019 to 10.41% in 2019-2020.

Action 1 - Deliver the roll out of the performance review process for staff at all grades.

The Council's new performance review process for staff is being incrementally rolled-out to ensure effective implementation and understanding. Roll-out has been undertaken for Chief Officer post holders and for staff on Grades 11 to 15. Embedding the new performance review process and focusing on compliance has been the focus this year and has unfortunately delayed further roll-out to all staff. However service areas are continuing to use the previous performance review processes with their staff not on the grades mentioned above, although central monitoring for this is not undertaken.

We will continue to roll-out the revised performance reviews Council wide, with particular attention to ensuring that staff without access to work IT and no Council email address have a performance review.

Action 2 - Improve the monitoring of the performance review process.

As part of the new performance review process we monitor compliance, the training needs analysis and we review the process which includes obtaining feedback from managers and staff. We will continue to develop the monitoring process during further roll-out of the process.

Action 3 - Better understand whether barriers exist regarding the progression of women into senior positions.

Following feedback from our female staff we are exploring how we can encourage more women to apply for senior roles. We are developing a Women in Leadership Programme which will aim to remove barriers to progression.

Action 4 - Understand more about what prevents women returning to the workplace following maternity leave.

A qualitative research study has commenced to understand the barriers to retention following maternity leave. The study explores social and organisational barriers that contribute to the issue, which may detrimentally impact on long-term career prospects for women. The research also aims to examine whether target setting is

an aid to retention and explores other retention strategies. The research is due for completion in May 2020.

Action 5 - Support the EHRC pledge 'Working Forward' and implement its recommendations.

Work will commence in this area during 2020-2021 following receipt of recommendations from the report outlined in the previous section.

OBJECTIVE 5 – TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

Within this equality objective there are a number of areas that require action. The progress towards these actions are outlined below:

Action 1 - Develop a programme of sexual harassment training and awareness.

Work in this area is due to commence in the financial year 2020-2021 in response to new guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, published at the end of January 2020.

In 2019-2020 there were 2 complaints of sexual harassment in the workplace. These complaints were initially dealt with under the Council's Dignity at Work Policy but quickly escalated to the Disciplinary Policy due to the allegations concerned. Human Resources Officers dealing with the cases were made aware of emerging best practice in relation to sexual harassment cases and as such offered enhanced support to the complainant. Following disciplinary action, one-to-one training was held with the perpetrators in each case and one was permanently relocated to an alternative work place.

Action 2 - Undertake a review of all our mental health activities and develop annual plans which provide education, training and interventions.

Following a successful staff well-being event in January 2019 we have continued to highlight the importance of staff well-being and mental health.

At each of our staff induction sessions there has been a Mental Health Champion or representative from Time to Talk Wales, giving the message to new staff that the Council values their well-being and that this is an organisational wide approach.

Throughout the year we have written internal articles to promote and raise awareness of well-being days and events related to mental health. We have published staff bio's and lived experiences including staff network members experiences of living with mental health.

Over the year we have delivered face-to-face sessions at various Council sites as part of our Time to Change Wales pledge. At these sessions which attracted around 80 staff, we provided internal and external resources to support staff and promoted and encouraged staff to speak about mental health and their well-being and seek support if needed.

We have continued to work with Trade Unions to raise awareness of mental health issues and help them to recognise symptoms in Council staff. As a result of this work, we secured a further £16k from the [Welsh Union Learning Fund](#) which the Council match funded. Using this funding, 249 managers and supervisors received Mental Health Awareness Training between November 2019 and February 2020. Plans to train more of our staff were affected by COVID-19 and will be arranged as soon as it is safe to do so.

Action 3 - Source and develop a suite of training for managers on equality and diversity topics.

Work is due to commence on this area in financial year 2020-2021.

Action 4 - Become more disability confident as an organisation.

The Council is already a [Disability Confident](#) employer. As such we have good practice recruitment and selection processes, we support employees with disabilities by providing reasonable adjustments, and we challenge negative stereotypes associated with disability. However, we recognise that there are areas we can improve upon. In Jan 2020, we welcomed a University of South Wales internship to undertake a project to look at how we can become more Disability Confident. This internship is due to finish in April 2020. An action plan will be developed to report the findings.

We are [Business Disability Forum](#) (BDF) members. As a result of this membership we are able to access a range of disability guidance and best practice, which we have made available to our managers. We have promoted the BDF Advice Service to enable our Human Resource Team and managers to gain timely advice on a range of disability issues, for example accessibility issues and reasonable adjustments.

As previously mentioned in this report, this year we have purchased and rolled-out software called Read&Write. Read&Write improves reading and writing confidence. It makes documents, files and web pages more accessible. This software, whilst beneficial to everyone is particularly beneficial to those with neurodiverse conditions. Our IT department is developing user guidance to support the roll-out of the software.

Action 5 - Undertake workplace equality monitoring.

As previously outlined in this report, an equality monitoring toolkit has been developed which highlights the best practice equality monitoring questions that should be completed by staff. Internally, equality monitoring data is vital to examine the Council's progress concerning its legal duties and equality objectives. It helps us to identify gaps and trends and consequently we can develop action plans to address those gaps.

The Council is implementing a new HR and Payroll system in April 2020. This is a significant project covering all workforce data. The best practice equality monitoring fields outlined in the toolkit will be added onto this system. This provides us with an opportunity to collect data on characteristics such as non-binary identities. This is something which we have not been in a position to do previously due to development limitations in the current system. Following implementation of the new system there will be a push to obtain up-to-date staff information.

Action 6 - Replicate existing good practice to reflect all protected characteristics.

In 2019-2020 the Council marked a number of awareness days either by raising awareness through articles and blogs on its internal intranet and with staff networks or by holding awareness raising events. Articles were written about the following, they appear in date order:

- Autism Awareness Week
- Lesbian Visibility Day
- Deaf Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia
- Pride Cymru
- Dyslexia Awareness Day
- International Day of Older Persons
- Bi Visibility Day
- Rhondda Pride
- World Menopause Day
- Black History Month
- Baby Loss Awareness
- World Mental Health Day
- Men's Mental Health Month
- Carer's Rights Day
- Trans Day of Remembrance
- Trans Awareness Week
- Human Rights Day

- Welsh Language Rights Day
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Time to Talk Day
- Interfaith Harmony Week
- Holocaust Memorial Day
- LGBTQ+ History Month
- International Women's Day.

In addition to the above, a number of events were held across the Council to raise awareness and promote diversity and inclusion.

Black History Month

The Council celebrated Black History Month by sharing articles on iconic black role models including:

- Betty Campbell
- Clive A. Sullivan
- Marsha P. Johnson.

We also signposted readers to websites promoting Black Welsh History including the 1919 South Wales Race riots.

A public event was also held which has already been outlined earlier in this report.

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD)

Each year the Council marks HMD. In January 2020 the Council commemorated the day by lowering the flag and holding a minute silence at the Headquarters in Clydach. The Library Service supported HMD by arranging book displays on the Holocaust which included books such as the Diary of Ann Frank. Workshops were held with 3 primary schools across the borough, Cwmaman Primary School, Maesybryn Primary School and Maerdy Primary School, where classes of year 5 and 6 pupils learned about the purpose of HMD and how they can commemorate this day in future. All pupils were taught about the Nazi's, the Holocaust and discrimination. The pupils then took part in an activity by reading a survivors' story and writing a message to the Holocaust survivor [Renee Bornstein](#).

International Women's Day

For International Women's Day 2019, we hosted an afternoon tea for Council staff. The event was themed around the [Women's Equality Network's Wales \(WEN\)](#) '100 Welsh Women', and encouraged those in attendance to learn about Welsh women's history. We focussed on 20 women from the list and gave information on each of

these women to those who attended. The library service brought books about Welsh women's history to the event. The event attracted many staff who engaged in discussion about gender equality and women's achievements. Staff were encouraged to pledge support to promote gender equality in the workplace.



Council staff at the International Women's Day Event.

Menopause Awareness

Working with our recognised Trade Unions we have held a number of menopause awareness events. The sessions have highlighted the taboo around the menopause and have not only raised awareness but also offered individuals support through peer discussion and support from an Occupational Health nurse. As a result of previous feedback we trialled a menopause emergency pack which contained information from menopause support groups, a notebook, a fan and refreshing wipes. The feedback from recipients of these packs was overwhelmingly positive. One member of staff commented:

"Thank you very much for hosting this event. I am pleased that RCT are attempting to prioritise staff well-being regarding such important health issues."

The menopause packs are a fantastic resource for all staff to educate themselves on an issue that affects so many within the workforce. Thanks again”.



Councillor Maureen Webber, Deputy Leader with Trade Union Officers and Council staff at a menopause event in the Valley's Innovation Centre.

Following the launch of the Menopause Guide, our library service recognised they may have a large number of staff who may be experiencing the menopause. As a result, they established their own menopause network for library staff. This network provides support and information as well as providing a route to the Corporate menopause working group. A menopause café with guest speakers was scheduled to be held at Rhydyfelin Library in April 2020. This was also going to be open to the public. Unfortunately this was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Library staff at their first menopause network meeting.

Staff Networks

Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index

We have continued our commitment to creating an inclusive place to work for LGBTQ+ staff by submitting our work annually to Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index. We are extremely proud to have placed 88th in the top 100 LGBTQ+ inclusive employers in the UK. Rhondda Cynon Taf are the only Welsh local authority to secure a spot in Stonewall's Top 100 in 2019-2020, making it one of the most inclusive workplaces for LGBTQ+ staff in the UK. We secured our top ranking in the Stonewall Top 100 thanks to evidence submitted to showcase our approach to equality and inclusivity, which includes staff awareness, training, peer support and mentoring, senior management buy-in and more. Staff were also invited to provide feedback, in the strictest confidence, to Stonewall on what it is like to work for the Council and how well they feel LGBTQ+ services and support are delivered. The overall feedback was extremely positive with staff knowing that we have a strong commitment to equality as an organisation and recognise the work we have undertaken to implement this. Many of the LGBTQ+ staff, who answered the survey,

shared that they felt confident to be who they are at work and felt well supported and had no fear of discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Flag Raising

For important dates and events in the LGBTQ+ calendar we continue to raise and fly the Rainbow and trans flags at our Head offices. This sends a positive message of inclusion to our staff and the wider community.



Cabinet members, members of the Senior Leadership Team, Trade Union Officers and Council staff raising the Rainbow flag.



Council Staff Network members raising the Rainbow flag.

LGBT History Month

We worked in collaboration with Coleg y Cymoedd and Caerphilly Council to deliver an event where all staff were invited. A lecture was delivered on Global LGBTQ+ history and current issues, we had information stalls from external and internal partners such as Pride Cymru, Community Cohesion and our Staff Networks and we engaged with college students about the prospect of working at the Council.

'Equali-tea for staff and learners'

To mark LGBT History month, LGBT Allies from
Coleg y Cymoedd, RCT Council and Caerphilly Council
will be hosting an:

Equali-tea
27th February
Nantgarw campus
9.30am - 12.30pm.

There will be information stalls and guest speakers.
Wear a splash of colour and join us for refreshments in support of our LGBT community





We held an internal campaign called 'In their shoes'. This was an idea from a member of our Allies Network to encourage people to have a conversation and raise awareness that some LGBTQ+ staff members may not feel comfortable being their authentic self in work.



Organisational Policy

Through our work with Stonewall we have recognised the need to amend and update some of our policies to ensure the language is inclusive and representative of all people in society. Our policies are now accessible and inclusive of all; some of the policies that we have updated include Transitioning at Work Policy, Shared Parental Leave and Maternity Leave Policy.

Overall Progress

The Council has made significant progress in many of the equality objectives. It is noted that some have not yet commenced and progress in these will be monitored in future annual reports. Whilst this report reflects the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic it is important to note that the Council's response to the pandemic will significantly impact upon day to day activities and progress in all equality objectives in the next financial year 2020-2021.

Our work to deliver equality objectives contained in our Strategic Equality Plan helps us to show how we are contributing to [a more equal Wales](#) - 'a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances'. But it also seeks to support all the well-being goals including a Wales of Cohesive Communities and a Prosperous Wales.

7. Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's)

The Council has had an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process in place for a number of years which is carried out under the following circumstances:

- Where new policies or practices are developed (including corporate plans, annual business plans and the annual budget);

- Where changes to existing policies or practices are proposed, and when conducting expenditure reviews and programme evaluations;
- Where there are proposals to withdraw from or discontinue an existing policy or practice;
- Where the Business Planning process has identified relevance to or implications for equality.

The process is regularly reviewed and takes into account the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council introduced a screening process in January 2012 which is designed to make the process as effective as possible and to ensure that any information gathered at the screening stage can be used if a full EIA is required. However, the Council automatically carries out a full EIA on its Change proposals process.

The table below includes a snapshot of EIA's carried out in 2019-2020.

Equality Impact Assessments

Policy/Procedure	Date
The future of Community Day Centres – consultation report	May 2019
Proposals for a strategic development plan for the Cardiff capital region	May 2019
Proposals to undertake a formal review of the Council's Local Development Plan	May 2019
Creating vibrant town centres in Rhondda Cynon Taf – growing businesses with a targeted package of support in our town centres	Jun 2019
Cwm Taf Morgannwg safeguarding board annual Plan 2019-20	Jun 2019
Transformation of the early years system in Rhondda Cynon Taf	Jun 2019
A4119 Dualling	Jul 2019
21 st Century Schools	Jul 2019
Energy Company Obligations (ECO) 3 – Local Authority Flexibility Eligibility Criteria 'ECO Flex'	Jun 2019
Modernisation of Residential and Day Care Services	Sep 2019
New policy guidance on relevance of convictions in determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades	Sep 2019
Direct cremations	Nov 2019
The impact of the public service vehicle accessibility regulations 2000 on charging for spare seats on mainstream school/college transport	Nov 2019

Review of Learning Support Classes Provision for Pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Significant Additional Learning Needs	Dec 2019
The Council's 2020-2021 revenue budget	Jan 2020
Council fees and charges policy 2020-2021	Feb 2020

Full details of decisions are included in Cabinet reports which are available on the following link:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Committees/Committees.aspx>

8. Employment Monitoring Data

The Council must collect and publish on an annual basis the number of:

- people employed by the authority on 31 March each year by protected characteristic;
- men and women employed, broken down by:
 - job;
 - grade (where grading system in place);
 - pay;
 - contract type (including permanent and fixed term contracts);
 - working pattern (including full-time, part-time and other flexible working patterns).
- people who have applied for jobs with the authority over the last year;
- employees who have applied to change position within the authority; identifying how many were successful in their application and how many were not;
- employees who have applied for training and how many succeeded in their application;
- employees who completed training;
- employees involved in grievance procedures either as a complainant or as a person against whom a complaint was made;
- employees subject to disciplinary procedures;
- employees who have left an authority's employment.

All of the information above must be presented for each of the separate protected groups. The exception to this requirement is the data on job, grade, pay, contract type and working pattern, which must be broken down only in relation to women and men.

This information is attached at Appendix 1 - Employment Monitoring Data.

9. Procurement

The Council operates the SQuID which is part of the National Procurement Website, www.Sell2Wales.co.uk.

It contains a set of core questions commonly asked at the selection stage, and has a database of suppliers' answers stored for re-use, and a tool for buyers to generate a selection questionnaire using a risk-based wizard for each procurement project. The idea is that working together these three things deliver a number of benefits:

- Increased efficiency for both suppliers and buyers, by allowing standard questions and answers to be stored for future use, by keeping the number of questions to a minimum, and also by encouraging buyers to only seek information from suppliers if they can be clear about exactly how the information will be used;
- Greater standardisation of the selection stage, whilst also allowing for tailoring of questions to meet the specific requirements of the procurement;
- Increased transparency of the selection process and how responses will be evaluated – so that suppliers are able to work out easily whether or not they wish to bid for a particular opportunity, how to optimise their proposal and how to present it in an effective way;
- Improved opportunities for small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) and local businesses to compete on a more equal footing as a result of a carefully considered question set that removes some of the barriers to entry for them.

It includes a section on equal opportunities and is in line with the guidance on procurement published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/>

10. Accessible Information

The Council produces information in a wide variety of formats according to need. Service areas record requests for alternative formats from service users to ensure that these are provided.

Accessibility Guidelines are available to employees on the Council's Intranet, these provide information on the types of accessible information available, what it is and does and includes a list of suppliers so that employees can source requested formats.

The Council has adopted the RNIB Clear Print Guidelines to increase readability of its documents.

11. Future Work

We will work towards further embedding and achieving the actions as outlined in the [Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan 2019-2022](#). Next year it will be important that we respond to emerging issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement

12. Contact Details

Rhondda Cynon Taf welcomes comments on all aspects of this report, both in what it contains and what it may not make clear enough about the work and progress in delivering equality and removing discrimination.

If you have any comments or want to know more about the work the Council is doing please contact:

Melanie Warburton
Diversity and Inclusion Manager
Rhondda Cynon Taf Council
Ty Elai
Dinas Isaf East Industrial Estate
Williamstown
Tonypany
CF40 1NY

Telephone: 01443 444531

email: equality@rctcbc.gov.uk

Employment Monitoring Data

Equality monitoring information is stored against all employees' records in the Council's payroll and human resources information system (Vision). The information is requested at the recruitment stage and entered on to their record at that point.

The Council encourages all employees to provide this information and an equality monitoring survey is carried out on all employees every two years in an attempt to increase the information held.

In preparation for the extended employee monitoring requirements being introduced as part of the Equality Act 2010, the Council carried out an equality monitoring survey of all employees in 2011. This survey included questions that covered all protected characteristics except pregnancy. This question was not asked as it was felt that information on pregnancy and maternity would already be held on employee records and the time period allowed for return could mean that the information provided would be out of date.

The Equality and Diversity Team worked with other service areas to identify other useful information which resulted in the questionnaire including sections on the use of British Sign Language, Welsh language ability and whether or not an employee had caring responsibilities. This information was provided statistically to the service areas to inform their work and strategies.

Statistical analysis of the information is contained in the following tables and covers all Council employees including teachers and school based employees.

People Employed by Protected Characteristic

The following information has been provided using employees' national insurance numbers; this ensures that where an employee may work in more than one job their details will be included only once to avoid duplication of information. It includes teachers and school based employees. Some comparisons will be made to the local demographic of the borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf as over 80% of employees live in the Council area.

The table below shows the gender breakdown of employees:

Gender	Total	% of Workforce
Male	2698	25.1%

Female	8036	74.9%
Total	10734	100%

This table clearly indicates that women make up the majority of the Council workforce, this has been consistent for a number of years. This is also comparative with other local authorities in Wales.

Age

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by age group:

Age Group	Total	% of Workforce
16-24	632	5.9%
25-34	1913	17.8%
35-44	2525	23.5%
45-54	3155	29.4%
55-64	2153	20.1%
65+	356	3.3%
Total	10734	100.0%

This table indicates, as the figures did last year, that over half of Council employees are within the age range of 35-54.

Disability

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by disabled and non disabled:

Identification	Total	% of Workforce
Disabled	189	1.8%
Non Disabled	8627	80.4%
Prefer not to say	22	0.2%
Information not held	1896	17.7%
Total	10734	100.0%

Information is held on 82% of employees. A small percentage of employees have indicated that they are disabled but this is unlikely to give the true picture of disability in the workplace. Although the staff equality profile questionnaire gives the definition of disability, some employees with a 'defined' disability may not identify as having a disability.

National Identify and Ethnicity

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Number
Asian	8
Asian British	2

Asian Chinese	4
Asian Cornish	1
Asian Indian	3
Asian Other	2
Black	5
Black African	4
Black British	3
Black Other	1
Chinese	4
Mixed Other	12
Mixed White & Asian	3
Mixed White & Black African	1
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	4
Other	25
Prefer not to say	12
White	5070
White British	1773
White Cornish	1
White English	32
White Irish	11
White Other	14
White Scottish	7
White Welsh	1658
Not Known	2074
Total	10734

The demographic of Rhondda Cynon Taf is 2%* of people identify themselves with an ethnicity other than White British, Welsh, English or Scottish.

*statswales.gov.wales at 30 June 2019

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by national identity:

National Identity	Number of Employees
African	4
Any Other Asian Background	2
Any Other Mixed Background	2
Any Other White Background	10
Bangladeshi	1
British	1422
Caribbean	1

Chinese	4
English	198
European	15
Indian	4
Irish	18
Other	7
Scottish	25
Welsh	4440
White and Asian	4
White and Black Caribbean	1
Not Known	4576
Total	10734

Information is held on 57% of employees with the majority of employees identifying themselves as Welsh followed by British.

Religion or Belief

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by religion or belief:

Religion	Total
Christian	2623
Muslim	10
Hindu	5
Buddhist	11
Sikh	1
Other	104
% of workforce identifying with a religion	25.7%
None	2705
Prefer not to say	285
Information not held	4990
Total	10734

Information is held on 54% of employees with the predominant faith being Christian. 50% of the local population identify themselves as Christian, with 40% regarding themselves as having no religion.

Sexual Orientation

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by sexual orientation:

Sexual Orientation	Total
Heterosexual	3715
Gay Man	34
Gay Woman/Lesbian	37

Bisexual	17
% of workforce identifying a sexual orientation	35.4%
Prefer not to say	206
Information not held	6725
Total	10734

Information is held on 37% of employees. This is the same as reported last year. As part of the Stonewall Diversity Champion's Programme, work has and will continue to encourage more employees to complete this category on equality monitoring forms.

Pregnancy and Maternity

As at 31 March 2020 there were 172 employees on maternity leave none of which were involved in disciplinary or grievance cases. During the year 2019-2020, 314 employees had been on maternity leave during this period of time.

Gender Reassignment

Specific information has not been published due to the possibility of identification. The Council has a Gender Reassignment Policy in place which was developed some years ago as a result of an employee asking for support. Since that time the policy has been accessed and support provided as and when required by employees.

Gender Reassignment

Specific information has not been published due to the possibility of identification. The Council has a Transitioning at Work Policy in place which was developed some years ago as a result of an employee asking for support. Since that time the policy has been accessed and support provided as and when required by employees.

Regulation Nine – Gender Specific Information

Regulation Nine of the Specific Equality Duties in Wales requires the following specific information to be provided in respect of gender breakdown.

The number of employees employed at 31 March 2019 broken down by:

- Job
- Grade
- Pay
- Contract type
- Working pattern.

This information has been provided on the basis of actual job numbers so that those employees who work in more than one job are included in all the jobs they are

employed in so the numbers may be different to those in the previous section. Once again the information includes teachers and school based employees.

The following table/s provides the specific information required:

Breakdown of Employees by Gender and Job

There are over a thousand job titles within the Council so for ease of demonstration they have been broken down into job families within the competency framework.

Job Family	Female	Male	Grand Total
Administrator	923	250	1173
Ancillary	1567	542	2109
Assistant Headteacher	42	28	70
Community and Social Care	1333	254	1587
Deputy Headteacher	68	45	113
Frontline and Customer Care	383	297	680
Headteacher	76	44	120
Middle Manager	163	79	242
School Support	1494	82	1576
Skilled Manual Worker	32	121	153
Strategic Manager	35	40	75
Supervisor	183	201	384
Teacher	1337	384	1721
Technical, Specialist & Professional	375	317	692
Unqualified Teacher	25	14	39
Total	8036	2698	10734

As last year, the data provides very little surprises with the majority of women working in 'traditional' female areas, particularly in the Community & Social Care, Ancillary and School Support settings; this will be more closely examined as part of the Gender Pay Objective within the Strategic Equality Plan.

Breakdown of Employees by Gender & Grade

The Council operated the following grading systems as at 31 March 2019:

- Chief Officers (Head of Service and above)
- National Joint Council
- Teachers/Education

The tables below sets out the breakdown of employees by gender and grade:

Employees by Gender & Grade – Chief Officers

Grade	Female	Male	Total
Chief Executive	0	1	1
Group Director	0	2	2
Director Level 1	0	2	2
Director Level 2	3	5	8
Service Director Level 1	1	2	3
Service Director Level 2	3	7	10
Head of Service Level 1	12	8	20
Head of Service Level 2	4	6	10
Total	23	33	56

There has been little change since the previous year, whereby more Chief Officer posts are held by males. Those held by females are largely on the lower Chief Officer grades.

Employees by Gender and Grade – National Joint Council

Grade	Female	Male	Total
GR1	257	73	330
GR2	877	50	927
GR3	539	151	690
GR4	906	269	1175
GR5	780	415	1195
GR6	1109	307	1416
GR7	550	157	707
GR8	262	114	376
GR9	194	105	299
GR10	236	161	397
GR11	309	123	432
GR12	137	63	200
GR13	109	53	162
GR14	17	9	26
GR15	42	30	72
Total	6324	2080	8404

This information indicates that while 74.9% of the total Council workforce is female, it is females that dominate the lower pay grades. This will be an area that is considered with the Gender Pay objective in the Strategic Equality Plan.

Employees by Gender and Grade – Teachers/Education

Grade	Female	Male	Total
Education Psychologists and Advisers	74	24	98
Leadership Group/Headteachers	70	47	117
Deputy & Assistant Headteachers	139	75	214
Teachers	1316	416	1732
Total	1599	562	2161

The figures above indicate that females make up 74% of the education profession.

Individual salary grades of Education staff is complex to summarise but on analysis there is a fairly even split of male/female across all salary points with no obvious discrepancies in respect of ability to move through the grades. The grades and salary points are based on nationally agreed pay scales and there are specific requirements for each grade and how employees move through them.

Employees by Contract Type/Working Pattern

Contract Type	Female	Male	Total
Permanent Full Time	2475	1851	4326
Permanent Part Time	1624	232	1856
Permanent Part Time Term Time	2063	80	2143
Permanent Term Time	132	27	159
Temporary Full Time	300	154	454
Temporary Part Time	115	31	146
Temporary Part Time Term Time	636	48	684
Temporary Term Time	15	1	16
Casuals	676	274	950
Total	8036	2698	10734

For permanent members of staff the breakdown of female/male is comparable to the overall workforce. Although 74.9% of the overall workforce is female, a much higher percentage of those females compared to males are working on part-time or term-time only basis.

Applicants for Employment and Promotion

There were a total of 446 vacancies advertised during the year 2019-2020. The following table indicates the results of the recruitment monitoring for the same

period. Please note that more people are appointed to posts than the number of posts advertised. This is due to multiple post holders in the same job e.g. social workers.

Applicants for Employment and Promotion by Protected Characteristic

	Applicants	Shortlisted	Appointed
Female	4347	2026	496
Male	2068	905	200
Minority Ethnic	232	94	25
Disabled	308	121	16
LGB	291	109	33

The numbers of people appointed in each category reflect the general makeup of the Council as a whole.

Training

Equality monitoring is carried out in respect of attendance at internal training courses only and has been undertaken by the use of equality monitoring forms that now monitor all protected characteristics. Sexual orientation and pregnancy and maternity were added during 2014-15.

Identification of the need for training, learning and development is carried out through the Council's workforce planning and performance review systems. During personal development interviews managers will discuss with employees their training, learning and development needs which are aligned to the performance review and job competencies. The results of these feed in to a departmental or divisional training plan.

The Council does not currently monitor whether training requests are refused as the process used to identify training, does not lend itself to this type of monitoring. This however will be considered.

There were a total of 218 equality monitoring forms returned in 2019-20.

Training by Gender

Group	Male	Female	Transgender	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	12	23	0	0	0	35
Community & Children's Services	34	70	0	0	0	104

Corporate & Frontline Services	16	22	0	0	0	38
Education & Inclusion	3	20	0	0	0	23
Not Specified	8	8	0	0	2	18
Total	73	143	0	0	2	218

Training by Age

Group	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	7	7	8	13	0	0	0	0	35
Community & Children's Services	8	29	23	26	18	0	0	0	104
Corporate & Frontline Services	6	11	6	12	2	1	0	0	38
Education & Inclusion	1	3	9	9	1	0	0	0	23
Not specified	3	0	7	4	2	0	0	2	18
Total	25	50	53	64	23	1	0	2	218

Training by Ethnicity

Group	British	Chinese	Cornish	English	Irish	Scottish	Welsh	White and Black Caribbean	Other	Prefer not to say	Total
Chief Executives	16	0	1	1	0	0	15	0	1	1 not known	35
Community & Children's Services	43	0	0	1	1	1	56	0	1	1 not known	104
Corporate & Frontline Services	13	0	0	2	0	0	22	0	1 White & Asian	0	38
Education & Inclusion	7	0	0	2	1	0	13	0	0	0	23
Not specified	6	0	0	1	0	0	8	0	2	1 not known	18
Total	85	0	1	7	2	1	114	0	5	3	218

Training by Religion or Belief

Group	Christian	Buddhist	No religion	Other	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	11	0	19	1 Muslim	1	3	35

Community & Children's Services	41	1	49	1	0	12	104
Corporate & Frontline Services	12	0	25	0	1	0	38
Education & Inclusion	10	0	7	1	3	2	23
Not specified	4	0	8	1 Muslim	0	5	18
Total	78	1	108	4	5	22	218

Training by Pregnancy and Maternity

Group	Are currently pregnant or have been pregnant during last 12 months	Not currently pregnant, nor have been during last 12 months	Prefer not to say	Not known	Total
Chief Executives	0	30	1	4	35
Community & Children's Services	4	90	1	9	104
Corporate & Frontline Services	0	37	1	0	38
Education & Inclusion	0	21	0	2	23
Not specified	0	13	0	5	18
Total	4	191	3	20	218

Training by Sexual Orientation

Group	Heterosexual	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	28	1	0	1	5	35
Community & Children's Services	85	3	2	3	11	104
Corporate & Frontline Services	36	1	0	1	0	38
Education & Inclusion	18	1	0	2	2	23
Not specified	11	1	0	1	5	18
Total	178	7	2	8	23	218

Disciplinary & Grievance

Disciplinary and Grievance cases are recorded and monitored through the Vision System. There were a total of 227 cases covering disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work and disciplinary action resulting from sickness absence in 2019-2020. The tables below provide equality monitoring information for these cases:

Gender

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Male	87	57	30	0	0
Female	140	41	98	0	1
Total	227	98	128	0	1

Age

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
16 – 24	14	5	9	0	0
25 – 34	35	14	21	0	0
35 – 44	44	23	20	0	1
45 – 54	70	32	38	0	0
55 – 64	57	21	36	0	0
65+	7	3	4	0	0
Total	227	98	128	0	1

Disability

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Disabled	9	5	4	0	0
Non Disabled	181	75	105	0	1
Information not held	37	18	19	0	0
Total	227	98	128	0	1

Ethnicity

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Asian	0	0	0	0	0
Black	0	0	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed	0	0	0	0	0
White	187	82	104	0	1
Other	1	0	1	0	0

Information not held	39	16	23	0	0
Total	227	98	128	0	1

Religion or Belief

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
No Religion	67	22	45	0	0
Christian	48	25	23	0	0
Other	2	0	2	0	0
Prefer not to say	6	4	2	0	0
Information not held	104	47	56	0	1
Total	227	98	128	0	1

Sexual Orientation

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Heterosexual	89	36	53	0	0
Gay/Lesbian	0	0	0	0	0
Bisexual	0	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	11	2	9	0	0
Information not held	127	60	66	0	1
Total	227	98	128	0	1

Gender Reassignment & Pregnancy and Maternity

There was 1 employee in these categories involved in disciplinary, sickness absence or grievance cases.

Leaving Employment

Information gained from the Vision System shows that a total of 1,029 employees left the employment of the Council in 2019-2020, which included 21 employees who were made redundant. It should be noted that these employees were school based, where the decision on redundancy rests with the relevant school in accordance with School Governance Regulations. The tables below indicate the number of leavers and reasons for leaving during 2019-20

Reasons for Leaving by Gender

Reason for Leaving	Female	Male	Total
Age Retirement	46	16	62

Death in Service	10	6	16
Dismissed	4	10	14
Early Retirement (Teachers)	3	2	5
End of Contract	109	27	136
Failed Probationary Period	2	2	4
Ill Health	11	3	14
Inability to Attend Work	2	1	3
Mutual Agreement	63	35	98
Redundant	14	7	21
Transfer to another Council	22	11	33
Tupe Transfer to Outside Organisation	39	23	62
Voluntary	319	132	451
Voluntary early retirement and redundancy	38	21	59
Voluntary redundancy	42	9	51
Total	724	305	1029

The gender breakdown of those leaving reflects the gender breakdown of the Council as a whole.

Reason for Leaving by Age

Reason for leaving	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
Age Retirement	0	0	0	0	24	38	62
Death in Service	1	0	1	7	7	0	16
Dismissed	1	4	2	4	3	0	14
Early retirement (Teachers)	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
End of Contract	20	46	24	20	17	9	136
Failed probationary period	2	0	1	0	1	0	4
Ill health	0	0	1	5	4	4	14
Inability to Attend Work	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
Mutual agreement	1	8	14	33	26	16	98
Redundant	0	0	4	2	15	0	21
Transfer to another Council	1	8	14	8	2	0	33
Tupe Transfer	0	9	21	24	7	1	62
Voluntary	33	152	97	94	54	21	451
VER and redundancy	0	0	0	0	49	10	59
Voluntary redundancy	0	6	16	20	6	3	51
Total	59	233	197	218	220	102	1029

The majority of employees left due to the end of their contract or voluntarily

Reason for Leaving by Disability

Reason for Leaving	Total
Death in Service	1
Ill Health	1
Mutual agreement	3
Tupe Transfer	4
Voluntary	9
VER with redundancy	2
Voluntary redundancy	1
Total	21

Reason for Leaving by Ethnicity

Reason	White	Ethnic Minority	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	58	0	4	62
Death in service	15	0	1	16
Dismissed	12	0	2	14
Early retirement (Teachers)	5	0	0	5
End of contract	87	2	47	136
Failed probationary period	3	0	1	4
Ill health	13	0	1	14
Inability to Attend Work	3	0	0	3
Mutual agreement	81	0	17	98
Redundant	19	0	2	21
Transfer to another Council	20	1	12	33
Tupe Transfer	57	0	5	62
Voluntary	319	12	120	451
VER with redundancy	55	0	4	59
Voluntary redundancy	41	0	10	51
Total	788	15	226	1029

Reason for Leaving by Religion or Belief

Reason	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	No Religion	Other	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Age Retirement	0	13	0	9	0	2	38	62
Death in Service	0	3	0	4	1	0	8	16

Dismissed	0	3	0	1	0	0	10	14
Early retirement (teachers)	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	5
End of contract	0	27	0	37	1	7	64	136
Failed probationary period	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	4
Ill health	0	7	0	1	0	0	6	14
Inability to Attend Work	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
Mutual agreement	0	23	0	17	2	2	54	98
Redundant	0	3	0	2	0	0	16	21
Transfer to another Council	0	3	0	7	0	3	20	33
Tupe Transfer	0	22	0	22	0	1	17	62
Voluntary	1	89	2	136	4	15	204	451
VER with redundancy	0	24	0	11	2	2	20	59
Voluntary redundancy	0	13	0	6	0	2	30	51
Total	1	236	2	254	10	35	491	1029

Reason for Leaving by Sexual Orientation

Reason	Hetero-sexual	Gay/Lesbian	Bi-sexual	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	18	0	0	1	43	62
Death in service	5	0	0	0	11	16
Dismissed	3	0	0	0	11	14
Early retirement (Teachers)	2	0	0	0	3	5
End of contract	16	0	0	2	118	136
Failed probationary period	2	0	0	1	1	4
Ill health	6	0	0	0	8	14
Inability to Attend Work	2	0	0	0	1	3

Mutual agreement	31	0	0	0	67	98
Redundant	3	0	0	0	18	21
Transfer to another Council	7	0	0	2	24	33
Tupe Transfer	37	0	0	1	24	62
Voluntary	150	7	2	15	277	451
VER with redundancy	33	0	0	1	25	59
Voluntary redundancy	15	0	0	1	35	51
Total	330	7	2	24	666	1029

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

THE SOCIO ECONOMIC DUTY (EQUALITY ACT 2010)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR. MAUREEN WEBBER, DEPUTY LEADER

**Author(s): Melanie Warburton, Diversity and Inclusion Manager,
Telephone 01443 444531.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information on the Socio economic Duty which will come into force on 31 March 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- Note the content of the report in respect of the requirements of the Socio economic Duty and the need to ensure that the duty is incorporated into key Council decisions, to reduce the inequalities of outcomes from socio economic disadvantage.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To meet legislative requirements contained in Sections 1-3 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 The Socio economic Duty is viewed as a key mechanism to support the most vulnerable in our society. As such the Duty must be integrated into decision making processes and not treated as a tick box exercise.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Despite the Equality Act 2010 being implemented in 2010, Part 1 of the Act which includes the Socio economic Duty has laid dormant.

- 4.2 Due to its devolved powers the Welsh Government is commencing Sections 1-3 of the Equality Act 2010 in Wales – the Socio economic Duty, namely:
- Section 1 requires relevant public bodies, when taking strategic decisions, to have due regard to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome from socio economic disadvantage.
 - Section 2 confers a power on the Welsh Ministers to make regulations, naming those relevant public bodies to which the Duty will apply. In determining which bodies are ‘relevant authorities’ the Welsh Ministers must consider whether each authority meets the criteria specified in section 2(6) of the 2010 Act.
 - Section 3 makes it clear that the Duty will not create any new justiciable rights for individuals.
- 4.3 The Duty is intended to complement and not compete with, or override, other statutory duties incumbent upon relevant public bodies, for example the Public Sector Equality Duty, or the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 4.4 There is no reporting requirement attached to the Duty, however, it is a statutory duty and relevant bodies should be able to demonstrate how they have discharged it. Once the Duty is commenced, if an individual or group whose interests are adversely affected by a relevant public body’s decision, in circumstances where that individual or group feels the Duty has not been properly complied with, they may be able to bring a judicial review claim against that authority.
- 4.5 In preparation for the Duty the Welsh Government have produced a number of helpful guides to aid decision makers. These include:
- [The Socio economic Duty: Guidance](#)
 - [The Socio economic Duty: Examples of inequality of outcome](#)
 - [The Socio economic Duty: Scrutiny framework.](#)

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 5.1 The Council already has an established Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process in place. If completed robustly this tool can demonstrate due regard has been paid in respect of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 5.2 There is a need for the EqIA process to be strengthened. This is already highlighted in the Council’s Strategic Equality Plan 2019-2022.

- 5.3 The EqlA Form and Guidance has been revised to take into account the statutory requirements of the Socio economic Duty.
- 5.4 Both documents provide a host of information for lead officers and decision makers to enable them to consider how proposals are paying due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome from socioeconomic disadvantage.
- 5.5 Whilst the EqlA is an important tool to evidence due regard, it is crucial that decision makers and lead officers focus on outcomes and not just the process. The use of relevant data and engagement with communities is essential for effective decision making.

6. THE REVIEW PANEL

- 6.1 To strengthen and safeguard the decision making process a Review Panel is being established to act as an independent review mechanism to scrutinise the proposal being considered.
- 6.2 The Review Panel will meet to review all Council key decisions and review both EqlA's and Welsh Language Impact Assessments.
- 6.3 It is proposed the Review Panel will consist of:
- a representative from Democratic Services/Executive Officer Support
 - a representative from the Diversity & Inclusion Team
 - a representative from the Consultation & Engagement Team
 - a representative from Welsh Language Services
 - a representative from Legal Services
 - a Service Director/Head of Service/Service Manager from another service area than that which is generating the policy proposal.
- 6.4 The Review Panel will make recommendations as to whether the evidence contained in the EqlA (or Welsh Language Impact Assessment) needs to be strengthened prior to presentation to Cabinet.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

8 CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

Consultation is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

The Socio economic Duty is contained within Sections 1-3 of the Equality Act 2010. The Duty is intended to complement and not compete with, or override, other statutory duties incumbent upon relevant public bodies, for example the Public Sector Equality Duty, or the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The [mapping guide](#) demonstrates how the aforementioned duties align.

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

Equality considerations feature throughout Corporate and National priorities and specifically the contents of this report significantly contribute to a More Equal Wales.

12 CONCLUSION

In addition to existing equality duties, from 31 March 2021, key Council decisions will need to pay due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome from socio economic disadvantage.



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25 MARCH 2021

DRAFT COUNCIL TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2021-2025 FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER
OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN) AND CABINET'S
CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS)**

AUTHOR: Chris Bradshaw: 01443 424026

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an opportunity to consider the Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy and agree to engage and consult with residents and businesses on the Council's response to Climate Change.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report and the Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy in the Appendix.
- 2.2 Consider the Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy and the recommendations arising from the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group on [17th March](#), in particular that officers engage and consult with residents and businesses on the Council's response to Climate Change.
- 2.3 Request that the results of the consultation on the Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy is presented to a future meeting of Cabinet.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 For the Council to become Carbon Neutral by 2030.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 There can be no doubt of the speed of change required to reduce carbon emissions to protect the planet, or the need for us all to work together more quickly to do so.
- António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations ***"If we don't act now on climate change, this coming century may be one of humanity's last"***.
 - Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission ***"fighting Climate Change has become the greatest responsibility of our times"***.
 - Boris Johnson ***"no-one can say they didn't see climate change coming"***.
 - Mark Drakeford ***"Tackling the climate emergency requires a level of collective action we have not seen since the days of the Second World War"*** and he urged the people of Wales to ***"Think Global: Act local"*** to make a difference.
 - David Attenborough has described climate change as ***"our greatest threat in thousands of years"***.
 - Greta Thunberg ***"This is the biggest crisis humanity has ever faced. This is not something you can like on facebook"***.
- 4.2 The science has never been clearer and the call to action, never louder. This Council is also clear that it must play its part in taking urgent action to mitigate the risks and tackle the catastrophic effects of the planet's rising temperatures. In doing so it has recognised the fundamental changes that are needed to the way we all live our lives.
- 4.3 The Council has already shown a positive commitment to meet and contribute to global, national and local targets to reduce carbon across the Council's services. The Council already purchases 100% of its electrical energy supply from renewable energy sources and has reduced its carbon footprint by 37% or 12,725 tonnes over the past five years. Examples of the action taken to date by the Council include:
- The upgrading of all street lights to efficient LED units and turning off street lights in specific localities;
 - Investing in solar panels, LED lighting, wall and roof insulation, energy efficient gas boilers, and combined heat and power units in many schools, leisure centres and council buildings. The solar panels fitted on council buildings are the equivalent size of two football fields;
 - Installed electric cooking equipment in all new kitchens to benefit from the renewable electricity we procure;
 - Significantly reduced the amount of waste that is disposed of by landfill or through energy for waste;
 - Invested in the Healthy Hillside project with Welsh Government and the Fire Service with benefits for carbon reduction, biodiversity and air quality;

- Through planning agreements with windfarm developers, hundreds of hectares of peat and associated habitats have been targeted for restoration and their carbon and water storage has been increased;
 - Invested in 20 micro generation Hydrogen Fuel Cells for our highest energy users (care homes, large schools and leisure centre) with the ambition to do more – this has a significant impact on the emission of greenhouse gases;
 - Ensured all new schools and other council buildings are certified as BREEAM “Very Good” or “Excellent” with EPC ratings of A;
 - Through various government grant schemes, enabled many residents on low incomes to improve the heat insulation in their own homes;
 - Worked with partners to develop renewable energy projects such as, Clydach hydroelectricity, Vattenfall Wind Farm, Gasification Boiler at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, and Bryn Pica Eco Park.
- 4.4 Furthermore, in the autumn of 2019, the Council created the Climate Change Steering Group, a sub-committee of the Council’s Cabinet, which is charged with developing the Council’s response to the Climate Change agenda and supporting Cabinet to achieve the 2030 Net Zero target. The focus of the Steering Group has been on understanding the various carbon issues within the County Borough, making a series of recommendations to the Council’s Cabinet and gathering information to inform the development of the Council’s Tackling Climate Change Strategy.
- 4.5 Whilst, the Covid19 Pandemic has had an impact on the work of the Steering Group, good progress has been made, and to date it has:
- **Biodiversity** - Considered and challenged the Council’s Biodiversity Plan and Cabinet has approved the Plan;
 - **Community use of vacant/unused land** - Simplified the Council’s processes and procedures to enable community groups to use underused or vacant Council land for environmental purposes;
 - **Waste Management Strategy** – Recommended that Cabinet consider increasing the Council’s waste recycling target from 70% of its household waste by 2025 to 80% by 2025 and challenged other public sector and private sector organisations to do the same. This new target will be the most challenging in the UK;
 - **Local Procurement of Supplies and Services** –Currently, the Council spends £227m on supplies and services of which £51m is spent with businesses registered in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and £138m on businesses registered in South East Wales. The Steering Group agreed to the Council advertising its tenders with the local market and wherever possible break the tenders into lots which enables small and medium sized companies to compete for parcels of the supplies

and services being tendered. The Steering Group has requested a regular report on whether this change in approach is increasing the amount of money the Council spends locally;

- **Elimination of single use plastics in all Council contracts and premises** – Agreed an action plan that sets out the arrangements to eliminate/reduce the single use of plastics, and in particular seeks to remove all single use plastics from Council and school catering facilities by 31 March 2021 where there is an environmentally friendly alternative;
- **Taffs Well Thermal Spring – Generating carbon free energy for the community of Taffs Well** – Made a recommendation for Cabinet to consider at its January 2020 meeting to invest in the technology to use the natural heat from Taffs Well Thermal Spring to heat the local school and community centre;
- **Transportation – how do we reduce our carbon emissions and change our modes of transport?** - This report focused on maximising the benefits of the South Wales Metro; considered electrical vehicle charging; opportunities to significantly increase active travel options; how we reduce the impact of the Council's fleet of vehicles, commissioned/subsidised public transport, licenced taxis and home to school transport. Progress is being made and a further report on electric vehicle charging was considered by the Steering Group at its meeting on [17th March 2021](#);
- **Air Quality – how do we improve air quality, and eliminate the “hotspots”, the Air Quality Management Areas in the County Borough** – The report considered what proactive action the Council is taking to tackle air quality in the air quality management areas, to ensure air quality improves across the County Borough. The Steering Group made a series of recommendations to Cabinet in respect of schemes/actions to be implemented to improve air quality in the air quality management areas;
- **Energy Generation – What opportunities do we have to generate energy on public sector land and/or rivers in Rhondda Cynon Taf** – This report set out a series of proposals for the Council to build and finance potential solar, wind and hydro schemes on Council or other public sector owned land and rivers, that will make a significant contribution to the Council achieving its Carbon Neutral target. The Steering Group supported the proposals and they were considered by Cabinet in [January 2021](#);
- **Nature's Assets - Using the Natural Environment to reduce carbon emissions and the effects of climate change** – This report focused on opportunities to maximise carbon storage through natural assets in the County Borough. The Steering Group recommended that Cabinet identify a number of potential suitable sites and consider funding the development of these sites including allocating funding

within the 21/22 capital budget. A range of projects, were considered such as a long term native woodland programme, urban green infrastructure scheme in town centres, and peatbog restoration schemes which will have a positive impact on improving air quality, supporting flood management and prevention schemes, reducing noise and vehicle pollution and generally improving the living environment of residents. We are currently working with National Resources Wales to identify the land in the Council's and NRW's ownership suitable for carbon sequestration;

- **Strategic and Local Development Plans – How do we plan for the future, and ensure new homes, new buildings, and other infrastructure are carbon neutral?** – Cardiff Capital Region and the Council are planning to prepare a regional SDP and a RCT LDP. It is essential that these ten year plans include new policies and commitments to ensure our housing, transportation and business infrastructure minimises our carbon footprint and it is fit for purpose in the 21st Century and beyond. This will include commitments to ensure offices and homes are well connected with public and active travel options; town centres become places to live as well as work and socialise; and the natural environment is enhanced. The Steering Group has provided its views on a range of topics that need to be considered by the LDP, and this feedback was also considered by Cabinet in progressing the LDP process;
- **Quantifying Rhondda Cynon Taf's carbon footprint on Wales and the World** – The Welsh Government's planned carbon footprint measurement tool has yet to be released. Therefore, the Carbon Trust has been commissioned to establish a robust baseline for the County Borough which will be considered by the Steering Group early in the new financial year, in order to understand the data and to use it to determine the next steps to prioritise interventions and investments.

5 THE TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

5.1 The Council's draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy set out in Appendix A seeks to set the overall direction for the Council over the coming five years, describing its vision, purpose and ambition as local authority in respect of the Council's carbon footprint and the carbon footprint for the County Borough.

5.2 The Council's proposed vision is:

By 2030

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Council will be carbon neutral;



- The whole County Borough will be as close as possible to carbon neutral;
 - Our work with partners will have contributed to reducing carbon emissions across the County Borough by *****.
- 5.3 In order to deliver our Vision, the Council will continue to provide strong community leadership and create a cleaner, greener environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous and for natural eco systems to thrive. We will play our part in tackling climate change and protecting the planet.
- 5.4 In our Corporate Plan 2020-24, [Making A Difference](#), the Council acknowledged that delivering our Climate Change commitment is our greatest challenge. In our plan we committed to delivering three main priorities, all of which will contribute to and benefit from tackling climate change:
- Ensuring **People:** *are independent, healthy and successful;*
 - Creating **Places:** *where people are proud to live, work and play;*
 - Enabling **Prosperity:** *creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.*
- 5.5 Our Climate Commitments underpin each of our priorities. These commitments have been developed using the best information available at a time of significant and competing local, regional, national and global priorities with new and fast-moving opportunities being presented by governments and businesses alike. The pace of change is also being accelerated by the growing pressure of people across the world to take climate action.
- 5.6 No single plan can set out the many ways in which we are working to reduce carbon emissions in to achieve our commitments in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This plan is a framework to guide us and shape what we do to reduce both the Council's carbon footprint and that of the County Borough. We will also be working within the Welsh Government's Delivery Plan for a [Low Carbon Wales](#) and its 'Route Map' to decarbonise the public sector in Wales.
- 5.7 Our commitments to reduce carbon within the Council include:
- Reducing our carbon footprint in respect of all the Council's activities.
 - Reducing the demand for energy and embedding carbon reduction into everything we do.

- Using public sector land for green energy generation and/or carbon storage.
- Investing in solar energy installations in Council buildings and making sure that all new schools, offices, homes and commercial buildings within the County Borough are built to a Net Zero standard.
- Supplying all our buildings and offices with low carbon heat and/or generating our own electricity.
- Further developing the use of hydrogen for fuel cells in Council vehicles and buildings.
- Ensuring we recycle or reuse 80% of all municipal waste by 2025.
- Continuing to locate services closer the people that use, work and visit them.
- Procuring a vehicle fleet that is fit for purpose yet has a limited impact on the environment and replacing all our new cars and light goods vehicles with ultra low emission vehicles by 2025.
- Taking a sustainable approach to the supplies and services we buy within the Council, from major building projects to eliminating single use plastics, so that we better support the local and green economy.
- Reducing staff travel by car by continuing to maximise the use of technology, encouraging active travel and greater use of public transport significantly reducing car commutes and business travel.

5.8 To achieve the 2030 target and respond to increasing public expectations, will require the Council to invest significant sums in ensuring its day to day activities become Carbon Neutral. This means that the Council must plan for the fact that this additional cost will not be met from simply doing more of what it is currently doing, but from making other difficult choices on what it does or does not provide.

5.9 Responding to the pandemic and the impact of Storm Dennis has had impact on the Council's financial position, in the short term. Longer term, the UK Government will have to repay the enormous sums spent in protecting jobs and the economy during the long periods of lockdown. This will inevitably have an adverse impact on public sector funding. Therefore, it is important that the Council, despite these significant financial challenges in the years ahead, ensures its longer term financial planning can meet the challenge to be carbon neutral by 2030. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022-25 will consider this in detail in July 2021 after the Council's Tackling Climate Change Strategy, as set out in the Appendix, is consulted upon and residents and businesses feedback their views and priorities for the future.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required with regard to this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy will be subject to a comprehensive public consultation over the two months to 31 May 2021, the strategy will be scrutinised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and it will be important to involve all elected members in the consultation.
- 7.2 It is proposed to involve as wide a range of stakeholders as possible during the two months in order to engage as many as possible in the conversation of “how do we all tackle climate change?”. The Council will work with national and local environmental groups to engage residents and businesses and to also encourage them to engage in changing their behaviours. To raise awareness, the Council’s social media and marketing expertise will be used to develop and deliver targeted campaigns for specific audiences, as well as more general awareness raising of the impact of climate change. In particular, we will be keen to engage with the Rhondda Cynon Taf Youth Forum, schools and other youth groups, in addition to the various groups that the Council has traditionally engaged with for consultation processes.
- 7.3 The lockdown will inevitably limit the opportunity for face to face engagement, however, the Council will make best use of the variety of social media, remote meetings and digital tools to engage with stakeholders.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. Any investment required to address the priorities being consulted upon will be reported and considered separately as part of the Council’s Medium Term Plan to be considered in July 2021. Nevertheless, over the course of the next few years the Council will seek to realign its revenue and capital budgets to ensure that it has the financial resources to invest in major projects that can have a positive impact on reducing the Council’s carbon footprint.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

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

- 10.1 The Council has committed to becoming a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030 and to work with residents and businesses to ensure the whole County Borough is Carbon Neutral as close as possible to the 2030



target. This supports the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan "Making a Difference" – 2020-24.

- 10.2 This report reflects the Sustainable development principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and will contribute to all seven national goals, with more immediate direct contributions to a Globally Responsible Wales, a more Resilient Wales, a Healthy Wales and a Wales of Cohesive Communities.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The Council has set the ambitious target to become a Carbon Neutral Council by 2030, along with the residents and businesses of the County Borough. The draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy sets out the action the Council will take over the next four years to make significant progress and lay the strong foundations to enable the Council to make progress towards achieving the 2030 target.
- 11.2 Achieving the 2030 target requires the communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf to work together. The Council, therefore, welcomes the opportunity to consult and engage with elected members, other public and private organisations, community and environmental groups and individuals in seeking their views how we can all help to achieve this ambitious target.

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Tackling Climate Change in Rhondda Cynon Taf (2021 - 2025)

(Think Climate RCT)

**Making Rhondda Cynon Taf
Carbon Neutral by 2030**

Introduction/Context

Our County Borough has many stunning and unique features which can and will continue to benefit the residents, businesses and visitors to Rhondda Cynon Taf. These features include a huge area of semi-natural landscape, with a high level of tree cover and a wide variety of wildlife, both common and rare, close to where we live. Even our mining heritage offers the potential to produce energy for us. We also face unique challenges. The devastating impact of the 2020 floods, Ciara, Dennis and Jorge on Rhondda Cynon Taf and the surrounding areas, is an early indication of the impact of projected warmer, wetter winters in the northern hemisphere arising from the impact of Climate Change. The ecological emergency is affecting our plants and animals and affecting the natural processes on which we all depend.

Welsh Government [data](#), set out in its [Future Trends Report 2017](#), indicates that by 2050, in Wales,

- daily maximum summer temperatures are projected to rise by 3.4°C
- daily minimum winter temperatures are projected to increase by 2.5°C
- rainfall is projected to increase by 14% in winter and decrease by 16% in the summer.

Across Wales, rising temperatures are already changing habitats [affecting plants and wildlife as well as soil conditions and landscapes](#). Rising sea levels in coastal regions are threatening sea defences, frequent and more intense storms bring increased risk of flooding. More winter rain, too much rainfall in a short period and changes across the seasons will contribute to both flood and drought conditions. We are already seeing increasing numbers of heavy rainfall events, and expect this increase to continue, with greater risk of river and flash flooding. More extreme weather events also include more frequent heat waves which will affect our health, livelihoods and for many older and vulnerable people, life expectancy. For the ageing population in Rhondda Cynon Taf, this is one of the significant risks that need to be managed.

As a Council, over the last few years, we have put in place energy efficiency measures in our buildings, schools and street lighting and increased the amount of residents' waste recycled. As a result of this work, between 2014/15 and 2018/19 we reduced the amount of carbon emitted across the Council by 15,884 tonnes, a reduction of 45.24%. Our positive progress in waste recycling has led us to increase our recycling target for 2024/25 to 80%, which exceeds the national target set by Welsh Government.

We have also increased the amount of renewable energy we generate by investing in solar and wind power plants, using the energy produced to deliver Council services. In 2019/20 we generated 2,667,743 kWh – **equivalent *******

More widely, we know that in 2018, **1065.8** kilotonnes of CO₂e was emitted across the County Borough, 32.1% or 504.9 kilotonnes, less than in 2005.

We are making progress, but we need to do more, and faster, if we are to reduce our carbon emissions and help to reverse the damage to our planet, both as a Council and community leader. We will continue to lead by example, particularly in those areas where we have the greatest impact.

DRAFT

This is our plan to meet our commitment to reduce the carbon emissions in RCT and in doing so play our part in tackling Climate Change.

By 2030

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Council will be carbon neutral and
- the whole County Borough will be as close as possible to carbon neutral
- our work with partners will have contributed to reducing carbon emissions across the County Borough by *****.

In order to deliver our Vision, the Council will continue to provide strong community leadership and create a cleaner, greener environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous and for natural eco systems to thrive. We will play our part in tackling climate change and protecting the planet.

In our Corporate Plan 2020-24, [Making A Difference](#), the Council acknowledged that delivering our Climate Change commitment is our greatest challenge. In our plan we committed to delivering three main priorities, all of which will contribute to and benefit from tackling climate change:

- Ensuring **People:** *are independent, healthy and successful;*
- Creating **Places:** *where people are proud to live, work and play;*
- Enabling **Prosperity:** *creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.*

Our Climate Commitments underpin each of our priorities. These commitments have been developed using the best information available at a time of significant and competing local, regional, national and global priorities with new and fast moving opportunities being presented by governments and businesses alike. The pace of change is also being accelerated by the growing pressure of people across the world to take climate action.

No single plan can set out the many ways in which we are working to reduce carbon emissions in to achieve our commitments in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This plan is a framework to guide us and shape what we do to reduce both the Council's carbon footprint and that of the County Borough. We will also be working within the Welsh Government's Delivery Plan for a [Low Carbon Wales](#) and its 'Route Map' to decarbonise the public sector in Wales.

Our commitments to reduce carbon within the Council include:

- Reducing our footprint in respect of all the Council's activities.
- Reducing the demand for energy and embedding carbon reduction into everything we do.
- Using public sector land for green energy generation and/or carbon storage.

- Investing in solar energy installations in Council buildings and making sure that all new schools, offices, homes and commercial buildings within the County Borough are built to a Net Zero standard.
- Supplying all our buildings and offices with low carbon heat and/or generating our own electricity.
- Further developing the use of hydrogen for fuel cells in Council vehicles and buildings.
- Ensuring we recycle or reuse 80% of all municipal waste by 2025.
- Continuing to locate services closer the people that use, work and visit them.
- Procuring a vehicle fleet that is fit for purpose yet has a limited impact on the environment and replacing all our new cars and light goods vehicles with ultra low emission vehicles by 2025.
- Taking a sustainable approach to the supplies and services we buy within the Council, from major building projects to eliminating single use plastics, so that we better support the local and green economy.
- Reducing staff travel by car by continuing to maximise the use of technology, encouraging active travel and greater use of public transport significantly reducing car commutes and business travel.

The Council is one area's largest employers, and over 80% of staff are resident in the County Borough. The Council's property portfolio includes 447 Council sites 937 individual buildings, of varying sizes located throughout the County Borough. Through councillors representing their communities, Council playing its part in providing strong community leadership, support and scrutiny, and with Council staff trained and encouraged to support climate initiatives, there is much that we can do locally to be part of the global climate solution.

Our approach

Across the wider County Borough, our success will be dependent on the Council playing its part to protect the planet for future generations, and also working with other public bodies and organisations to maximise the impact of this work. This includes encouraging and facilitating changes in lifestyle in all staff and their representatives, elected Members, residents, local business as well as our visitors to Rhondda Cynon Taf. The involvement of younger people will be key to creating, developing and delivering this strategy over the long term and we are seeking this involvement through school eco councils and our Youth Fora and through other community organisations.

As well as listening to what people, communities and businesses are telling us, we also need to support and challenge the Welsh Government to do better and to break down any national barriers that mitigate against local action.

Think Climate – PLACES

Using RCT's resources to generate green energy for use in local buildings and homes

We will:

- Explore opportunities to develop micro hydro-electric schemes on rivers and streams.
- Investigate the potential to progress wind and solar energy schemes with a view to supporting the Council's aim to be carbon neutral and generate all our energy needs.
- Progress existing energy generation schemes, including wind turbines at Nant Y Gwyddon and Bryn Pica.
- Consider ways to use existing carbon free energy sources to provide sustainable heat and power to local communities e.g. Taffs Well Thermal Spring.
- Explore potential options to utilise existing energy sources including:
 - waste heat generated at Bryn Pica
 - geothermal energy from abandoned coal mines.
- Contribute to actions within the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to explore options for a hydrogen economy and to generate green energy to fuel our industrial and commercial businesses.

Potential measures/targets

- *Increase local renewable energy generated (MW numerical)*
 - *Solar - currently 1.5 MW of roof top solar installed on Council assets*
 - *Wind – no council owned*
 - *Hydro – no council owned**(targets tbd)*

Making waste work for RCT

We will:

- Increase the amount of waste we reuse and recycle locally by investing in technology, and supporting businesses and residents.
- Adopt a circular approach to recycling and reusing waste material that includes:
 - Ensuring the maximum service life from our resources and finding ways to recycle what is left.
 - Creating outlets for the sale of recycled goods that would have otherwise gone to landfill.
 - Investigating how hard plastic waste can be processed into useable products.
- Reduce transport emissions through improved processes for sorting and transporting cardboard maximising the cardboard capacity transported in a single journey.

- Continue to develop Bryn Pica Eco Park to its completion in 2023.

Potential measures/targets

- *By 2025, at least 80% of all RCT waste will be recycled.*
- *Tonnage of 'hard to recycle' waste diverted from landfill or incineration through specific recycling partnerships (e.g. 'TerraCycle' or equivalent).*

Putting in place low carbon infrastructure for travel

By 2030, we need to ensure that over half of all journeys are taken by public transport, bike or walking, with journeys where this is not possible using electric vehicles

We will:

- Invest in alternative transport options including:
 - Improved public transport through the development of the South Wales Metro;
 - Active travel initiatives that encourage walking and cycling, and which create wider County Borough wide networks;
 - Investing in safe routes to schools across the County Borough
- Work with Welsh Government and the Regional Transport Authority to continue to improve access to public transport and explore opportunities to bring back disused public transport, such as rail lines, for bus routes and active travel.
- Explore opportunities to develop a cycle network to major destinations in the County Borough without impeding main traffic routes.
- Work with private sector to put in place and invest in accessible County Wide network of electric vehicle (EV) charging opportunities, to stimulate market and widen EV charging opportunities.
- Develop an electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and electrical grid at the Eco Park in Bryn Pica, using green energy sourced from waste.
- Use enforcement, where appropriate, to improve air quality, reducing idling traffic and congestion in air quality monitoring zones.

Potential measures/targets

- *No of EV charging points installed at council premises over next 5 years*
- *% shift to zero emission passenger vehicles by 2030*
- *By 2025, 25% of journeys done by foot, bike or public transport*
- *By 2025, 20% more passengers using public transport vs 2009*
- *5% of bays in council owned car parks will be charging bays by 2023 (subject to funding)*
- *KM of safe routes to schools within County Borough*
- *KM active travel routes within County Borough*

Protecting and enhancing our wild spaces and work with nature to tackle both the Climate and Nature emergencies

We will:

- Minimise flood risk by promoting nature based solutions in appropriate locations as well as traditional engineering works, for example Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- Increase area of Woodland regeneration, protecting/storing carbon and reducing the risk of flooding.
- Protect and enhance our most valuable carbon stores, in undisturbed soils and semi-natural vegetation that reside in woods, heathland and grasslands across the County Borough.
- Restore selected local peatbogs following a review of publicly owned land.
- Develop a 'Living Landscape' bringing together existing wildlife sites, local communities and wildlife organisations, sharing knowledge and skills to protect, manage and use these sites to help address the Climate and Nature emergencies.
- In the wider countryside investigate and promote opportunities to use natural processes, green infrastructure and management techniques to reduce environmental risks such as flooding and wildfire, for example, [The Healthy Hillside Project](#).
- Manage our green spaces so they are better able to cope with a changing climate and enhance the benefits they provide to communities.
- Work with partners to expand green infrastructure and limit deforestation which in turn will significantly increase flood defences

Potential measures/targets

- *% of public sector land in RCT managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030*
- *No of areas set aside for peat bogs (increase)*
- *Number of Properties protected from the risk of flooding for extreme weather events (increase)*
- *Number of nature based flood risk reduction projects (increase)*
- *Area of Woodland in RCT (increase)*
- *Area of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation lost*
- *Areas of/Number of peatbog restoration projects*

Think Climate – PROSPERITY

Setting out Zero carbon ambitions for future development in our Local Development Plan

We will put climate change at the centre of our new development plan for adoption in 2024, addressing carbon reduction measures including proximity of development to public spaces, standards of new house building and protection of RCT uplands.

Potential measures/targets

- *By 2030 all new housing developments carbon neutral*
- *% of developments zero carbon*
- *proximity of new developments to public transport routes/hubs and/or active travel*

Making places easily accessible without a car through active & green travel

By 2030, we will ensure that over half of all journeys are taken by public transport, bike or walking, with other journeys, where this is not possible, using electric vehicles

We will:

- Invest in park and ride facilities across the County Borough, including key metro sites and transport hub sites.
- Ensure all new housing and commercial developments are easily accessible by active travel and/or public transport.
- Support the development of an Ultra Low Emission vehicles charging network.
- Ensure that the transport services we commission, inc. Home to School, are zero or low carbon where possible.
- Support operators to make the switch from diesel to electric taxis and buses.

Potential measures/targets

- *No. of EV charging points installed*
- *% of buses/taxis zero emissions*

Aiming for Zero carbon new homes

By 2025, all new homes in the County Borough will be carbon neutral

We will:

- Support housing development on existing brownfield sites, in particular Town Centres, rather than building on 'green' sites.
- Increase the land supply for new Zero carbon homes through our local development plan making sure the sites reduce the need for car use.
- Ensure that new housing and commercial developments include solar, where feasible, and have the capability to generate, store and use renewable energy onsite and offer EV charging points.

Potential measures/targets

no. of sustainable/zero carbon homes delivered

Making existing homes more energy efficient:

We will work with landlords and homeowners to reduce the amount of energy used in existing homes, reaching Zero carbon where this is feasible to do so, by 2050, *in line with Better Homes Better Wales.*

We will:

- Investigate innovative ways of decarbonising all the housing stock, exploring the Heat Pump systems and hydrogen opportunities.
- Increase the energy efficiency of privately owned and rented homes through our RCT Warmer Homes Fuel Poverty strategy 2019-2023 through supporting improvements to insulation and using more efficient low carbon appliances.
- Work with Registered Social Landlords to make their existing housing more energy efficient.

Potential measures/targets

No. of energy saving measures installed

Supporting local businesses to become more sustainable and capitalise on the new opportunities offered by the green economy

We will:

- Consider how our business grants can support local businesses to become more sustainable.
- Work with Welsh Government to help businesses eliminate waste and implement circular economy principles such as reducing pollution and extending the life of products and materials.
- Work with local businesses to help them source more sustainable products locally and sell to local markets.
- Increase the amount of supplies and services the Council procures from local small and medium sized enterprises by disaggregating the contracts into smaller lots that are more suitable for local businesses to tender for.
- Use natural planting in public areas of our town centres to improve air quality and well-being, reduce flood risk and provide cooling during heatwaves.
- Promote Carbon and Eco-Literacy in our schools and across the Council.
- Work with Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, universities and schools to provide opportunities for people to acquire the skills they need for jobs in the green economy, including tourism.
- Continue to work in partnership with schools to deliver and encourage the use of ecology areas on 21st Century School sites for learning.
- Bring together public and third sector, business and academia to maximise our work so that we can all meet our Carbon reduction targets.

Potential measures/targets to be developed

Think Climate – PEOPLE

Supporting and encouraging different lifestyle choices

We will work with residents to develop the Council's plans to tackle Climate Change and also encourage and support them to make changes to their lifestyles and make the choices that will help RCT to become Carbon Neutral by 2030.

We will

- Lead by example, e.g. eliminating our use of single use plastics, installing solar panels on our Council buildings etc. and encouraging our staff to make sustainable travel choices.
- Encourage people to reduce, reuse and recycle waste, which will also help us to achieve our recycling target of 80% by 2025.
- Encourage people to move away from carbon fuelled transport so that half of journeys are walking, cycling or made by public transport by 2030.
- Encourage people to support improvements in air quality by promoting good driving behaviours including implementing no idling zones and reduced speed limits.
- Encourage and support homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes aiming for Zero carbon homes by 2050.
- Develop a training centre at Ynysangharad park that will engage people in their local environment and contribute to activities with positive climate impact, increasing expertise and a love of nature.
- Involve and work with residents and community groups to develop biodiversity initiatives including 'Grab a Rake' (verge management), 'Action for Nature', protecting peatbogs, recording our wildlife and developing a 'Living Landscape' project, bringing together wild places and local groups to benefit nature.

Promoting sustainable, local food

We will:

- Work with partners to develop a Food Prosperity network for creating an RCT sustainable food facility.
- Develop 'park to plate' activities in Ynysangharad Park, to grow fresh vegetables for local foodbanks.
- Enable residents to be more active in their communities in community projects, community use of green space and community food growing projects.
- Increase the number of plant based meal options in our schools and offered by our community meals service.
- Work with community groups to offer Council land to be used for community gardens.
- Increase the number and the accessibility of allotments to residents to enable more people to grow their own fresh food.

Raising Climate Awareness

We will

- Provide clear, simple and practical ways to encourage everyone to play their part.
- Listen to and understand what our residents are telling us.
- Invite and encourage residents, staff and their representatives and also businesses to discuss what the Council can do to help them to reduce their carbon footprint and what they can do for themselves.
- Work with young people, including through schools and their eco councils, youth groups and Arts projects so that their voices are heard and they help shape our plans for their future.

In preparing this Climate Change Plan the Council has taken account of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The Act focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It makes public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven national Well-being Goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

The Council's approach to the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) is to embed its requirements into the Council's business including our Climate Commitments.

This Plan sets out a vision and Climate Commitments that will continue to maximise the Council's contribution to the seven national Well-being goals. The national goals, together with the five Ways of Working, will continue to be incorporated into the detailed action plans that will deliver the Council's climate commitments.

Examples of how our plans to tackle Climate Change contribute to the seven national Well-being Goals currently include

Will be updated once strategy is finished

National Well-being Goal	RCT Climate Action will support the 7 national Well-being goals by
Prosperous Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting new green jobs in a low carbon economy with locally procured goods and services and community benefit clauses. <i>Progressing schemes that will benefit communities now, and in the future including improved low carbon public transport and active travel.</i>
Resilient Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the use of natural resources creating healthier environments for people and all forms of biodiversity. <i>Investing in and valuing our Green Spaces</i> <i>Delivering natural carbon storage solutions such as those provided by trees, peat bogs, marshy grassland</i> <i>Promoting biodiversity by protecting existing habitats where possible</i> <i>Reducing site disturbance and material waste with shorter construction schedules.</i>
Healthier Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving air quality, access to green space and more Active Travel. <i>Ensuring new housing and commercial developments have capacity to generate, store and use reusable energy</i> <i>Make it easier for shoppers to use public transport or active travel to our town centres</i>
More Equal Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving housing conditions and warmth Addressing the inequalities faced by those who are most vulnerable to the effect of Climate Change including women and people on low incomes, allowing people to fulfil their full potential.
Wales of Cohesive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling residents being more active in their communities in community projects and community use of green space. Working with partners to develop a Food Prosperity network for creating an RCT sustainable food place. Developing 'park to plate' activities in Ynysangharad Park, to grow fresh vegetables for local foodbanks

National Well-being Goal	RCT Climate Action will support the 7 national Well-being goals by
A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Welsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting in place based bi lingual climate related activities, <i>using reclaimed and sustainable materials and methods in community arts, traditional crafts and trades and architecture which distinctly reflect the local area and culture.</i>
Globally Responsible Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitating sustainable behaviour and use nature's resources responsibly at home to contribute to protecting the countries and people that are most at risk and vulnerable to the effects of Climate Change around the world. <i>Home to school transport vehicles, bus operators and taxi vehicles are fit for purpose and are as environmentally friendly as possible.</i> <i>A Council fleet that limits impact on environment.</i> <i>Circular approach to recycling and reuse.</i> <i>Eliminating single use plastics across the council and schools</i> <i>Progressing the Eco Park in Bryn Pica.</i> <i>Opportunities to create and use our own green sustainable energy such as micro hydro-electric schemes which utilise natural river and water course feature.</i> <i>Increasing the supply of low carbon homes.</i>

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

LOCAL AUTHORITY ARRANGEMENTS TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, CLLR MORGAN

AUTHORS: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Paul Mee, Group Director, Community & Children's Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1 Provide an overview of the work undertaken to deliver the improvement actions set out by the Wales Audit Office (Audit Wales) in relation to the Council's Corporate Safeguarding responsibilities.
- 1.2 Set out the further actions that require attention.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Reviews the progress made against the improvement actions to support Corporate Safeguarding requirements and requests further information on any areas where this is deemed insufficient.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody. All staff, volunteers, Councillors and those contracted to deliver work and services on behalf of the Council should have the ability to identify what constitutes a potential safeguarding issue and how they can raise a concern.
- 3.2 The update provided within this report sets out the progress made in respect of the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements in the last 12 months.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Councillors, staff, volunteers and providers who work for or on behalf of the Council have a responsibility for protecting children, young people and adults at risk from abuse and/or neglect. This also involves preventing them from becoming at risk of abuse and/or neglect.
- 4.2 The Council's responsibilities for Corporate Safeguarding add to and complement the work of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board, which is the multi-agency statutory partnership that has the responsibility for safeguarding across the region. Each agency must ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place to safeguard children and adults at risk.
- 4.3 The development of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding arrangements, which included a programme of accountability, policy development, training and communication, was set out in a report to Cabinet on the 17th March 2016 following consideration of Wales Audit Office [Review of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements in Wales](#). At this meeting, Cabinet also adopted the original Corporate Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.4 Since then, the Council has taken steps to strengthen its Corporate Safeguarding arrangements. This work has been reflected in various reports including Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Audit Committee and the Corporate Parenting Board including:
- [Audit Committee 20 March 16](#) reviewed arrangements to support safeguarding children and determined there were no matters of governance, internal control or a risk management nature that required further action or attention.
 - [Corporate Parenting Board 11 April 16](#) noted the progress to date and the need to continually raise awareness of individual's responsibilities in respect of safeguarding.
 - [Audit Committee 20 March 2017](#) was satisfied with the progress that has been made in relation to the steps taken by the Council to monitor the implementation of 'proposals for improvement' by the WAO.
 - [Children and Young People Scrutiny 22 March 2017](#) resolved to receive update reports at future meetings.
 - [Children and Young People Scrutiny 6 September 2017](#) received annual report of Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board.
 - [Overview and Scrutiny 14 November 2017](#) received a presentation of progress to date.
 - [Children and Young People Scrutiny 12 September 2018](#) received the annual report of Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board.
 - [Overview and Scrutiny Committee 5 February 2019](#) – received an update and next steps in respect of Corporate Safeguarding.
 - [Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23rd February 2021](#).

- 4.5 A follow up review of the Council's corporate arrangements for safeguarding of children was carried out by the Wales Audit Office in 2019. Overall, the findings set out in the [WAO report](#) issued in September 2019, found that the Council had met, or partially met, most of the previous recommendations and proposals for improvement. However, some further proposals for improvement were made to strengthen aspects of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.
- 4.6 In summary, the six Proposals for Improvement were that the Council should:
- Strengthen the Corporate Safeguarding Policy
 - Strengthen the recruitment and selection procedures
 - Gather contractual monitoring information from across all Council directorates
 - Should improve its approach to safeguarding training
 - Consider producing performance measures (for example in respect of DBS check compliance) to enhance the performance information that goes to scrutiny and aid transparency and that
 - The Corporate Safeguarding Working Group should have oversight of corporate safeguarding risks from across the Council.
- 4.7 An Improvement Action Plan was developed to oversee the implementation of these Proposals for Improvement. Progress in implementing this plan has been monitored over the past year by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group.
- 4.8 A report to [Cabinet on 28 July 2020](#) sought approval of this Action Plan, along with a revised [Corporate Safeguarding Policy](#).

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Progress in relation to each of the recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office is set out below:
- 5.2 Proposal for Improvement 1: Strengthen the Corporate Safeguarding Policy
- A revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy (see above) was approved by Cabinet in July 2020, and has since been translated, posted to the Council's website and a link shared with all staff. Posters, raising awareness of the Policy, have been produced for placement in Council buildings when it is safe to do so and to share with external providers.
- This revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy provides more detailed information on wider safeguarding concerns, such as child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and counter terrorism. It also clarifies the role of the Corporate Safeguarding Group and sets out the roles and responsibilities of every person to whom the Corporate Safeguarding Policy applies.
- 5.3 Proposal for Improvement 2: Strengthen the Recruitment and Selection Procedures
- 5.4 Recruitment processes have been amended to reflect the WAO recommendations.

This includes making a clear commitment to safeguarding, ensuring that all relevant job descriptions and job adverts refer to safeguarding and the requirement for a full DBS check. A recent audit of a sample of Job Descriptions found that these were compliant with these requirements.

- 5.5 Proposal for Improvement 3: Contractual Monitoring Arrangements to robustly monitor safeguarding related actions
- 5.6 An extensive piece of work was undertaken to review the Council's Contracts Register and identify those contracts where safeguarding would apply. However, it became apparent that it was difficult to filter out specific contracts, as many could be in environments where staff could observe something and need to know how to report it. It was therefore agreed that staff employed across all of our contracts should be able to identify and know where to report potential concerns.
- 5.7 A letter and poster was sent out to all suppliers and contractors in January 2021 advising them of their safeguarding responsibilities, as required by the Council's Safeguarding Policy.
- 5.8 Monitoring arrangements are currently in development whereby service areas will be asked to select a sample of contracts each year to assess whether safeguarding responsibilities are being adhered to.
- 5.9 In addition, all Social Care contracts include specific obligations for providers in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities. These are closely monitored by Social Services Commissioning Teams.
- 5.10 Proposal for Improvement 4: Improve the approach to Safeguarding Training
- 5.11 The Council has in place ongoing safeguarding training and awareness-raising sessions for Councillors and staff. Plans are in place to roll out refresher Level 1 training across the Council in 2021.
- 5.12 A Cross-Council Working group was set up in January 2020 to strengthen the training compliance for both Safeguarding and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. This group has drafted a Safeguarding Training Competency Framework and an associated action plan which details the levels of safeguarding knowledge expected of staff groups (Levels 1 to 5). This work is expected to be completed in 2021.
- 5.13 Work has also been ongoing to support service areas with harder to reach employees to address induction and training compliance issues. A training pilot, utilising ICT equipment, was set up for Catering, Cleansing and School Crossing Patrol service teams. In February 2020, 22 tablets were shared across the three service areas to provide training, including the mandatory and induction elements.
- 5.14 In May/June 2020, the Council's Licensing Department carried out awareness raising sessions amongst the taxi trade of the need to spot the signs of County Lines abuse. The licensing authority is changing the qualification that needs to be attained by any

new driver to that of a SQA Level 2 Certificate in an Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver. This new qualification has a heightened focus on safeguarding. All new drivers sit a qualification called an SQA (Scottish Qualification Authority) 'Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver', which covers safeguarding and has replaced the previous BTEC qualification.

5.15 In March 2020, a safeguarding presentation was held within Pub-watch schemes in Pontypridd and Aberdare on spotting the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation.

5.16 The numbers of staff who have undertaken Level 1 Safeguarding Training are included in the tables below. This includes training carried out by the Council's Social Care Workforce Development department. Face to face training has reduced during 2020 due to the pandemic, which has meant that e-learning via the RCT Source has dramatically increased.

	2019	2020
Total no. staff	10,629	10,854
Current no. of staff trained	6,450	7,484
Training method used:		
Face to Face	4,631	4,625
E-Learning	1,819	2,859

5.17 Proposal for Improvement 5: Produce performance measures to enhance the performance information that is presented to Scrutiny Committee

5.18 The Corporate Safeguarding Group has agreed the following performance measures:

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	DATA/COMMENTS
%/No of staff trained in Corporate Safeguarding - Basic Level - Management Level %/No of new staff completing mandatory Safeguarding induction training within 6 months	69% (7,484) of 10,854 staff completed training as at the end of November 2020 (see table above). Also, 54% of new starters from 1st Sept 2020 to 9th February 2021 have completed on-line learning.
%/No of people who are aware of their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding (data to be sourced from staff survey) %/No of people who found it easy to access information if they had reason to report	As above – roles, responsibilities and reporting of issues are covered as part of the online training and within the corporate safeguarding policy (which is included with on the e-learning page on the Source)

%/No of DBS checks carried out	1,797 DBS checks carried out from January to December 2020, 580 of which was COVID-related recruitment.
%/No of taxi drivers completing training	200 of the 484 drivers have gained the BTEC qualification.

5.19 The following additional measures will be implemented when circumstances allow:

- New PI in respect of Contract Monitoring action in line with Improvement Action 3
- New PI in respect of training for the night time economy in line with action Improvement Action 4

5.20 Measures of success will include positive feedback from the next Audit review.

Extract from WAO Report 2019

Overall, we found that: The Council has met, or partially met, most of our previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, but we have identified some further proposals for improvement to strengthen aspects of the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements.

5.21 It has also been proposed that the number and source of safeguarding referrals from staff and Councillors is recorded. This may indicate an improved awareness of the reporting requirements. The figures for January to December 2020 are provided below. These will be used as benchmarking data going forward:

Adult Safeguarding Referrals
Source of Referral Jan - Dec 2020

Staff of Social Services	377
Independent Care Homes	145
Independent Domiciliary Care Agencies	119
Councillor	2

Children's Services Contacts Received
Source of Contact Jan - Dec 2020

Schools	1697
Staff of Social Services	1111
Independent Sector/Other Agency	629
Councillor	3
Advocate	52

5.22 Proposal for Improvement 6: Oversight of Corporate Safeguarding Risks across the Council

5.23 A review of all risks contained within the Council's Service Delivery Plans was completed in 2020. These risks were considered by the Corporate Safeguarding Strategic Group and deemed to be appropriate. The regular and well-embedded Performance Management arrangements requiring annual Service Delivery Plans to be in place have been overtaken by COVID-19 events. The arrangements for Delivery Planning for 2020/21 were suspended due to the need to put in place immediate and agile responses and recovery and contingency planning in order to keep people safe, with priority afforded to vulnerable people and those at most risk. In the meantime, the Senior Leadership Team and the Council's Cabinet are regularly reviewing ongoing work to mitigate and manage the Council's strategic risks set out in the Strategic Risk Register, which includes the coronavirus.

5.24 Once the operational Performance Management arrangements resume, operational service risks will be considered by the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

6. FURTHER WORK

6.1 In addition to the continuation of the core priorities of the Corporate Safeguarding Group, the work plan has been updated to include the following areas of work. Relevant updates will be provided via the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board:

6.2 Suicide Prevention - there has been an increasing number of suicides in the area, particularly in the Rhondda area. The need for a regional, co-ordinated approach to tackle this issue has been identified. New regional governance arrangements have been established and a single multi-agency strategy has been drafted.

6.3 Child Sexual Abuse and Contextual Safeguarding - the Welsh Government's National Action Plan for Child Sexual Abuse (2019-2021) states that corporate safeguarding has a core role in ensuring that adequate measures are in place to keep children safe. Alongside this, there is the need to be aware of the principles involved in Contextual Safeguarding, which recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. This involves looking beyond the child's home when assessing for and planning child protection interventions.

- 6.4 The Welsh Government plans to develop an exemplar Corporate Safeguarding Policy to inform improvements and consistency in local and regional arrangements.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 No specific consultation required at this time.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 Additional costs are likely given the scale and depth of training required, but these can be met from within existing resources.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Extracted from the Corporate Safeguarding Policy:

- Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014
- Education Act 2002 – plus ‘Keeping Learners Safe’ -The role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002
- Children Act 1989 and 2004,
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998,
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Housing Act 2004
- Licensing Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998

11 LINKS TO THE COUNCIL’S CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

Safeguarding and protecting children and adults at risk is a key priority for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and ***‘is everyone’s business’***. Further, by keeping our residents, both young and old, safe, the Council is contributing to a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales and one of more cohesive communities.

- 11.1 The Council's Corporate Safeguarding arrangements support the 'PEOPLE' priority of the Council's [Corporate Plan](#), particularly "... *Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities to remain independent and have a good quality of life...and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do.*"

12 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The Council continues to make progress in delivering its Corporate Safeguarding responsibilities as evidenced by the information provided in this report and the ongoing nature of the actions being delivered.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

25th MARCH 2021

**LOCAL AUTHORITY ARRANGEMENTS TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND
ADULTS AT RISK**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY &
CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO
HOLDER, CLLR MORGAN**

Background Papers:

Cabinet 17.03.16
Audit Committee 20.03.16
Corporate Parenting Board 11.04.16
Audit Committee 20.3.17
Children and Young People Scrutiny 22.03.17
Children and Young People Scrutiny 06.09.17
Overview and Scrutiny 14.11.17
Children and Young People Scrutiny 12.09.18
Overview and Scrutiny Committee 05.02.19
Cabinet 28.07.20
Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23.02.21

Officers to contact:

Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Paul Mee, Group Director, Community & Children's Services



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

A PROPOSAL TO DELIVER SHARED REGIONAL EDUCATION ADVISORY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION

AUTHOR: Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Members to consider a proposal for Rhondda Cynon Taf's Sensory Team within the Access and Inclusion Service to move from a separate and autonomous sensory service to a shared sub-regional, educational advisory service for children and young people with a sensory impairment¹

It is proposed that this new sub-regional service would be developed in partnership with the two other Councils from the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region; Bridgend and Merthyr County Borough Council for at least the next three years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 Agree to support the proposal developed in partnership with the Education Directors from Rhondda Cynon Taf, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area, to deliver sub-regional, shared educational advisory services for children and young people with a sensory impairment, for at least the next three years.

¹ Children and young people who have a hearing (deaf), visual (blind) and/or dual sensory impairment (deafblind)

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To seek support for the collaborative cross Council proposal for a shared, sub-regional educational advisory service for children and young people with a sensory impairment. This is required to
- Provide a resilient and future-proofed sensory impairment service to families and schools across the region, which can respond effectively as the numbers of children and young people with sensory impairments increases, appreciably.
 - Address the unequivocal nationally collated evidence of rising challenge on the current capacity of Councils to meet this group of young people's additional learning needs (ALN).
 - Diminish the growing difficulties of recruiting and retaining specially skilled staff to provide these statutory services, locally.
 - Ensure that all partner local authorities are prepared and able to meet the additional challenges inherent in the forthcoming ALN reforms and the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Educational Tribunal Act (2018).

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Across the Central South Consortium, and Wales as a whole, Councils currently provide and deliver highly specialist sensory impairment and ALN services to families and schools. This report acknowledges the growing difficulties in delivering a continuous service to families, during a period of unprecedented public sector financial austerity, the significant impact of a global pandemic together with an irrefutable increase in the population of these extremely vulnerable children and young people.

In the autumn of 2020, Directors of Education in the Central South Consortium commissioned an independent review of the region's sensory impairment and ALN services. The purpose of this assignment was to ascertain if an individual Council's current sensory impairment services were fit for future-purpose, financially sustainable and operationally prepared to meet the prospective workforce changes, projected over the next five years.

- 4.2 A specialist independent consultant, with over forty years' experience in this particularly specialist ALN field, was appointed to undertake an options appraisal. His report was presented to the Directors of Education within the Central South Consortium in October 2020. A copy of this report is provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.3 The Central South Consortium Education Directors' group reviewed the independent report and considered that it is in the best interests of families with hearing impaired/deaf, visually impaired/blind and/or deafblind/multi-sensory impaired children to move forward with an pioneering strategy to future-proof these specialist services by developing a sub-regional sensory

impairment service across Rhondda Cynon Taf, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils.

5. THE NEXT STEPS

If the three Council Cabinets endorse this proposal i.e. delivery of a regional, shared educational advisory service for sensory impairment, the Directors of Education will subsequently present to their respective Cabinets the following:

- An explicit and clear-cut strategy to ensure that families, across the three Councils, continue to receive high quality, specialist statutory support for their children and young people;
- Projected increases in the numbers of children and young people together with a plan on how Councils will continue to meet their statutory duties i.e. provide mandatory qualified ALN staff to support families and schools, across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region
- A remodeling of the existing educational sensory services in particular the operational arrangements and deployment of resources, advised and informed by an Independent Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Consultant;
- Three-year budget proposals for consideration by the respective Councils;
- Ensure all modified operational arrangements take account of forthcoming legislative changes associated with the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (2018) which is due for implementation in 2021 and requires the delivery of future proofed services for 0 - 25 year olds.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A robust Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the essential consultation in regard to these proposals.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There will be significant engagement with all families across the region, Councils' current sensory impairment staff/teams, headteachers, governors and members of the area's voluntary and community sector, as part of the transformation of the current, individual sensory impairment services. This will safeguard the respective future delivery of support and interventions to sensory impaired children and young people across Rhondda Cynon Taf, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil Councils.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 The current costs associated with the Sensory Service in the Access and Inclusion Service, which sits within the Education and Inclusion Service Directorate, equates to £742k.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Each Council has a legal duty, under the current Welsh Code of Practice (ALN) to provide specialist services to families of deaf/hearing impaired, blind/visually impaired and deafblind/multi-sensory impaired children, in early years and school settings (*currently not in FE provision*). Under impending, new legislation, these duties and responsibilities will change to include liability for those young people attending local post-16 FE establishments.
- 9.2 In addition, Councils are also required to provide specialist teachers who hold a mandatory qualification in; hearing, visual or multi-sensory impairment. Without the provision of an appropriately qualified workforce, families would be entitled to seek specialist, out-of-authority placements to secure access to this specialist teaching and learning, thus placing an excessive and avoidable burden on the Council's ALN budgets.

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

- 10.1 This report seeks to ratify a proposal, by the Directors of Education from each of the three Councils, to collaborate and deliver a regional, shared educational advisory sensory impairment service. The decision will meet national and local priorities for regional collaboration and regionalisation and comply with the five ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

11. CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 The Independent Consultant's report provides robust and direct evidence that the population of deaf/hearing impaired, blind/visually impaired and deafblind/multi-sensory impaired children is increasing across the region and Wales. All three local authorities involved with this proposal reported increases in their respective hearing, visual and multi-sensory impaired populations over the last five years.
- 11.2 Furthermore, the recruitment and retention of specialist teachers and support staff, holding mandatory qualifications in hearing, visual and multi-sensory impairment, has become progressively more challenging over the last five years.

In a number of cases it has not been possible to recruit *any* qualified staff to current sensory teams and Councils have embarked on the costly exercise of finding and training experienced mainstream teachers in this area of ALN.

Interest from experienced, mainstream or special school teachers willing to undertake re-training and complete a two-year mandatory teacher training course is unpromisingly low.

- 11.3 Specialist sensory impairment workforces are recognised nationally, as ageing. The current, small number of academic training providers (*none in Wales*) cannot deliver sufficient numbers of newly qualified teachers, as the contemporary workforce retirees exceeds the demand for new appointments.

Within five years (or less) without decisive action, the Council's current isolated sensory impairment teams will be faced with operationally *critical*, short-falls in qualified staff, to meet growing numbers of newly identified and vulnerable children and young people with sensory impairments.

- 11.4 This opportunity will enable us to drive forward and improve the way in which current sensory impairment services operate. Regionalising the resources and expertise across the three Councils will enable us to realise efficiencies in travel, equipment, training and direct support to families and schools. However, the main driver for this proposal is to provide resilience in the system to meet a growing area of ALN.
- 11.5 The respective Directors of Education have been proactive, having commissioned an independent review to evaluate the risks and consequent options facing the region's sensory services. The report identifies areas for development and improvement. If this proposal is approved, it will ensure the partner Councils future-proof these highly regarded ALN services, safeguarding and ensuring financial sustainability.
- 11.6 In a number of the region's local authorities, there has been growing uncertainty regarding the long-term future of their mandatory ALN services due to the significant challenges in recruiting and retaining staff.

This report seeks to provide a clear commitment from each of the three respective Councils to the enduring future of these low incidence services, and provide families, schools and local authority staff with assurance, during a period of significant insecurity, for this aspect of the educational sector in Wales.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES
WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION**

**A PROPOSAL TO DELIVER SHARED REGIONAL EDUCATION ADVISORY
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A SENSORY
IMPAIRMENT**

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee-

Background Papers-

Appendix 1.

**Strategic Position Paper ~ an Options Appraisal of the Region's Sensory
Impairment Services, October 2020**

Mark Geraghty, Independent SEND Consultant

STRATEGIC POSITION PAPER

An Options Appraisal of the Region's Sensory Impairment Services



Mark Geraghty
Independent SEND Consultant

CONTENTS	
1.	The Remit of this Strategic Position Paper
2.	Purpose of this Position Paper
3.	Sensory Impairment Service Delivery Options
4.	Partner LA Inclusion Leads - Emerging Themes
5.	Options Appraisal and SWOT Analysis
6.	Options - Risk Appraisal
7.	Conclusions and Recommendations
8.	Appendices

1. The Remit of this Strategic Position Paper

In January 2020, I met with Chief Officers from the region's five central Wales Local Authorities (CSC) to discuss the requirements to facilitate the publication of a strategic position paper, regarding their respective provisions for children and young people with sensory impairments.

It was agreed that I would undertake an evaluation of their sensory impairment services, based on the following brief;

“Prepare an options appraisal paper for us to consider the best strategic direction for sensory provision across the 5 Central South Wales authorities.

We would like you to outline the context, specifically legislative and an analysis of the effectiveness and sustainability of the current models employed in the individual LAs.

Against each option could you identify the strengths and potential risk but also we would ask that you identify the option/s that you consider to be the most appropriate for us to investigate further”.

This analysis is set in the context of the Welsh Government's aspirations to enhance and extend, regional working across the country.

National policy “We all recognise that the future requires us to work differently, but more importantly it requires us to work together, within the sector and with our partners to deliver high quality, responsive and integrated public services alongside those who need them.”

Mark Drakeford, Welsh Government

Accordingly, I was happy to undertake, on behalf of the five Central Local Authorities¹ of Wales a concise evaluation of the merits and feasibility of a *merged* regional service for sensory impairments, across the partner authorities;

Table 1

Local Authority	Population ²
Bridgend	139,200
Cardiff	478,000
Merthyr Tydfil	59 495
Rhondda Cynon Taff	240,131
Vale of Glamorgan	132,165
Total for the Regional	1,048,991

¹ Local Authorities = LA

² Approximate figures via the respective LA websites (September 2020).

2. Purpose of this Position Paper

In order to gauge the efficacy of this options appraisal, the five Local Authorities need to have a clear understanding of the current and future ALN of this group of children and young people (C&YP) i.e. those with a sensory impairment.

Principal Strategic Question -

What does a needs analysis tell us about our current level of ALN (SI) and how is this forecast to change in future years?

*(*Further, detailed, information is available in Section 4 of this paper - see Table 5. Central South Consortium Provision Map)*

Headline Analysis of the Trend Data

- Trend data for C&YP with sensory impairments including those with complex and additional needs indicate increases and decreases over the last 9 years.
- The 2019 CRIDE reported a 5% reduction in pupil numbers on the previous year, following an 11% *increase* in 2017.
- Generally, increases in the SI population in Wales, over the last 10 years, are in line with other national and international data e.g. EPICURE, Consortium for Research in Deaf Education³ VIEW.
- By comparison; in England, there was a 7% increase in the equivalent low incidence population, 2019.

How well do the current SI services meet the needs C&YP now and what outcomes are being achieved?

Parallel Strategic Issues -

- I. In broad terms what activities do the services currently deliver to families, early settings and schools?
- II. Do we understand the operational impact i.e. outcomes of these SI services on C&YP with sensory impairments?
- III. How do the SI services offered, provided and align with the future strategic direction of ALN legislation in Wales?

Appendix I⁴ sets out a universal description of a support and intervention framework offered by sensory impairment services. This section endeavours to provide an abridged reference which attempts to addresses questions I and II, of the above strategic issues detailed, above.

Question III will be addressed, in part, after this position paper.

³ <https://www.batod.org.uk/information/cride-reports/>

⁴ See the Section Appendixes at the end of this document.

Supplementary strategic influences are set out in Appendix II - Prevailing Strategic Imperatives (*detailed key drivers in appraising the value of consulting further on a regional SI service*).

The *current* legislative requirements for SI workforces in England & Wales are further detailed in Appendix III - Sensory Impairment Workforces – Current Legislative Context, of this paper.

3. Sensory Impairment Services - Delivery Options

What options, if any, are persuasively viable for ensuring that the additional learning needs of C&YP with sensory impairments can continue to be met in the future? This question is set in a context of;

- projected changes in the numbers, type and prevalence of this particular ALN cohort;
- retaining a high-quality, specialist workforce, given trend data over the last 9 years?;
- impending ALN new legislation.

The options comprise;

- making no changes to existing operational SI services
- minimal changes that build on existing collaborations
- developing a regional SI service

All of these choices must ensure that the five partner LAs can continue to meet C&YP's ALN effectively in a context of diminishing resources. Together with, assimilating and incorporating local and national strategic/operational requirements?

4. Partner LA Inclusion Leads - Emerging Themes

Evidence Collecting Methodology

I gathered the individual views of the Inclusion Leads which has *critically* informed and shaped the options appraisal and resultant risk analysis.

Table 2

Date	Activity Descriptor
30 th January 2020	Meeting with LA Chief Officers group to discuss the fundamental ideas concerning an opportunity to undertake this appraisal, including confirmation (subsequently) of the rationale for this position paper
4 th March 2020	One-to-one meeting with David Davies (Vale of Glamorgan)
5 th March 2020	One-to-one meeting with Sarah Bowen (Merthyr Tydfil)
6 th March 2020	One-to-one meeting with Ceri Jones (RCT)
6 th March 2020	One-to-one meeting with Jennie Hughes (Cardiff)
6 th March 2020	One-to-one meeting with Michelle Hatcher (Bridgend)
16th March 2020	Lockdown in the UK announced by Matt Hancock
31 st July 2020	MS Teams video call Sarah Bowen (Merthyr Tydfil)
24 th August 2020	MS Teams video call Ceri Jones (RCT)
25 th August 2020	MS Teams video call Michelle Hatcher (Bridgend)
27 th August 2020	MS Teams video call Jennie Hughes (Cardiff)
28 th August 2020	MS Teams video call David Davies (Vale of Glamorgan)

The initial face-to-face meetings provided a platform, for the respective inclusion leads, (*in some cases the IL asked their respective Heads of SI to join the meeting*) to detail their views, frankly and candidly, concerning the idea of consulting on a regional SI Service.

In each meeting, I noted critical or significant comments from the discussions, which I have recorded, *confidentially* and *anonymously*.

A number of the ILs were definite about their interest in the concept of a regional SI Service. Others were robust in their beliefs that either minimal or no change was their preferred option.

Tables 1 & 2 below, summarises the views of the respective Inclusion leads and which informs the options appraisal and its consequent conclusions.

Table 3

Retaining Status Quo
1. It might create insecurity for families, schools and other stakeholders
2. Essential that the five LAs/region looks ahead, purposefully, as changes are impending
3. Capacity building in schools to support and promote inclusion
4. Stability for families and schools is critical, in the current climate, as families and schools face countless capacious changes
5. Prevailing management of local SI teams is robust and ensures high-quality delivery of Services
6. It might dilute the local offer
7. Conflicting and incompatible models of prevailing SI support across the respective LAs i.e. some delegate resources to schools, others retain similar resources, centrally
8. Existing 'local' collaborations were effective and meeting the ALN of C&YP
9. Established practices support effective regional cooperation and collaboration of SI teams, working across the five LAs
10. Transforming these collaborations, across all the five LAs into a unified SI Service, might present significant operational challenges to maintaining coherent support to families and schools
11. Two different Health Boards across the 5 LA
12. Potential loss of 'local' accountability with a regional SI Service
13. Large geographical area which would present logistical, organisational and travel obstacles
14. It had been discussed previously, with no follow-up or action, frustratingly
15. Needed 5 years ago – the opportunity was missed and solutions have been found
16. It could be destabilising for SI staff across the respective services
17. Exactly what would a regional service look like, how would it coordinate the various services efficiently and competently?
18. How would it operate strategically and operationally i.e. would there be lead LA, joint funding, to whom would a regional service be answerable?
19. Are there complimentary, operational models other than just a regional SI service?
20. It would impact and diminish IL's existing responsibilities (some ILs have responsibilities wider than SI services)
21. Professional impact for SI managers who might no longer have responsibility for directing and managing the SI service
22. In some LAs SI services are associated with other ALN services; a regional service would impact on these arrangements
23. Up-to-date statistics and information would be needed apropos the trends of this population, across the region, to inform a public consultation
24. Is it change for change sake?

Table 4

Regional Service	
1.	Essential that the five LAs/region looks ahead, purposefully, as changes are impending
2.	Reduce duplication of resources and limited time across the region
3.	Capacity building in schools to support and promote inclusion
4.	The Welsh government is committed to increasing and extending <i>regional</i> collaborations, local authority <i>integration</i> and advancing <i>regionalisation</i> (cited <i>Local Government Reforms</i>)
5.	A regional SI service would prove to be more cost-effective for the five councils through economies of scale i.e. specialist's advice and SI population intelligence
6.	Facilitate the sharing of good practice from across all the LAs
7.	Build regional resources e.g. Braille support to students
8.	Addresses the forthcoming requirements to support in FE Colleges/post 16/post 19 given there is inadequate, dedicated resources and specialist staff for this sector
9.	Reduce the likelihood of ALN Tribunals where there's a paucity of provision or restricted access to specialist support staff
10.	Improve operational planning for probable changes in; the SI workforce, C&YP population, schools and concomitant legislative changes
11.	Ensure a sustainable and justifiable SI service going forward i.e. future-proofing SI provision for families and schools, across the region
12.	Improve the delivery of SI services; believe it would offer more efficient and effective support to families and schools, given the greater resources resultant from a regional SI Service
13.	Create a more resilient model of operational delivery given some of the trends they'd been experiencing in the last five years
14.	Opportunity to create a 'hub and spoke' type service model, balancing local operational delivery with a more strategic regional view of the needs of this SI C&YP populous

Table 5* Central South Consortium Provision Map

The information⁵ below represents the current data set for C&YP across the five partner LA SI services. It provides a summative insight into the range of SI provision offered and delivered by the respective LA SI Services.

It includes information about; the C&YP supported by the LAs; SI workforces, SI C&YP in Special Schools and individual *teaching resource centres (TRC)* as part of a continuum of ALN provision (*not all LAs operate separate and/or discrete SI TRCs*).

The information below was collated from specific data provided by the respective Inclusion Leads.	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Totals
Number of children & young people (C&YP) supported by the LA's SI service (<i>maintained EY/LA school settings</i>)	833	372	13	1218
Number of SI C&YP supported in specialist LA resource bases	70	13	2	85

⁵ Appendix IV contains the individual LA responses to my requested information



Number of SI C&YP supported in LA special school settings	78	101	19	198
Have the numbers of C&YP on your LA's caseloads increased or decreased, in the last year?	x4 increase x1 decrease	x4 increase x1 decrease		
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers employed centrally	16	12.4	1.2	29.6
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff employed centrally	14.2	21.7	1	36.9
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	14	19.5	4	37.5
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	13	21.5	2	36.5
Areas of SI provision provided, via an SLA, to another <i>local</i> LA	Two LAs hold SLAs with two other LAs from across the CSC consortium			
Number of specialist primary resource bases	4	0	0	4
Number of specialist secondary resource bases	4	0	0	4
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	2	0	0	2
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	16	0	0	15
Number of C&YP in specialist SI/ALN placements outside the LA's maintained provision e.g. independent or NMSS schools or colleges	5	4	0	9
Number of qualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	1	3	0	4
Number of unqualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	7	7	0	14



Additionally, I have included, in **Appendix V** (for information) a range of national data for Deaf C&YP in Wales and Visually Impaired C&YP in England⁶. This section evidences national trends over 9 years and details some significant interpretations.

⁶ I was unable to find/access specific data for C&YP with VI/MSI in Wales.

5. Options Appraisal and SWOT Analysis

- **Option 1:** Status quo i.e. no change but with some augmentation to the existing SLA arrangements, which builds on the pre-existing cross-border alliances.
- **Option 2:** In this scenario, CSC would look to create two, sub-regional sensory impairment services i.e. **SubR 1. RCT + Merthyr + Bridgend** **SubR 2. Vale of Glamorgan + Cardiff.**
- **Option 3:** Move forward with and consult on developing, publishing and ultimately consulting on a regional SI service model (experience indicates this process could take up to nine months from start to sign up).


SWOT Analysis of Option A – Maintain Existing Service Arrangements (<i>remain as discrete SI Services, deployed and managed by existing LAs including furtherance of existing local collaborations</i>)	
<p>S</p>  <p>Strengths</p>	<p>No immediate disruption to families, schools and stakeholders; No immediate change for existing SI staff; No additional costs to the LA, short-term; SI Service staff are accustomed to/and comfortable in how they work and perform i.e. it's how they've always done it; No change to the current use and allocation of additional SI resources/equipment; SI services fully staffed – maintains workforce constancy; Relationships with and knowledge of schools is an asset; Continuity for pupil's communication and learning needs; Consistency of teaching interventions; Provision of specialist equipment for pupils; No change to SLAs to local LAs e.g. HI/VI and Habilitation works well; No cost of a public consultation; No need to review the role of SRC's for SI in relation to the SI teams (where applicable).</p>
<p>W</p>  <p>Weaknesses</p>	<p>No strategic resilience, if/when the SI and school populous changes i.e. rise in SI incidence; Limited capacity to respond to likely changes in C&YP's ALN; Sustainability of local workforces remains exposed as they age/move, etc. Increasing numbers of SI C&YP with decreasing qualified workforce e.g. MQ staff is a risk for families - could lead to requests for out of authority placements; Potential increased cost to fund requests for residential specialist school and/or FE college as pupil numbers rise – such placements could be catastrophic, financially; At odds with Welsh Government's national drivers to foster and facilitate regional collaboration and ultimately regionalisation; Leaves smaller LAs vulnerable to changes in service delivery i.e. how the respective SI service priorities are ordered and by whom? Limited opportunities to review and share best practice across a regional team; How are SI services held responsible, consistently across the region, in the future; Parent and stakeholder views unsolicited; No scrutiny of a successful regional SI Service in the SE of Wales; Limited career development opportunities for SI workforce, within existing arrangements; Retention, recognition and retainment of QTVI/VI & MSI staff more challenging for LAs.</p>







 <p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Look to extend, enhance and formalise further local relationships; Prepare for new ALN legislation via local partnerships based on current operational models; Improve local monitoring protocols, already in place, to ensure trend data, SI C&YP numbers, etc. are regularly scrutinized; Crucial adjustments (operational and financial) can be made promptly to ensure the maintenance of high-quality SI; Formalise sharing of regional SI practice, collect outputs and use information summatively, to inform and improve operational effectiveness across the region.</p>
 <p>Threats</p>	<p>No contingency in the event numbers of C&YP and/or SI workforces becomes capacity critical; Introduction of RSIS would mean loss of role/status for some members of the existing SI teams, this threat is assuaged; If regionalisation becomes a mandated requirement for SI services in the future, changes will be forced on LAs rather than them being in control of such changes; Staff within SI teams move to other local LA services for career development or further professional recognition i.e. they wish to be a part of a regional service, elsewhere; Funding changes, at a local level, make unconnected SI service delivery increasingly more problematic for LAs.</p>


SWOT Analysis of Option B – Nominal Improvements to Existing Service Arrangements (*Progress to sub-regional, SI Services, deployed and managed by a lead LA. Existing local collaboration formalised, managed and funded by a lead authority as a unified 'local' SI service:*




1 ~ Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan become a unified sub-regional service

2 ~ Bridgend, Merthyr And RCT become a sub-regional service, coterminous with their respective Health Boards)

 <p>Strengths</p>	<p>As in Option B but furthermore incorporates - Little or no disruption to families, schools and stakeholders; Little or no change for existing SI staff; No additional costs to the LA, short term; SLAs and attendant costs/work upgraded; Insignificant cost to affirm existing and/or any new agreements; Operational staff experience minimal change; Little or no change to the current use and allocation of additional SI resources/equipment.</p>
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  Weaknesses	<p>As in Option B but furthermore incorporates -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum strategic resilience, if/when the SI and school populous changes; This is a half-way house between existing arrangements and a full regional SI Service (<i>why make limited change</i>); Reduced capacity to respond to likely changes in C&YP's ALN locally; Sustainability of local workforces remains perilous as staff age/ change/move on/illness, etc.; At odds with Welsh Government's national drivers to foster and facilitate regionalisation but <i>more</i> in keeping with the spirit.
  Opportunities	<p>As in Option B but furthermore incorporates -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curtailed opportunities to review and share best practice; Smaller LAs less vulnerable to changes in service delivery demands i.e. SI service priorities, increasing C&YP numbers; The requirement to design a rudimentary strategic plan for unanticipated changes in C&YP needs and/or impending workforce discrepancies; Opportunity to review how SI services are evaluated and performance held accountable? Joint planning for future legislative changes; Modest ability to respond promptly and dynamically to changes in the SI population; Minimal future-proofing the recruitment of specialist workforce; Nominal progress of current systems apropos how existing SI services are appraised; Ensure sub-regional SI Services' performance are transparent, always formative and through positive challenge and support, operational delivery held communally accountable? Plan and respond, in a timely fashion, to future legislative changes; Opportunity to co-produce new joint arrangements from the outset.
  Threats	<p>Existing Families will see any movement in this direction as an opportunity to reduce funding, albeit small;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All changes must be communicated promptly, transparently and with explicit detail; Some members of current SI Staff teams may still feel threatened by any change; Minimal improvement in the effective and efficient use of the respective LA's resources; Repurpose overlapping funding and improve the quality and quantity of support to C&YP, Families and Schools; Inadequate to capacity to respond to significant growth following the introduction of the new ALN Legislation; Workforce vagaries could impact on SLA arrangements in the event of compromised priorities.

SWOT Analysis of Option C – Move to a Consultation of the Efficacy and Utility of a Regional SI Service (<i>Develop, Publish and Consult on a Model of Operational Delivery for a Regional SI Service based on a Shared Strategic Vision</i>)	
<p>S</p>  <p>Strengths</p>	<p>Regional SI Service (RSIS) ensures robust strategic resilience when the SI population and workforce experiences probable variations i.e. rise in SI incidence/ageing of MQ teachers; Capacity to respond promptly, dynamically and therefore productively to changes in C&YP population/ALN; RSIS workforce is durable, provides high levels of quality assurance and will be responsive and flexible to meet changing demography of SI C&YP; Supports the Welsh Government's national drivers to promote and facilitate regional collaboration and ultimately regionalisation; Removes overlapping/duplication of funding thus improving the quality and quantity of support to C&YP, families and schools; None of the LAs is exposed or vulnerable to changing SI service priorities (planned or inadvertent); Exceptional opportunities to review and share best practice across RSIS; Develop a Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to include parents, C&YP and stakeholders, to challenge and support the RSIS's outputs and outcomes (co-produce this Board?); Indisputable transparency and accuracy vis-à-vis accountability of RSIS across the region; Parent and stakeholder views inform RSIS development, expansion and communication; Enhanced career development opportunities for RSIS workforce; Considerably improved retention, recognition and retainment of QTVI/Hi & MSI and other SI staff; More efficient and effective use of the public purse; Enriched value for money function with a RSIS; Financial efficiencies can be reinvested into the RSIS facilitating 'targeted' workforce development/CPD/career opportunities; An amalgamation of SI resources will ensure proportionate allocation of assets/equipment based on C&YP ALN; New co-produced relationships with families, schools and stakeholders, providing new opportunities to re-evaluate and update existing primacies; Consistency of pupil teaching/intervention programmes to C&YP; Removes onerous SLAs between local LAs.</p>
<p>W</p>	<p>Likely short-term disruption to C&YP, their families, schools and stakeholders; Individual LAs will share the control and management of the RSIS; The inescapable political fallout from the change (will need managing); Requires an innovative culture of sharing and distribution of resources across the five LAs; Potential adverse publicity for the five LAs; Extensive change for some existing SI staff, which may result in staff self-selecting and moving on;</p>

 Weaknesses	<p>Reduction in the number of SI managers/leads; This model is likely to be unwelcomed across some of the LA SI teams; Some SI Service staff familiar with existing practices and performance may be disconcerted and unhappy with the change (short-term?); Potential disruption to continuity for C&YP and families, if not managed strongly; Will require infrastructure change i.e. HR/finance/IT systems for new regional service; Cost of a public consultation; Additional implementation costs for the LA, short term.</p>
 Opportunities	<p>Consolidate and rationalise regional resources and structures to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and deployment of an integrated service which could maximise further financial expenditure; Develop integrated KPI systems focused on outcomes, agreed outputs, progress and achievements for C&YP; Revamp monitoring and prioritisation protocols to ensure that trend data, SI C&YP numbers and more are regularly scrutinized; Annual RSIS improvement plan will enable adjustments to be made to safeguard high-quality SI support to C&YP and their families; Formalise sharing of regional SI practice, through CPD, Improvement & Training programmes, to increase operational effectiveness and quality, across the region.</p>
 Threats	<p>Plans communicated inadequately; Existing families may see any move in this direction as an opportunity to reduce funding; Schools may feel this is potentially a disrupting, precarious strategic and/or operational change for C&YP; Some members of current SI Staff teams will be threatened by impending change; Without a robust and credible consensus for change, across the 5 SI teams, any consultation on a RSIS could be ruinous; Perceived loss of control at local levels by managers/SI leaders; Will each LA support this move, unequivocally? Without this assurance you will not achieve the effective regionalisation of SI Services; Loss of status or job security across some SI teams; Professional peer pressure, among some of the team members, who may feel compelled to resist change to protect co-workers. This is a powerful driver in the workplace i.e. it maintains service identity and stability, so any change to these facets is resisted; Fear of failure/exposure under a different regime; Significant loss of employee confidence in the implementation change process; Cross authority politics i.e. the size, influence and control of the respective LAs cannot be agreed.</p>

6. Options - Risk Appraisal

The following tables attempts to assess the risks associated with some of the *key activities/decisions* for each option. This process is based on a probability rating, detailed in the table below.

As ever, risk appraisals are principally subjective views and are not intended to be unequivocal or based on any absolute empirical values.

Their purpose is to provide a professional judgement consequent to the key risks of each key activities/decisions appraised. They are *indicative* of a risk calculation which has been subject to an analysis, by me, of what could cause harm to specific aspects of the respective SI services operational activities and consequent decisions.

It seeks to *identify* the threats and harm that might result in collective risk, within the context of the respective option's descriptors.

What I have not included with these risk appraisals is the respective help each LA would require to mitigate high-risk activities/decisions i.e. putting control measures in place based on the level, severity and likelihood of a particular risk.

Table 3 – Understanding Risk Assessment Ratings

A risk assessment rating is the *possibility* that an event will occur with detrimental outcomes for a particular *stakeholder group(s)*, *activities or consequence of taking this decision*.

For example; *disruption to families (chosen from Option A)* has a risk assessment rating of 1 ~ indicated green in Table 6. This suggests the likelihood of this risk is improbable and the potential impact of the choice, on this activity, is negligible.

Please note I have only selected *critical* operational/strategic risks, for each option. These risk assessment ratings are based on my professional judgement of the critical operating risks, for each option.

Using coloured blocks to indicate the individual risk rating, an aggregated visual ranking can be garnered from each option, so providing an overall appreciation of risk for each option i.e. the more green blocks estimated for an option, the less risk associated with that choice and vice-versa.

Table 6

Likelihood	Severity Rating			
Certain - 5	20	15	10	5
Probable - 4	16	12	8	4
Occasional - 3	12	9	6	3
Remote - 2	8	6	4	2
Improbable -1	4	3	2	1
Probability Rating	Catastrophic - 4	Critical - 3	Marginal - 2	Negligible -1

Table 4 - Option Risk Appraisal

Option A – Maintain Existing Service Arrangements (<i>remain as discrete SI Services, deployed and managed by existing LAs including furtherance of existing local collaborations</i>) Key Risks ~ Appraisal	
	⁷ Rating
Disruption to families, schools and stakeholders;	
Immediate change for existing SI staff;	
Additional costs to LAs, short-term;	
Change to the current use and allocation of additional SI resources/equipment;	
SI services remain fully staffed – maintains workforce constancy;	
Continuity for pupil's communication and learning needs;	
Continuity of provision of specialist equipment for pupils;	
No strategic/operational resilience, if/ when the SI and school populous changes i.e. rise in SI incidence;	
Impact of increasing numbers of SI C&YP together with the decreasing workforce (MQ staff) results in the risk of families requesting out of authority placements' due to inadequate access to MQ staff;	
Increased cost to fund requests for residential specialist FE college placements, financially, without appropriately experienced SI staff;	
At odds with Welsh Government's national drivers to foster and facilitate regional collaboration and regionalisation;	
Leaves smaller LAs vulnerable to changes in service delivery i.e. how SI service priorities are ordered and by whom;	
Retention, recognition and retainment of QTVI/HI & MSI staff more challenging for LAs.	
Option B – Nominal Improvements to Existing Service Arrangements (<i>Progress to sub-regional, SI Services, deployed and managed by a lead LA. Existing local collaboration formalised, managed and funded by a lead authority as a unified 'local' SI service:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan become a unified sub-regional service - Bridgend, Merthyr And RCT become a sub-regional service, coterminous with their respective Health Boards 	
	Rating
Disruption to families, schools and stakeholders;	
Little change for existing staff;	
Additional costs to the LA, short term;	
Change to the current use and allocation of additional SI resources/ equipment;	

⁷ Inevitably these judgements are subjective and based on the author's knowledge and experience of similar service facing similar challenges and changes. These risk ratings are open to further debate and discussion.

Minimal strategic resilience when the SI and school populous changes;	
Capacity to respond to likely changes in C&YP's ALN locally, restricted;	
Sustainability of local workforces remains perilous as staff age/ change/move on/illness, etc.;	
At odds with Welsh Government's national drivers to foster and facilitate regionalisation but <i>more</i> in keeping with the spirit;	
Require a plan for future legislative changes with resultant operational impacts;	
Ability to respond promptly and dynamically to changes in the SI population;	
Future-proofing the recruitment of specialist workforce;	
Existing Families will see any movement in this direction as an opportunity to reduce funding, albeit small;	
Improvement in the effective and efficient use of the respective LA's resources;	
Option C – Move to a Consultation of the Efficacy and Utility of a Regional SI Service (<i>Develop, Publish and Consult on a Model of Operational Delivery for a Regional SI Service based on a Shared Strategic Vision</i>)	
	Rating
Changes to a regional SI Service (RSIS) ensure strategic resilience when the SI population and workforce experiences variations i.e. rise in SI incidence/ageing specialist teachers;	
A transition plan and implementation arrangements to a RSIS workforce not managed effectively i.e. does not provide well-judged levels of quality assurance together-with responsive operational tractability;	
Does not support the Welsh Government's national drivers to promote and facilitate regional collaboration and regionalisation;	
Removal of overlapping/duplication of funding facilitating sustained improvement in the quality and quantity of support to C&YP, families and schools;	
None of the LAs is exposed or vulnerable to changing SI service priorities (planned or inadvertent);	
Opportunities to review and share best practice across RSIS;	
Ineffectual Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to include parents, C&YP and stakeholders, to challenge and support the RSIS's outputs and outcomes;	
Parent and stakeholder views unsolicited regarding the concept, development, expansion and communication of a RSIS;	
Enhanced career development opportunities for RSIS workforce;	
Improve retention, recognition and retainment of QTVI/Hi & MSI and other SI staff;	
Failure to move to a RSIS results in not maximising the efficient and effective use of the public purse;	
Failure to move to a RSIS will impact proportionately on the allocation of assets/equipment/resources based on C&YP ALN, directly;	

Disruption to C&YP, their families, schools and stakeholders;	
Individual LAs perceive a loss of direct control and management of their SI services;	
Likelihood of political fallout from the change which will need managing;	
Potential adverse publicity for the five LAs;	
Impact of the reduction in the number of SI managers/leads and their respective responsibilities;	
Some SI Service staff familiar with existing practices and performance may be disconcerted and unhappy with the change (short-term?);	
Impact of infrastructure change i.e. HR/finance/IT systems for new regional service;	
The additional cost of a public consultation;	
Additional implementation costs for the LAs (medium-term);	
Impact of consolidating and rationalising regional resources and structures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the integrated service and maximise financial expenditure;	
The time required to develop integrated KPI systems focused on outcomes, outputs, progress and achievements for C&YP;	
Plans communicated inadequately and by the wrong tier of Officers;	
Existing families may perceive any move in this direction as an opportunity to reduce funding without the opportunity to ask questions;	
Schools/ALNCos may feel this is a disrupting strategic and/or operational move for C&YP at a time of excessive change;	
Without a robust and credible consensus for change, across the 5 SI teams, any consultation on a RSIS could be ruinous;	
Risk of professional peer pressure among some of the SI team members i.e. feel compelled to resist change (to protect their co-workers?). Powerful driver in the workplace i.e. maintain identity professional to preserve stability i.e. change is resisted;	
The risk associated with cross-authority politics i.e. the size, influence and control of the respective LAs.	

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

It is clear from my various discussions, with your inclusion leads, that the notion of consulting further on a model of unified regional delivery, for the existing LA SI Services, is not universally welcomed.

I've set out the explanations and my reasons for citing these reluctances, within this paper. Accordingly, I have appraised for the LA Chief Officers group, three options going forward;

- i.) **Option 1:** Status quo i.e. no change but with some augmentation to the existing SLA arrangements, which builds on the pre-existing cross-border alliances.

Appraisal judgement – nonthreatening choice; little change and probably welcomed by a number of the LAs. Overall risk rating would be low i.e. Green

- ii.) **Option 2:** In this scenario, CSC would look to create two, sub-regional sensory impairment services i.e. SubR 1. RCT + Merthyr + Bridgend SubR 2. Vale of Glamorgan + Cardiff.

This would offer a modest scale of improvement, above and beyond the existing SLAs/parochial partnerships, across what I indicate would be the two sub-regions.

There is some attainable benefit to be realised vis-à-vis the formation of two sub-regional SI services i.e. they would align to one of two, prevailing Health Boards.

Nonetheless, it would seem oddly inexplicable to take these small steps, towards realising some of the evident and tangible benefits of a full regional SI service, and not consider moving forward with a full consultation on a RSIS.

However, this might be considered, by the respective LAs, as a graduated and pragmatic approach toward the expansion to a full, regional SI service, in the future? Overall risk rating would be **low** i.e. Green

Appraisal judgement – measured choice; minor change and probably welcomed by a number of the LAs

- iii.) **Option 3:** Move forward with and consult on, developing, publishing and ultimately implement a regional SI service model. Experience indicates this process could take up to nine months from start to sign up.

I believe this option would strategically future proof these very important, individual and exclusive ALN services for C&YP and their families.

Appraisal judgement – challenging; major change not entirely welcomed by a number of the LAs, nevertheless the potential benefits and rewards for C&YP, families and stakeholders could be significant. It would provide a level of strategic and operational resilience unparalleled by the two other options detailed above.

Overall risk rating would be medium/high i.e. **amber/red**

Conclusively, there are significant and inherent high levels of risk associated with taking forward Option 3.

Without an explicit consensus of support from all of the local authorities; respective Politicians, Corporate Management Teams and key players who would be responsible for the delivery and implementation of a RSIS.

To progress this strategic option, without an unequivocal agreement/backing by the groups above would result in adverse publicity for Political Leaders/CEO/Chief Officers, from the respective LAs.

The collateral fallout from any public oppositional exposure would make the task of convincing families, schools and stakeholders of the merits of a regional SI service, **very difficult**.

In my opinion, the critical question to be answered is; 'how risk-averse the respective LAs are for change?'

I think the value of change or not, is summed up impeccably by Ex USA President Bill Clinton who said:

"The price of doing the same old thing is far higher than the price of change."

A Regional SI Service - South East Consortium

Colleagues will be aware, the South East Consortium operates a regional SI service which has recently undergone a [Value for Money Review](#). This regional SI service supports approx. 1,900 families.

In regards the existing regional SI Service cited mentioned above; a further possibility might be to '*test stakeholder's appetite*' by setting up a half-day seminar; inviting parents, schools and local CVS organisations who are currently and positively working with and supporting the South East Consortium's regional SIS.

This would enable them to meet with representatives from CSC's parents, school representatives, key SI Staff and other stakeholders, to hear about their experiences of a regional SI service.

They would be able to ask questions, without contrary backstories and uncorroborated half-truths, enabling them to understand the benefits of a unified, integrated and dynamic SI service across five SEC LAs.



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September 2020

APPENDICES

I. A Summary of the Support and Interventions Offered by Sensory Impairment Services

The following statements have been simplified and are intended to provide a broad outline of the SI services currently delivered across the five Welsh LAs. Its purpose is to summarise and illustrate an operational framework which will be referenced in subsequent sections of this paper.

Local Sensory Inclusion Services (SIS⁸) are specialist teams which support C&YP with sensory impairments; in early years, educational settings and across local communities in Wales.

They are staffed by trained Teachers of the Deaf (QToDs), Qualified Teachers of the Visually Impaired (QTVIs), Qualified Teachers of MSI and other specialist support staff. All of whom provide an all-in-one service from the point of diagnosis until the child or young person leaves full-time education (and occasionally beyond).

In broad terms SIS support; children, young people, families, colleagues in health, education and other multi-agency settings, to meet the specific educational/ALN of C&YP with sensory impairment.

SIS commonly receive recommendations from health agencies but also parents/carers, schools and other stakeholder agencies, but always concerning medical advice regarding hearing and/or visual loss.

a) Hearing impairments - There are two main types of deafness. The first happens when there is a fault in the inner ear – usually in the cochlea. This is called 'sensorineural deafness' and is permanent.

The level of hearing loss may be described as mild, moderate, severe or profound and may not be the same in each ear, with only a few children totally deaf.

Amplification of residual hearing may be made possible with a hearing aid. The more profound the hearing loss, the greater the likelihood that the child will be given a cochlear implant, which allows electrical signals to be sent directly to the auditory nerve, providing a sensation of hearing.

The second type of deafness happens when sounds fail to pass efficiently through the outer and middle ear to the cochlea and auditory nerve. This is most commonly caused by a build-up of fluid in the middle ear, often referred to as 'glue' ear.

This is known as 'conductive deafness' and is the most common type of hearing loss. A conductive loss is likely to fluctuate and be temporary. It is often treated by inserting grommets into the eardrum: ventilation tubes which allow fresh air to enter the middle ear to keep it free of fluid.

⁸ I have generalised all the various service titles into a single generic term – Sensory Inclusion Service.

Assessment and Supporting Children & Young People with Hearing Loss

Most children with a significant sensorineural hearing loss will have been identified before they enter an early year setting. Other children, particularly those with a fluctuating conductive loss, may not. Early years practitioners have an important role to play in noticing and recording aspects of a child's development that might indicate a hearing loss.

The following signs are indicative children with a hearing loss:

- Delayed development of speech
- Watching your face and lips carefully when you're speaking.
- Often failing to respond when called by name.
- Pausing after an instruction has been given, then watching other children to see what to do.
- Speaking unusually loudly or quietly.

A significant hearing loss can have a major impact on other aspects of a child's development – particularly on communication and social interaction skills. The child may use sign language, speech or a combination of the two. Unless steps are taken to help the child feel confident in social situations, they are likely to be withdrawn – remaining on the edge of groups of children or preferring a one-to-one activity with an adult.

How Do Sensory Services help and Support Practitioners?

Firstly, it is vital to work closely with the child's parents. They will have an enormous amount of information about the nature of their child's hearing loss and the best means of communication. Secondly, a child with a significant hearing loss is likely to be having regular input from a specialist teacher of the Deaf (QToD) or specialist support assistant.

It is important to make time to seek their advice and input, where required. Practitioners can help the young child with hearing impairment by:

- providing additional visual clues to support information you give verbally;
- making sure that the child can see your face and lips when you're speaking, and that you gain their attention before speaking;
- checking that the child has understood you, repeating or giving extra clues if necessary;
- considering learning sign language;
- monitoring noise levels – a hearing aid amplifies everything, not just your voice.

b) Visual impairments - The term 'visually impaired' is used to describe a child who has sight problems severe enough to interfere with their learning. The majority of children with a visual impairment still have some vision – only five per cent are totally blind.

Most blind or partially sighted children have their sight problem from birth, though a small number lose their sight later in life following illness or an accident.

Assessment and Supporting Children & Young People with a Visual Impairment

Most children with a marked visual impairment will arrive in the nursery with their condition already diagnosed. Early years practitioners' observations can still contribute to the

ongoing assessment of the child's functional use of vision, linking with the Qualified Teacher of Visually Impaired Children (QTVI).

Practitioners can look out for signs of impaired vision in children by noticing the child who:

- displays undue sensitivity to light;
- closes or covers one eye when attempting visual tasks;
- often trips or bumps into things;
- holds books unusually close to their face;
- tilts their head to an unusual angle when trying to focus.

Since 80 per cent of communication is non-verbal, the young child with impaired vision is at a huge disadvantage when developing interpersonal skills. Unable to discern the facial expressions of others, they cannot 'read' reactions to things they say and find verbal turn-taking very difficult. These children cannot learn by watching, only by doing.

Restricted vision also leads to restricted mobility. In a typically developing child, vision is a huge motivator: seeing the desired toy just out of reach prompts the child to stretch for it or crawl towards it, but the visually impaired child doesn't know the toy exists.

The development of play – leading to concepts such as conservation, classification and one-to-one correspondence – is also negatively affected by visual impairment. When a child cannot observe others at play, it limits their skills.

Finally, independence and self-help skills are significantly delayed in a child with sight problems.

How Do Sensory Services help and Support Teaching Practitioners?

Close links with parents and specialist professionals are vital. Additionally, practitioners can help the young child with a visual impairment by:

- making wall displays colourful, clear and uncluttered;
- offering toys with good colour contrast and books with simple illustrations;
- offering activities that draw upon all the senses;
- saying the child's name before giving instructions;
- giving individual demonstrations of tasks;
- warning of changes in routine;
- giving the child longer to explore new toys and activities;
- considering providing a secure, familiar place to play;
- if a toy rolls out of reach, leading the child towards it to encourage independent exploration;
- describing the things, you or others do, to the child;
- helping the child connect with others and to link present with past experiences;
- encouraging other children to approach the child;
- taking care not to overprotect the child, becoming a barrier between them and others.

c) **Dual sensory loss** *(sometimes erroneously referred to as deafblindness)*

Additionally, when a C&YP has difficulty seeing and hearing, they can be referred to as having a dual sensory loss (incorrectly referred to as deafblind).

Usually, such C&YP will have difficulty with communication, mobilising and accessing information.

The majority of people in the UK with dual sensory loss are older adults, the incidence in C&YP is very low much lower than HI and VI C&YP. There are genetic causes such as Usher Syndrome and also dual sensory impairment can be caused by injury or infection.

Dual sensory loss can often be misdiagnosed especially when it is part of a complex, comorbid condition.

II. Prevailing Strategic Imperatives *(key drivers in appraising the value of consulting further on a regional SI service, or not):*

I have not tried to respond to **all** of the bullet points, below, but publish these as an aide memoir for LA Officers when considering the merits of - change or no change? A robust Value for Money Review would, however, look to assess and evaluate each of these descriptors.

- ✎ Are the current service delivery models still fit for purpose and do they represent 'value for money?'
- ✎ What alternative delivery models could be considered which would ensure, as a minimum, that the five LAs continue to meet their statutory responsibilities?
- ✎ What are the benefits and risks to consulting further on a joint arrangement?
- ✎ How would you ensure that a regional SI service identifies ALN/SI children's needs, appropriately?
- ✎ Safeguard C&YP's ALN so they can continue to be met now, and in the foreseeable future?
- ✎ Specialist interventions can be carried out efficiently, effectively and by appropriately qualified staff?
- ✎ Would a regional SI service have the capacity to support, explicitly, C&YP's preparation for life, as an adult? *(this will include living independently, entering paid employment and/or accessing higher education thus participate as valued and valuable members in 'their communities'?)*
- ✎ How a local (and regional?) SI services would ensure it has sufficient resources, remains sustainable and continues to represent value for money?
- ✎ Can local (and regional?) SI services continue to build inclusive capacity in educational settings and prepare families to support their children as young adults and beyond, as the trends in the SI population vacillate?

- ✎ Could a regional service (or a version of it) work harmoniously and effectively, in each locality areas, responding to ALNs while according to the local context?
- ✎ What quality improvement lessons can be learnt from best practice, elsewhere?

III. Sensory Impairment Workforces – Current Legislative Context

The Requirement Hold a Mandatory Qualification (MQ) in Hearing/Visual and/or Multi-sensory Impairment

I have searched, exhaustively, the legislative requirements for teachers to hold the Mandatory Qualification (MQ too teach/support C&YP with a hearing, visual or multi-sensory impairment (HI/VI & MSI).

The Department for Education (England) which has legal oversight for ensuring all teachers hold a [MQ](#) and who are required to ensure training providers meet the required standards for delivering the training, specify:

*‘To teach a class of pupils with hearing impairment (HI), vision impairment (VI), or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI), a teacher **must** hold a mandatory qualification. This qualification is required in addition to qualified teacher status’.*

The requirement for peripatetic or advisory teachers to hold this qualification is not the same i.e. it’s not a mandatory prerequisite, as it is for those who teach a class of wholly or mainly HI/VI/MSI, C&YP.

Consequently, theoretically, Welsh LAs *could* employ HI/VI/MSI teachers to support discrete C&YP i.e. not taught in a class of wholly or mainly HI/VI and/or MSI C&YP, in inclusive mainstream or special school settings and who don’t hold an MQ.

However, to complete a statutory assessment of a child who has a hearing/visual and/or multi-sensory impairment, LA’s **must** ensure this part of the assessment is carried out by a teacher holding the relevant MQ.

Theoretically, LAs could ‘buy-in’ a teacher holding the appropriate MQ to undertake these assessments or employ one teacher from each MQ area, who specifically completed these legal appraisals for the LA.

Notwithstanding this, I have also sought advice from [NatSIP](#) on this specific matter. They confirm my interpretation of the law and affirm:

*... agree with your interpretation of the law, as it stands. As far as we understand the MQ does apply to Wales. Current legislation and Code of Practice (England) do say that the MQ is a ‘**must**’ for a class and is a ‘**should**’ for visiting teachers. Mandatory ‘no’, but recommended ‘yes’!*

The MQ is required for statutory contributions to assessments, EHCPs, etc. (or the current equivalent in Wales, Statements) NatSIP 2020

Almost all C&YP on ALN support are educated in mainstream schools (see **Table 1**) rather than specialist settings (or SRC). Schools in Wales have a high level of autonomy in how they support children with ALN, guided by the *current* ALN Code of Practice⁹.

Schools can choose to seek the support of particular professionals/specialist support and/or programmes or to provide their staff with training in related areas. The exception would be where a child's statement of ALN specifies the *type and level* of specialist teacher/Sl support intervention. In the case of C&YP with Sensory Impairments¹⁰, their *frequency* and *distribution* of incidence are extremely idiosyncratic i.e. exceptionally low and irregular in occurrence, by comparison with other areas of ALN.

IV. Individual Provision Maps for Each LA

This section itemises the SI Service provision, workforce and C&YP population for each of the partner LAs, in the Central Wales consortium. A summary of these individual provision maps can be found in **Section 4. Table 3** of the position paper.

Bridgend LA

Provision Map Bridgend LA – Detailing Overall C&YP Numbers and SI Staffing March 2020				
Number of children & young people (C&YP) supported by the LA's SI service (<i>maintained EY/LA school settings</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	266	78	7	0
Number of SI C&YP supported in specialist LA resource bases	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	7	0	0	0
Number of SI C&YP supported in LA special school settings	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	23	26	8	0
Have the numbers of C&YP on your LA's caseloads increased or decreased, in the last year?	● increased	● increased	□ increased	□ increased
	□ decreased	□ decreased	□ decreased	□ decreased
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	3	1.8	0	0
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	5	5	0	0
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	0

Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	3	2	0	0
Areas of SI provision provided, via an SLA, to another <i>local</i> LA	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	0	0	0
Number of specialist primary resource bases ¹¹	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1 *	0	0	0
Number of specialist secondary resource bases ¹²	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1 *	0	0	0
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	0
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify e.g. Physical Impaired Staff
	2	0	0	0
Number of C&YP in specialist SI/ALN placements outside the LA's maintained provision e.g. independent or NMSS schools or colleges	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	0	0	0
Number of qualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	1	0	0
Number of unqualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	0
<i>Please leave this section empty</i>				

Cardiff LA

⁹ I understand a new ALN Code of Practice will be published in early 2021

¹⁰ A sensory impairment is when one of the senses – sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste or spatial awareness – is not working as it should. These children have problems with hearing, vision and/or both referred to as a dual sensory impairment.

¹¹ Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

¹² Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

Provision Map Cardiff LA - Detailing Overall C&YP Numbers and SI Staffing March 2020				
Number of children & young people (C&YP) supported by the LA's SI service (<i>maintained EY/LA school settings</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	220 (not incl HIRB or OLA) 12 home 14 nursery	124 14 home 7 nursery	3 0 home 1 nursery	
Number of SI C&YP supported in specialist LA resource bases	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	36 HI RB 4 other SRB	10 (NB there's no VI base in Cardiff- these are children in learning bases supported by VI service)	2	
Number of SI C&YP supported in LA special school settings	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	25	39	8	
Have the numbers of C&YP on your LA's caseloads increased or decreased, in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased X <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	5.8	6.8	1	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	2	1	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (<i>MQ</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	5.8	8	1	Trainee sp teacher VI x2 trainee sp teacher MSI x1
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	2	1	

to HI/VI/MSI				
Areas of SI provision provided, via an SLA, to another <i>local</i> LA	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	VOG	VOG	
Number of specialist primary resource bases ¹³	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	
Number of specialist secondary resource bases ¹⁴	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (<i>MQ</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	6 HIRB (NB-staff employed by the schools)			
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify e.g. Physical Impaired Staff
	12 HIRB (NB-staff employed by the schools)			
Number of C&YP in specialist SI/ALN placements outside the LA's maintained provision e.g. independent or NMSS schools or colleges	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	4			
Number of qualified staff (<i>MQ</i>) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	4 (incl HIRB)	0	0	
Number of unqualified staff (<i>MQ</i>) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify

¹³ Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

¹⁴ Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

	5 (incl HIRB)	3		1 VI teacher undertaking MSI training
<i>Please leave this section empty</i>				

Merthyr Tydfil LA

Provision Map Merthyr Tydfil LA - Detailing Overall C&YP Numbers and SI Staffing March 2020				
Number of children & young people (C&YP) supported by the LA's SI service (<i>maintained EY/LA school settings</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	42	0	0	
Number of SI C&YP supported in specialist LA resource bases	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	0	0	
Number of SI C&YP supported in LA special school settings	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	4	9	1	
Have the numbers of C&YP on your LA's caseloads increased or decreased, in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/> increased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased
	x <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	X <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> decreased
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	4.5 ¹⁵	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (<i>MQ</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	4.5		

related to HI/VI/MSI				
Areas of SI provision provided, via an SLA, to another <i>local</i> LA	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	N/A	Yes		
Number of specialist primary resource bases ¹⁶	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	0	0	0
Number of specialist secondary resource bases ¹⁷	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1	0	0	0
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (<i>MQ</i>)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	0	0	0
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify e.g. Physical Impaired Staff
	0	0	0	0
Number of C&YP in specialist SI/ALN placements outside the LA's maintained provision e.g. independent or NMSS schools or colleges	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	0	0	0
Number of qualified staff (<i>MQ</i>) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1 ¹⁸	1 ¹⁹	0	0

¹⁵ 4.5 LSAs are supporting statemented pupils and budget is seconded to schools

¹⁶ Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

¹⁷ Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

¹⁸ 1 x TOD

¹⁹ 1 x Grade 2 Braille LSA

Number of unqualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	3 ²⁰	0	0
<i>Please leave this section empty</i>				

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT)

Provision Map RCT - Detailing Overall C&YP Numbers and SI Staffing March 2020

Number of children & young people (C&YP) supported by the LA's SI service (maintained EY/LA school settings)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	184	111 (23)	(2)	
Number of SI C&YP supported in specialist LA resource bases	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	9	0	0	
Number of SI C&YP supported in LA special school settings	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	13	16	2	
Have the numbers of C&YP on your LA's caseloads increased or decreased, in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	3.2	2.5	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1.2	8	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	3.2	2.5	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	2	8		
Areas of SI provision provided, via an SLA,	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify

²⁰ 3 x Braille LSAs (training for Scottish sensory qualification)

to another <i>local</i> LA		QTVI Mobility		
Number of specialist primary resource bases ²¹	Hearing Impaired 1	Visually Impaired 0	Multi-sensory Impaired 0	Other - please specify
Number of specialist secondary resource bases ²²	Hearing Impaired 0	Visually Impaired 0	Multi-sensory Impaired 0	Other - please specify
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (<i>MQ</i>)	Hearing Impaired 1	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired 2	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify e.g. Physical Impaired Staff
Number of C&YP in specialist SI/ALN placements outside the LA's maintained provision e.g. independent or NMSS schools or colleges	Hearing Impaired 3	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
Number of qualified staff (<i>MQ</i>) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
Number of unqualified staff (<i>MQ</i>) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired 1	Visually Impaired 1	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
<i>Please leave this section empty</i>				

Vale of Glamorgan

Provision Map Vale of Glamorgan - Detailing Overall C&YP Numbers and SI Staffing March 2020

Number of children & young people (C&YP) supported by the LA's SI service (<i>maintained EY/LA school settings</i>)	Hearing Impaired *95 Including	Visually Impaired 38	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
---	--------------------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------	------------------------

²¹ Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

	St Cyres mainstream and Cogan mainstream pupils			
Number of SI C&YP supported in specialist LA resource bases	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	14	3		
Number of SI C&YP supported in LA special school settings	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	13	22	1	
Have the numbers of C&YP on your LA's caseloads increased or decreased, in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/> X increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> X increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> increased <input type="checkbox"/> decreased
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	3 inc Specialist LA resource bases	1.3	0.2	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff employed centrally	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	7 working term time only	5.2		
Number of <i>fte</i> SI teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	3	7	2	1 teacher in VI and one in MSI are taking the VI course
Number of <i>fte</i> SI support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	7 BSL varying levels all at least have level 1 BSL	5	1	
Areas of SI provision provided, via an SLA, to another <i>local</i> LA	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	*3 days annually	One day per week Hab specialist to Cardiff LA	0	

²² Please apply an asterisk to this section, if this aspect of the LA's service is centrally funded i.e. the funding for this provision is NOT delegated directly to schools

Number of specialist primary resource bases ²³	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1*	0	0	
Number of specialist secondary resource bases ²⁴	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	1*	0	0	
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base teachers holding or undertaking a mandatory qualification (MQ)	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	2			
Number of <i>fte</i> SI resource base support staff holding or undertaking a specialist qualification related to HI/VI/MSI	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify e.g. Physical Impaired Staff
	0			
Number of C&YP in specialist SI/ALN placements outside the LA's maintained provision e.g. independent or NMSS schools or colleges	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	2	4		
Number of qualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0	1 Hab specialist	0	
Number of unqualified staff (MQ) recruited in the last five years?	Hearing Impaired	Visually Impaired	Multi-sensory Impaired	Other - please specify
	0			
<i>Please leave this section empty</i>				

* Included in this figure is one-off information /advice that has been sent to schools / ALNCOs for example regarding pupils diagnosed with APD. Pupils have not been seen by ST.

* 1 pupil is seen in Heronsbridge School 6 visits annually plus report writing

1 a pupil with a statement is seen in Howells Independent School 3 visits a year including the annual review.

V. Comparative SI C&YP Data (*national and/or local*)

Included with this paper is selected comparative data which provides some trend indicators that highlight indicative changes, over the last 10 years. This data is taken from an annual,

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national survey across Wales undertaken by CRIDE (Consortium for Research in Deaf Education) since 2011 and which can be found on the [BATOD website](#).

I have also looked at the relative numbers of existing SI Service provisions across a few /ocal/ LA. If the respective populations of each of the CSC LAs were combined it would create a total population of **1,048,991**. For comparison purposes, populations of;

South Central Wales Region	1,048,991²⁵
South East Consortium Regional SI Service	583,483
Gloucestershire LA	916,202
Bristol LA (which includes BANES and South Glos.)	913,503
Oxfordshire LA	700,000

Each of these Local Authorities operate and sustain integrated and discrete SI Service. Bristol has a consortium arrangement, but delivers its SI services to each authority, independently, rather than as one regional service.

What is more problematic to compare is the geography of each of these LAs. I suspect the infra-structures i.e. road networks in these LAs, maybe more travelable than a notional CSC region? I may, of course, be wrong with this assumption?

Data Population of Deaf Children - Wales

These figures are based on an all Wales survey return, from the 22 SI Services which operate in each LA. CRIDE cannot be expected to substantiate the veracity of the data they collect from each LA i.e. the survey assumes accurate and comparative data has been provided. These data sets reflect the discrete analysis of the respective LA SI services.

Table 1 All Wales data sets:

Year	No of Deaf C&YP	+ or -
2019	2,486 (5%)	decrease
2018	2,625 (0.9%)	decrease
2017	2,642 (11%)	increase
2016	2,374 (28%)	decrease
2015	3,288 (14%)	increase
2014	2,880 (0.8%)	decrease
2013	2,904 (6%)	increase
2012	2,743 (0.4%)	decrease
2011	2,755	Baseline

Key Findings for Wales CRIDE 2019

- SI Services reported that there are at least **2,486 deaf** children²⁶ in Wales; a reported **decrease of 5%** over the past year. Compare this to the CSC region; 4 out of the 5 LAs confirm an increase in deaf children numbers, in the last year.
- **80%** of school-aged deaf children attend mainstream schools (where there is no specialist provision).
- **9%** attend mainstream schools with resource provisions,
- **10%** attend special schools not specifically for deaf children.
- **1%** were home educated.
- **28%** of deaf children are recorded as having an additional special educational need.
- **6%** of deaf children use an additional spoken language other than English in the home.

Furthermore, of the C&YP (up to 19) with a severe or profound hearing loss;

- 66% communicate using spoken English only in school or other education settings as their main language,*
- 24% mainly use spoken English together with signed support.*
- 3% mainly use spoken Welsh,*
- 1% mainly use spoken Welsh together with signed support.*
- 6% mainly use British Sign Language.*

- The most common post-school destination for deaf young people is further education, with **54%** taking this option across Wales.
- There are at least **66 fte** Teacher of the Deaf posts with no LA having a vacancy (at the time of the survey); of these **66** staff working as Teachers of the Deaf, **86%** held the mandatory qualification i.e. **14%** staff **did not** hold an MQ
- The number of qualified Teachers of the Deaf in employment working in a peripatetic or advisory teacher role, in a resource provision and/or in a special school or college not specifically for deaf children, has increased slightly by **1%** over the past year.
- Notwithstanding this, over the long-term, it has **fallen** by **21% (one fifth)** since the CRIDE survey started in 2011.
- Peripatetic or advisory Teachers of the Deaf have an average theoretical caseload of **59 deaf children**. This has **decreased** from **73 in 2017** and from **71 in 2015**.
- **45%** of peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf are over the **age of 50** and therefore are likely to retire in the next **10 to 15 years**.

²⁶ Please note that for the purpose of this section of the survey we use the term 'children' to include children and young people up to the age of 19 years, 11 months (unless specified in the question).

- There are at least **100.55 fte** other specialist support staff working with deaf children in Wales, an increase from **87.7** reported in **2017**.
- Fewer MQ Teachers but more trained support staff – is this an artefact of the ageing MQ population or a change in how C&YP with SI are supported?
- There are **24** resource provisions across all 15 services; this represents a decrease from **2018**. A positive indicator of successful inclusion.
- **27%** of services report that they collect data on Key Stage 4 outcomes for all deaf children. The same proportion does the same, but only for deaf children on their caseload.

The Population of Visually Impaired Children – (English data) 2019

Turning to the data for C&YP with visual impairments; lamentably, I can only access/find detailed statistics specific for visually impaired C&YP in England.

The only data I can trace on visual impairments for C&YP in Wales includes no discrete stats on C&YP.

Consequently, I am assuming that the corresponding data for C&YP living/educated in Wales, follows the equivalent trends to those in England. This data is taken from the Welsh Schools census (StatsWales).

England - total population - **57,000,000m** ~ school population **8,890,357 (15.5%)**

Wales - total population - **3,316,000** ~ school population **435,280 (13.1%)**

Key findings

- **12,687** pupils with an EHCP or on 'SEN support' were recorded as having VI as their primary SEN. This is **397 more pupils** with VI as their primary SEN than were recorded in 2018.
- Pupils with VI as their primary SEN represented **0.16%** of the total pupil population in 2019.
- This is **lower than the 0.2%** prevalence estimate of VI based upon the WHO classification of childhood VI and blindness.
- The majority of pupils with VI as their primary SEN (**73.4%**) were on 'SEN support'; only **26.6%** had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or statement.
- **55.3%** of pupils with VI as their primary SEN were boys. In comparison, within the whole population of pupils with SEN, **66.5% were boys**.
- **74.5%** of pupils with VI as their primary SEN were White, and **69.5%** were classified as White British, while **13.9%** were Asian.

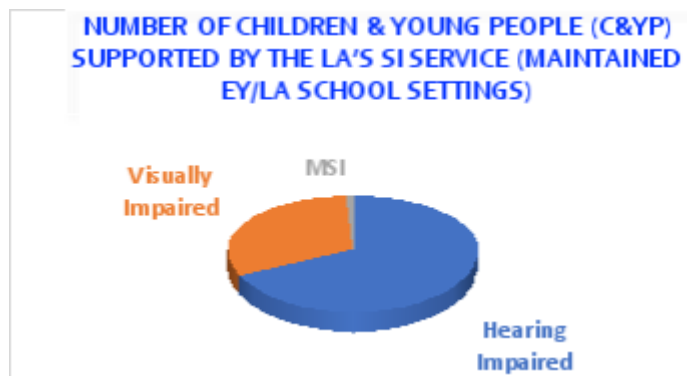
- **17.5%** of pupils with VI as their primary SEN spoke a language other than English as their first language. **16.3% of all pupils** with SEN spoke a language other than English as their first language.
- One in two (**49%**) pupils with VI as their primary SEN attended primary schools in 2019; **44.3%** were in secondary education and **6.7%** went to special schools.

This compares with **55.5%** of all pupils with SEN who were in primary schools, **34.2%** in secondary education and **10.3%** in special schools in 2019

- **384** special schools in England had approved provision for pupils with VI in 2019. Only **844** pupils with VI as their primary SEN were recorded as attending special schools in 2019.
- **24%** of pupils with VI as their primary SEN were entitled to and claiming free school meals (FSM) in 2019. This compares with **28.3%** of all pupils with SEN and **15.4%** of all pupils who were entitled to and claiming FSM.

In summary in, January 2019, the number of pupils recorded with VI as their primary SEN (England) was **12,687**. This is **798** more than were recorded in 2017 and **397** more than in 2018. The 3-years trend infers that the number of pupils with a VI (England) is increasing, year in year.

Pie Chart of Region Sensory Impairment Population



Key headlines:

- ✎ Four out of the five LAs report increases in HI/VI populations, over the last five years.
- ✎ A high number of teachers holding MQ (or undergoing mandatory training) - 29.6 FTE.
- ✎ High numbers of qualified support staff (or undergoing training) to compliment teachers - 36.9.
- ✎ 17% of HI/VI/MSI C&YP attend special school placements.
- ✎ 7% of HI/VI/MSI C&YP attend resources bases (not necessarily SI specific).
- ✎ 9 C&YP attend out of authority placements – the **average** cost for a residential placement £120,000k ([Baker-Tilley Report 2012](#)) suggesting total (average) cost across the region = £1,080,000m.
- ✎ All the LAs should be commended for their unambiguous commitment to employing /recruiting and/or training teachers and support staff, in SI.

VI. Articles/websites and references used to support the publication of this document.

1. WLGA Publications - Collaboration and Regionalisation
<http://www.wlga.wales/sharedfiles/PublicationLibrary.aspx?topic=520>
2. Support for children and young people with vision impairment in educational settings - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-12/191209-support-for-children-and-young-people-with-vision-impairment-in-educational-settings.pdf>
3. DfE/View Data (England) - <https://viewweb.org.uk/dfe-official-data-children-young-people-vision-impairment/>
4. BATOD data - <https://viewweb.org.uk/dfe-official-data-children-young-people-vision-impairment/>



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT UPDATE 2021

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

Author(s): Andrea Richards, Temporary Service Director for 21st Century Schools and Transformation, tel: 01443 744001
Denise Humphries, Senior 21st Century Schools Project Manager (Childcare and Special Projects), tel: 01443 744026

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017-22 (CSA) report and subsequent annual action plan updates.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 Agree for the Director of Education and Inclusion Services to discuss with Welsh Government the future role of RCTCBC in delivery of the Childcare Offer for Wales.
- 2.3 Agree to receive a further report and updated action plan in June 2021.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable officers to continue to develop and support childcare provision in RCT, as identified in the 2017-22 CSA report and subsequent annual action plans.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Section 22 of the Childcare Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) places a duty on the Council to secure '*as far as is reasonably practicable*' sufficient childcare to meet the

requirements of parents in its area who require childcare to enable them to take up, or remain in, work, or to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

- 4.2 Section 26 of the 2006 Act requires the Council to undertake a CSA every five years, with annual reviews of the assessment and accompanying action plan. This assessment forms an important stage in local planning, allowing the Council to work effectively with local partners, including the private and voluntary sectors, to fill gaps in the market and to develop a realistic and robust picture of parents' current and future needs for childcare.
- 4.3 The last full CSA report was published in 2017. Officers are now starting to plan for the next full report, due in Spring 2022. The last action plan update was submitted to Welsh Government (WG) in August 2020. WG delayed submission due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the ongoing pressures on childcare teams, WG has informed the Council that this year's action plan update report is not due to be submitted until 1st June 2021.

5. UPDATE

- 5.1 Since the 2020 update report, the universal childcare development team has grown from 1.5 FTE posts, to 3 FTE posts and the additional posts are grant funded. This team transferred to Education & Inclusion Services from Children's Services in November 2018 and has joined officers who administer the WG Childcare Offer for Wales scheme.
- 5.2 Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the priority for the Council was to evaluate the needs of parents and children and those of the childcare sector in RCT. Great strides had been taken to finalise the 2020/21 delivery plan to address these priorities, before all plans were suspended due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic.

On 20th March 2020, Welsh Government instructed all childcare settings in Wales to close for all children other than those of critical workers or who were deemed vulnerable. WG introduced funding to support these children via the Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS). This scheme provided funded childcare for children aged 0-4 years in those settings that had remained open. Approximately 21% of our CIW registered settings initially remained open to provide this critical service. More reopened as demand increased and by the end of the scheme in August 2020, 38% of our CIW registered settings were open and providing emergency care via C-CAS.

- 5.3 In order to manage the scheme officers worked closely with colleagues in Children's Services and the web team to create a process to administer C-CAS within a very short period. An online application form was created for critical workers to apply for the scheme. A separate online form was created for professionals and families to refer vulnerable children for placements. All staff in the childcare team were redeployed to administer C-CAS. They were supported

by officers from Resilient Families Service and 21st Century Schools. Applications for the Childcare Offer were suspended, although officers still had to process provider claims during this period.

- 5.4 For the duration of C-CAS, from April to the end of August 2020, a total of 747 children received funded childcare via the scheme, 95 of which were deemed vulnerable. 99 childcare settings in total participated in the scheme, delivering 223,115 hours of funded childcare. This equated to over £1.15 million of funded care in this 5-month period.
- 5.5 After the closure of the scheme, an evaluation of C-CAS in RCT was undertaken to gauge the feedback from parents and providers.

Parent evaluation

289 parents responded to the parent evaluation. Findings included:

- 98% found the online application process simple to use;
- 99% were happy with the service they received from officers;
- 100% were happy with the care the childcare provider gave to their child/ren;
- 99% confirmed it enabled them to continue performing their critical role in response to the pandemic;
- 79% were able to increase their work hours if required.

Comments received included:

“A really valuable option for us as both key workers and no grandparent support. Allowed us to continue working.”

“The whole RCT team that helped me during the emergency childcare were brilliant, explained everything to me and were really supportive, the nursery setting my daughter attended also told me how brilliant and easy to deal with they were. Many thanks for your help all.”

Provider evaluation

46 providers responded to the provider survey:

- 50% found it ‘Very Easy’ and 44% found it ‘Easy’ to find information about the scheme and sign up to deliver C-CAS;
- 100% of respondents found the expectations, administration and claim procedures easy to understand and follow;
- 91% confirmed that delivering C-CAS helped them financially during this period;
- 100% were happy with the service they received from RCT.

Comments received included:

“I really appreciate RCTChildcare team effort to communicate with us and support they given us was very good. I really enjoyed working alongside the team CCAS.”

“It was very helpful for my business during the pandemic, because I did not have much money coming in I was able to carry on working, the parents were very grateful for the financial help and knowing they could place their children with someone they already knew.”

- 5.6 Throughout this time, officers also continued to support the childcare sector via regular updates, emails, and phone calls. In June 2020, WG issued guidance for the sector – *“Protective measures in childcare settings: Keep Childcare Safe”*. Officers adapted this document to provide settings with RCT relevant information and additional resources. Version 1 of this local document was distributed in June 2020 and has been regularly updated since, as the situation and guidance has evolved. During this time, the Council also provided settings with resources packs containing items of PPE and cleaning materials. To date, we have undertaken three rounds of this resource support, issuing 185 packs to the sector in RCT.
- 5.7 With the relaxation of lockdown measures and the return to school in September 2020, the childcare team were able to refocus on the CSA action plan priorities and the reinstatement of the Childcare Offer.

The Childcare Offer provides working parents of 3 and 4 year olds with 30 hours per week of combined Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) education and additional funded childcare for 48 weeks per year. We are currently a Delivery Authority, administering the Childcare Offer on behalf of Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils. This arrangement works well, with close collaboration between RCT officers and colleagues in these authorities. Currently there are 1809 children eligible and receiving the Offer across the three LA's, with 1065 of these children residing in RCT.

WG are developing a new, national online portal that will take over from the individual systems currently being used by the Delivery Authorities. It is anticipated that this will be launched in 2022. As part of this, WG will look to change the delivery model and replace the current Delivery Authorities with Assessment Authorities. Further information about the exact nature of this is to be finalised, but it is anticipated that WG will seek expressions of interest from LA's to become an Assessment Authority. WG have already approached the Council and subject to Members approval, the Director of Education and Inclusion Services and officers from RCTCBC will meet with the WG Deputy Director Childcare, Play and Early Years Division to discuss this further.

- 5.8 Since September, the childcare development team have implemented the priorities that were planned for 2020/21. The rolling programme of statutory training courses was suspended in March and restarted in September, with COVID safety measures and most courses transferred to online delivery, with only the required practical elements conducted face to face. By the end of March 2021, the following courses were delivered:

- 8 x online Level 3 Safeguarding courses with a total of 80 participants;

- 9 x Level 3 Paediatric First Aid courses, with a total of 36 participants. Current courses are now a mixture of online and face to face practical elements;
- Funded 60 participants to attend online Level 2 Food Hygiene courses;
- 2 x Level 3 Transition to Play work courses, with a total of 10 participants;
- 1 x Childminder pre-registration course, with a total of 14 participants.

A programme of CPD training has also been developed which includes:

- Manual Handling;
- Managing Challenging Behaviour;
- Leadership & Management;
- The Four Purposes and Beyond;
- Developing Quality Outdoor Provision;
- Supporting Staff Well-Being and Emotional Resilience;
- The Curiosity Approach Pocket Size training.

An online survey to providers was disseminated in October 2020. This asked what training needs they would find require and how the Council childcare team can support them. Additional courses will be added to the training programme for 2021/22 based on feedback of the survey.

- 5.9 All planned face to face engagement activity with the sector was cancelled due to the pandemic and replaced by online engagement. A closed Facebook page has been established. This allows the team to keep providers in RCT up to date with COVID guidance, training, and other news. This has been well received by the sector and we currently have 107 members. A first online engagement event was held in February 2021. This offered participants an opportunity to hear up to date news from the childcare team. 23 providers logged onto the event and feedback has been positive. A programme of general online engagement and targeted sessions has been planned for 2021/22.

A joint conference was held in September 2019 with the Council's Childcare and Play Services teams working collaboratively. This was well received by childcare and play practitioners with 45 attendees on the day. Feedback was positive and a second conference was planned for October 2020. This was cancelled due to the ongoing pandemic. The date for the conference has been provisionally rearranged to 9th October 2021 and Officers are currently looking at contingency plans to deliver this conference virtually if we cannot meet providers face to face at that time.

- 5.10 A partnership group has been reinstated to improve collaborative working between Council departments and external organisations. The Early Years, Childcare and Play Development Partnership (EYCPDP) met virtually for the first time in January 2021. The group will meet each term. The aim of the group is to strengthen a multi-agency, integrated approach to support and improve early years, childcare and play work services in RCT. This will include information sharing, joint planning, and involvement in the development of the next full CSA and PSA (Play Sufficiency Assessment) reports. Both are due in 2022.

- 5.11 Childcare capital projects funded by WG capital funding are nearing completion. Since 2018, the Council has been successful in securing funding for ten childcare related projects, totalling £6 million. These projects are to develop, or expand, childcare facilities on school site. This will support an increase in the availability of Welsh medium childcare provision, thereby creating a seamless transition for children to enter Welsh medium education. It will also support the implementation of the WG Childcare Offer, by allowing parents to access the FPN education and additional funded childcare elements in one location. Some projects have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of the ten projects funded:

- YGG Evan James and Tonyrefail Community School are completed;
- New buildings for childcare settings at Ysgol Llanhari and next to YGG Ynyswen are occupied by the providers, with just minor external works to be completed;
- The other projects are all in development and due for completion by the end of 2022 (Treorchy Primary School, Gwauncelyn Primary School, YGG Aberdar, Cwmlai Primary, Dolau Primary School, YGG Abercynon).

A new sessional childcare service will open at Dolau Primary School in September 2021 when building works are completed. This provision will increase access for parents to funded childcare via the Childcare Offer and increase Welsh language provision in the South of the County Borough. The new provisions that will be created at YGG Aberdar and YGG Abercynon shortly also provide additional capacity where identified need of growth has been recognised.

- 5.12 In addition to the above funding was also secured from WG to offer a small capital grants scheme to childcare providers who are delivering the Childcare Offer. This grant scheme is to enable them to increase the number of Childcare Offer places they offer and/or to improve the quality of their facilities. In the first round of applications, a total of £76,000 in grant funding was awarded. Grants included items such as replacement boilers, new flooring, improving outdoor areas and replacing broken or dangerous equipment. A few projects were withdrawn and came under budget so the final figure spent in round 1 was £72,752.

The second round of funding was delayed due to COVID and opened for applications in September 2020. WG allocated the Council an additional £122,000 specifically to support settings implement COVID safety measures. Many of the successful applications were to develop outdoor facilities to enable providers to increase their use of the outdoors, in line with current COVID safety advice. These included requests for awnings, canopies, safety play surfaces, garden works, outdoor play equipment and outdoor storage. In addition, a number of providers were awarded funding to undertake internal refurbishment to enable them to develop additional childcare space/rooms, to refurbish and extend toilet facilities, and to replace carpets with hygienic washable flooring, enabling them to comply with strict cleaning guidelines. A total of 39 applications were received, totalling

£222,186. Of these, 31 were wholly, or partly, approved and a total of £165,965 in grant funding was awarded.

- 5.13 Due to the difficulties that the pandemic has caused the childcare sector, WG has been keen to support their sustainability. In the Autumn of 2020, WG made available funding via the Childcare Provider Grant. The scheme was designed to cover losses experienced at the beginning of the pandemic. However, the grant conditions were prescriptive, and some providers were not able to submit the evidence required. The Council was awarded £197,015.00 but the Council were only able to approve 7 applications totalling £26,997.00 in line with the grant conditions.

In response to feedback from LA's and the sector, WG made available further funding in November 2020 via the Children and Communities Grant. LA's were given more freedom to design their own grant schemes to enable this funding to support sustainability of the sector. RCT was initially allocated an additional £165,312.00. This was followed by a further £215,000 in January 2021. A new grant scheme was developed with three distinct sections:

- Support for settings that have full or partial closures due to positive COVID-19 cases;
- Increased costs as a direct result of COVID-19, such as increased heating and cleaning costs. This section also supports settings that have been unable to open or run at full capacity due to issues with their venues (i.e. running from a community building and not having permission from the building committee to reopen);
- Severe financial hardship due to reasons not covered in the first two sections and where no other public funding is available.

This grant scheme has been open for applications since December 2020 and to date, we have received 46 applications. 22 have been successful and a total of £76,593.48 has been awarded. Seven have been unsuccessful and 17 are awaiting further information.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed at this time as the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultation implications aligned to this report.
- 7.2 The next statutory consultation with parents, childcare providers and other stakeholders will start in Autumn 2021 in preparation for the next full CSA report which is due to be published in 2022.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 All childcare development in RCT is supported by Welsh Government grant funding. Previously known as the 'Out of School Childcare Grant', this funding has now been amalgamated with other grants and forms part of the 'Children and Communities Grant'.
- 8.2 This funding supports officers to implement the priorities identified in the CSA action plan updates and respond to changing priorities facing the childcare sector in RCT.
- 8.3 Funding has been supplemented during 2020/21 by additional WG funding to support sustainability of the childcare sector due to the challenges created by the pandemic as highlighted in the report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The Council has duties under section 22(1) of the Childcare Act 2006 to "secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare (whether or not by it) is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to enable them (a) to take up, or remain in work; or (b) to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.
- 9.2 Section 26 of the Childcare Act 2006 requires the Council to prepare assessments of the sufficiency of childcare provision and to keep this under review.

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

- 10.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2020–2024 highlights the Council's commitment to delivering three main priorities, namely:
- Ensuring People: *are independent, healthy and successful;*
 - Creating Places: *where people are proud to live, work and play;*
 - Enabling Prosperity: *creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.*
- 10.2 This report supports the childcare sector in RCT to remain prosperous and fulfil its potential. It also supports children and their families to be independent, healthy, and successful by ensuring children can access quality childcare provision and allows their parents to enter employment, training, or volunteer opportunities.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the childcare sector across Wales has been significant. The Council is incredibly proud of all childcare providers in RCT who have continued to deliver safe, quality care for children and their families throughout the last year in a professional and compassionate manner.

- 11.2 The pandemic has required the Council childcare team to find new ways of engaging and supporting the sector. These have been well received and have ensured that the Council is well placed to continue this support in the future, regardless of any ongoing or future pressures.
- 11.3 Despite the challenges of the last 12 months, the Council continues to be well placed with its existing childcare provision to meet the current needs of most working parents. Development work continues to be undertaken in response to parental demand and in areas where there is an identified need.
- 11.4 It is considered that implementation of the 2017 CSA report, and the subsequent annual action plans, will help to address the identified priorities, subject to available resources.

Other Information: -

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Children and Young People

Background Papers

Contact Officer

Denise Humphries, Senior 21st Century Schools Project Manager (Childcare & Special Projects) Tel: 07825 675667

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & LIFELONG
LEARNING (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)**

Item: CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT UPDATE 2021

Background Papers

The background paper included as an appendix to this report is: n/a

Officer to contact:

Denise Humphries, Senior 21st Century Schools Project Manager (Childcare & Special Projects). Tel: 07825 675667

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25th MARCH 2021

EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22

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

Authors:

Gaynor Davies, Director of Education & Inclusion Services - 01443 744001

Andrea Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools - 01443 744002

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides Members with details of the capital works for approval for 2021/22 as part of the Council's three-year Capital Programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the Education Capital Programme priority schemes for 2021/22 as outlined in Appendices 1-9 and to approve scheme commencement.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 An ongoing programme of work is required in school premises to deal with essential condition and health and safety issues across the school estate, to ensure school buildings are 'safe, watertight and warm'.
- 3.2 To continue to deliver the Council's long term school modernisation improvement programme supporting one of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities: 'Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper'.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will be aware that an amount of £7.170M has been allocated to the planned capital programme (minor works) for 2021/22, as agreed by Council on the 10th March 2021.
- 4.2 The continuation of the three-year rolling Capital Programme and sustaining the level of funding will continue to make significant enhancements to the quality of our school premises and has been a vital part of the Council school modernisation programme in order to prepare schools for the new Curriculum for Wales.

4.3 In framing options for the planned capital works programme, the following factors have been taken into account:

- The results of the Property Condition Surveys and further investigation works by Council surveyors and engineers.
- Delivering priorities set out in the Service Asset Management Plan in line with the Corporate Asset Management Plan.
- ESTYN Inspection Reports.
- Health and Safety considerations.
- Reducing energy and carbon.
- Refurbishing classrooms to provide flexible creative teaching spaces in preparation for the new Curriculum for Wales 2022.
- Investing in adaptations to schools to assist pupils with mobility and other accessibility needs to promote inclusion.

4.4 The programme has been divided into categories identifying the nature of the works considered to be a priority.

5. **CATEGORIES WITHIN THE PROGRAMME**

5.1 The table below sets out the proposed allocation of the planned capital programme funds now available to spend in 2021/22.

SPEND CATEGORY	£M
Kitchen Refurbishments/Remodelling	0.360
Window & Door Replacements	0.230
Essential Works	1.510
Electrical Rewiring	0.250
Fire Alarm Upgrades	0.108
Toilet Refurbishments	0.400
Equalities Act/Compliance Works	0.275
Education & Inclusion Access Condition Surveys	0.050
Boiler Replacement	0.250
Roof Renewal	0.745
Asbestos Remediation Works	2.600
Improvements to Schools	0.100
Capitalisation of IT Hardware/Software & Licences	0.292
TOTAL	7.170

5.2 Appendices 1–9 set out programmes of work for each category included above, with the exception of Education & Inclusion Access Condition Surveys, Asbestos Remediation Works, Improvements to Schools and Capitalisation of IT Hardware/Software & Licences.

5.3 The following narrative summarises the required investment and intended outcome of each Spend Category:

- **Kitchen Refurbishments/Remodelling**

A rolling programme of replacement kitchens is required to maintain the current

capital asset of school buildings and assist with much needed improvements, contributing towards the implementation of the Welsh Government 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) 2013'. Appendix 1 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Window & Door Replacements**

A rolling programme of replacement windows and doors is required to improve the energy efficiency, and in doing so reduce energy costs, and maintain the current capital asset of school buildings. Appendix 2 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Essential Works**

Members will be aware of the amount and value of outstanding historical maintenance works required to the buildings in the Education & Inclusion Services portfolio. Appendix 3 provides Members with a list of priority works, considered essential to maintain a 'safe, watertight and warm' environment for all users.

- **Electrical Rewiring**

Appendix 4 provides Members with details of Education establishments that require electrical rewiring.

- **Fire Alarm Upgrades**

Appendix 5 provides Members with details of schools that require fire alarm upgrades from manual to automatic detection systems in order to comply with current legislation.

- **Toilet Refurbishments**

Appendix 6 provides Members with details of schools that require refurbishment to comply with The Education (School) Premises Regulations 1999, the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and to support the recommendations in the report 'Lifting the Lid on the Nation's School Toilets' produced by the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

- **Equalities Act/Compliance Works**

An allocation of funding has been set aside to continue with works as and when deemed necessary to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Appendix 7 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **E&I Access Condition Surveys**

Phase 2 access condition surveys to all Primary schools to improve accessibility throughout the Education estate in order to comply with the Equalities Act 2010.

- **Boiler Replacement**

A significant number of systems are reaching the end of their useful life, therefore, it is considered prudent to fund a rolling programme of replacement to assist with the reduction in energy and carbon emissions. Appendix 8 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Roof Renewal**

Again it is considered prudent to allocate funding to ensure a rolling programme is maintained. Appendix 9 provides Members with a list of identified schemes.

- **Asbestos Remediation Works**

An allocation of funding has been earmarked to continue essential asbestos remediation works, following the results of recent asbestos surveys commissioned by the Council, and to progress a programme of replacement CLASP buildings affected by asbestos.

- **Improvements to Schools**

Under accounting regulations, certain expenditure that was previously charged directly to the revenue budget is now shown in the Capital Programme, whilst still being funded from revenue.

- **Capitalisation of IT Hardware/Software & Licences**

An allocation of funding has been committed for on-going hardware, software and licences to support essential data systems such as SIMS (Schools Information Management System).

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed schemes have given due consideration to equality issues particularly in relation to access to our school premises. Schools are a key part of our communities and as such it is important that they are well maintained, accessible and 'fit for purpose'.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultation requirements arising from this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The funding allocation to support spend categories contained within this report was agreed by Council on 10th March 2021 as part of the three-year Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24. This report does not commit any additional spend over and above this agreed allocation.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

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

- 10.1 This investment programme forms part of the Council's larger school modernisation and 21st Century Schools Programme and supports one of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities: 'Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper'.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The projects identified in the planned capital programme can be committed and delivered within the financial year and will have an immediate impact on improving schools and their surrounding communities. A coherent plan of expenditure over the three-year period will contribute to improvements in a wide range of physical environments benefiting pupils, staff, young people and members of the public.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET
25th MARCH 2021

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR J
ROSSER**

EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES PLANNED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22

Background Papers:

Council 10th March 2021: The Council's Three Year Capital Programme 2021/22 –
2023/24

Officer to contact: Andrea Richards (01443 744002)

Kitchen Refurbishments/Remodelling

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Coed-y-lan Primary	Removal of Dining Centre and Provision of New Kitchen	80,000
Penyreglyn Primary	Dining Hall Refurbishment	30,000
Ton Pentre Juniors	Dining Hall Refurbishment	30,000
Treorchy Comprehensive School	Refurbishment of Kitchen 1 and External Cladding	100,000
Various Kitchens	Essential Redecoration Works/Dish Washers	90,000
YGG Ynyswen	Dining Hall Refurbishment	30,000
Total		360,000

Window & Door Replacements

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Alaw Primary	Replacement External Walkway	120,000
Mountain Ash Comprehensive	Replacement Windows/Aluminium Screens	50,000
Porth Community School	Replacement Windows	30,000
Various Schools	Repairs to Existing Double Glazed Units	30,000
Total		230,000

Essential Works

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Ferndale Community School	Changing Room Refurbishment & Replacement Flooring	60,000
Llantrisant Primary	Land Drainage	30,000
Llwynypia Primary	Internal Refurbishment & External Works	50,000
Treorchy Comprehensive	3G Pitch	1,000,000
Ysgol Llanhari	New Safe Route to Early Years Block	70,000
YGG Evan James	Remodelling Classrooms following Water Damage & External Remediation Works	50,000
YGG Llwnceilyn	Repointing Works	50,000
Ysgol Hen Felin	Additional Classroom Accommodation	200,000
Total		1,510,000

Electrical Rewiring

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Coed-y-lan Primary	Electrical Rewire Phase 1	44,000
Llanhari Primary	Electrical Rewire Phase 1	45,000
Llwydcoed Primary	Electrical Rewire Phase 2	25,000
SS Gabriel & Raphael RC Primary	Modifications to Dual Mains Supply	17,000
Tref-y-Rhyg Primary	Electrical Rewire Phase 2	52,000
Trehopcyn Primary	Electrical Rewire Phase 1	42,000
Various Schools	Internal/External Escape Lighting	25,000
Total		250,000

Fire Alarm Upgrades

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	Fire Alarm Upgrade-Phase 2 Main Block (Ground Floor)	22,000
Gelli Primary	Internal Hall Cladding (Fire Risk Assessment)	25,000
Treorchy Comprehensive	Fire Alarm Upgrade-Phase 3 (Admin Block 3B, Main and Lesser Halls & Gymnasium)	50,000
YGG Ynyswen	Fire Alarm Upgrade	11,000
Total		108,000

Toilet Refurbishments

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Gwaunmeisgyn Primary	Toilet Refurbishment-Junior Area	35,000
Miskin Primary	Toilet Refurbishment-Junior Area	44,000
Mountain Ash Comprehensive	Toilet Refurbishment-Gymnasium	40,000
SS Gabriel & Raphael RC Primary	Toilet Refurbishment	40,000
Ton Pentre Infants	Toilet Refurbishment	80,000
Tonysguboriau Primary	Toilet Refurbishment-Infants Area	35,000
Ysgol Llanhari	Toilet Refurbishment	45,000
YGG Abercynon	Toilet Refurbishment	31,000
Various Schools	New Accessible Toilets	50,000
Total		400,000

Equalities Act/Compliance Works

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Blaengwawr Primary	Safeguarding Works	50,000
Ferndale Community School	Creation of Hygiene Room	50,000
Parc Primary	Creation of Changing Area in Nursery	15,000
St Margarets RC Primary	Creation of Hygiene Room	15,000
Various Schools	Adaptations to ALN Classes	50,000
Various Schools	Handrails & Ramps	95,000
Total		275,000

Boiler Replacement

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Mountain Ash Comprehensive	Boilerplant Replacement-Phase 2	120,000
Ysgol Llanhari	Boiler Replacement	65,000
YGG Ynyswen	Boiler Replacement	65,000
Total		250,000

Roof Renewal

Property/School	Project	Estimated Cost (£)
Cwmbach Church In Wales Primary	Phase 2 Replacement Roof	45,000
Cwmclydach Primary	Phase 2 Replacement Roof	175,000
Llantrisant Primary	Phase 3 Replacement Flat Roof	150,000
Tonysguboriau Primary	Facias & Rainwater Goods	25,000
Treorchy Comprehensive School	Flat Roof Replacement-Block 5	100,000
Ysgol Llanhari	Phase 2 Replacement Flat Roof	250,000
Total		745,000

Tudalen wag

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25th MARCH 2021

**HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS
SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT &
FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL,
CLLR A MORGAN**

**Author: Roger Waters, Service Director Frontline Services.
Tel 01443 494702**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Further to the approval of the Council's Three-Year Capital Programme 2021/22 - 2023/24 on 10th March 2021 at Council, this report sets out the detailed capital programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and approve the Supplementary Capital Programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects as detailed within this report.
- 2.2 Note that the current allocations are part of a 3-year capital programme and delegate authority to the Group Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Digital Services, to extend activity to deliver additional projects during the financial year, where capacity exists for accelerated delivery in accordance with the purpose of the wider programme, or to suspend programmes/projects and reallocate funding to optimise delivery.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report has been developed to identify commitments for RCT capital funding. The programme is impacted by a number of external factors that cannot be fully assessed at this time and this relates to both physical issues and funding.
- 3.2 COVID19 will continue to impact on our ability to deliver projects and programmes. Construction activity has continued to be sanctioned by Government and has evolved and adapted in the face of social distancing challenges, supply chain issues and workforce availability. Despite these

challenges, good progress has been made through 2020/21 in most areas and it is anticipated that measures being implemented to contain and manage the virus will create more certainty for construction in the coming year.

- 3.3 Projects will again be reviewed on a case by case process around deliverability and risk; flexibility to suspend individual projects and commit resources to other projects within a programme will be key.
- 3.4 The unprecedented floods of February 2020 continue to dominate forward programmes of work in repairing and upgrading our infrastructure including bridges, roads, culverts, retaining walls, together with numerous landslides and ongoing legacy issues related to former coal tips.
- 3.5 Commitments have been made to providing funding to replace and upgrade this infrastructure, much of which will need to meet new expectations around flood events. Substantial grants have been secured during 2020/21 and are anticipated to continue into 2021/22 and beyond.
- 3.6 The 2020/21 programme included significant flexibility to switch resources and this has enabled the Council to continue to deliver significant infrastructure improvements against the backdrop of uncertainty due to the unprecedented situation regarding storm events, funding and COVID19. Continued flexibility within the envelope of pre-approved schemes enables resources to be re-aligned to maximise opportunities to deliver projects and draw down grants in the best interests of RCT.
- 3.7 This report considers the detail against the specific 2021/22 capital allocations of £12.949M in favour of Highways Technical Services and £12.076M in favour of Strategic Projects, in order to safeguard the long-term integrity of the highways and transportation network and to enhance the network to deal with evolving travel demands. Specific regard is given to promoting safer and more sustainable travel and to enabling economic activity. Detail for consideration is submitted under the following areas;
 - Highways Improvements
 - Land Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements
 - Traffic Management
 - Car Parks
 - Transportation Infrastructure
 - Making Better Use Programme (MBU)
- 3.8 The Council has submitted bids for Welsh Government Grants for transport projects related to;
 - Road Safety (Capital and Revenue)
 - Safe Routes in the Community
 - Local Transport Fund (including Active Travel)
 - Resilient Roads Fund
- 3.9 The Council continues to be heavily engaged in the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, supporting the £734M allocated to Metro, a significant proportion of which

will deliver electrification of the Treherbert, Aberdare and Merthyr rail lines with 4 trains per hour to the top of each line, now programmed for completion in 2024.

- 3.10 Progress is also being made on the £50M Metro Plus Programme, which will deliver a new transport hub at Porth and the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority (CCRTA) has secured funding towards development of a potential second phase of Metro Plus, within which, consideration is being given to extending rail services beyond Aberdare to Hirwaun.
- 3.11 During the 2020/21 Financial Year, significant sums of grant funding have been secured via the Regional Local Transport Fund allocation. Studies have progressed related to;
- North West Cardiff – RCT Rail Corridor
 - Aberdare to Hirwaun Rail Service extension
 - New Station Treforest Estate
 - Strategic Park and Ride – Taffs Well/Treforest area
 - Mid Valleys Connectivity
 - Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (LEV) Funding

These projects are the subject of grant applications via the CCRTA for continued development during 2021/22. In particular, the ULEV funding should see the beginnings of an electric vehicle charge point network being delivered across the region, including across RCTCBC for both electric taxis and private cars, along with complementary initiatives to support the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles.

4. SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

4.1 Highways Improvements

- 4.1.1 The Highways Network represents the most significant asset of the Council, valued in excess of £3.4Bn and comprises of carriageways, footways, structures (bridges, retaining walls, culverts, etc.), street lighting, traffic signals and signs, safety barriers, highway drainage, etc.
- 4.1.2 At its meeting on 10th March 2021, Council approved the budgets for the Highways Improvement Schemes.
- 4.1.3 The network has now benefitted from ten years of enhanced levels of investment and this will continue into 2021/22.
- 4.1.4 The total allocation of capital resources for the Highways Improvement Schemes, as included in the Capital Programme for 2021/22, is £12.949M and is broken down into works packages in the table below. This includes previously reported slippage of £5.894M of Highway & Parks Structures funding. Spending plans for this programme of works are detailed in this report.

Work Area	£M
Carriageways	5.693
Footways	1.111
Structures	4.990
Parks Structures	0.750
Street Lighting	0.200
Traffic Management	0.160
Car Parks	0.045
Total	12.949

- 4.1.5 **Carriageways**; A programme of identified carriageway resurfacing and surface treatment to the value of £4.693M will be funded in 2021/22. A pool of schemes has been previously approved and a further £0.505M proposed schemes to be added to this pool are listed in Appendix 1. The actual schemes to be implemented in 2021/22 will be drawn from the approved pool based on officer prioritisation and deliverability constraints. These identified schemes will be supplemented by a £0.500M to carry out minor surface repairs (larger patches) and £0.500M of essential repairs to be identified by officers throughout the period.
- 4.1.6 **Footways**; are considered to be a high risk to the Council. An identified programme of resurfacing and surface treatment to the value of £1.111M will be funded in 2021/22. A pool of schemes has been previously approved. The actual schemes to be implemented in 2021/22 will be drawn from this pool based on officer prioritisation and deliverability constraints.
- 4.1.7 **Street Lighting**; An ongoing programme of column replacement and a replacement of the Council's network of supply cables is proposed with a proposed budget allocation of £200k in 21/22. The proposed programme is listed in Appendix 1.
- 4.1.8 **Highway Structures**; There are significant challenges associated with maintaining highway structures with a number of structures in a critical condition. A total budget of £4.990M (including £3.190M of previously identified slippage from 2020/21) has been allocated for 2021/22. A full list of proposed schemes can be found in Appendix 1. An allocation of £0.160M is made to project management costs.
- 4.1.9 Structures schemes often have long scheme design / lead in periods and a high level of initial uncertainty over works costs as the scope of works often only becomes fully apparent during the design period. In order to progress design of schemes for inclusion in future capital programmes funding of £0.285M has been allocated to advance preparation.
- 4.1.10 The previously funded schemes with significant previously allocated funds being carried forward into 2021/22 are discussed below:
- 4.1.11 A design and build contract for the replacement **Brook Street Footbridge**, adjacent to Ystrad rail station is currently ongoing. This footbridge forms a link between Ystrad and Nant-y-Gwyddon Road and provides the only access to the

northbound platform of Ystrad railway station for disabled people. It is an extremely large and complex scheme with very difficult site access, works over both a river and railway, and a requirement to maintain access to the northbound platform of the station. Considerations on the design are being carefully evaluated. Works are expected to begin on site in summer 2021 subject to the necessary approvals from Transport for Wales. A funding allocation of £3.617M has been previously approved and £2.757M of this funding will carry forward into 2021/22. A bid for Active Travel grant funding has been submitted to supplement / replace this funding. Should this bid be successful, any of this allocation which can be released will be diverted to the schemes identified in Appendix 1 as Reserve Schemes Previously Prepared.

4.1.12 There are numerous schemes 'on the shelf' as reserve for major refurbishment of **Highway Retaining Walls** throughout the county borough. It is proposed to prioritise some of these schemes with £138k of the budget.

4.1.13 **Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever** is situated on the A4061 Station Road in Treorchy upstream of **Institute Bridge** that carries the road over the stream at the junction with Dyfodwg Street. The scheme to replace this life-expired structure and strengthen Institute Bridge is carried into 2021/22. The scheme will also see demolition of the disused toilet building opposite Treorchy library.

4.1.14 A number of schemes have been prepared for future implementation should additional funding become available. These schemes are listed in Appendix 1.

4.1.15 **Parks Structures:** Responsibility for the maintenance of Parks and Countryside Bridges and Retaining Walls has been transferred to Frontline Services. A budget of £1.125M was allocated in 2020/21 of which some will be carried forward into 2021/22 and an additional allocation of £750k will be made. A programme of inventory collection and inspection continues, and design work has been progressed on a number of schemes for implementation in 2021/22. A pool of schemes from which projects will be taken forward is given in Appendix 1. The programme of works will be supplemented by an allocation of £0.160M for advance preparation and £0.080M of Project Management.

4.2 **Storm Dennis:** A number of Highway and Parks and Countryside structures were damaged during Storm Dennis. The capital funding is being sought from Welsh Government to undertake all the repairs to the structures which is anticipated to take until at least 2022/23 and possibly 2023/24 to repair due to the complicated nature of some of the work and seasonal constraints related to working in watercourses. The list of structures known to be affected by Storm Dennis are included in Appendix 1 for reference.

4.3 **Land Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements**

4.3.1 The Capital Land Drainage Programme supports works on land drainage and flood alleviation schemes, which are of such scale that their cost places them outside the framework of routine maintenance supported by the revenue programme.

4.3.2 With regard to land drainage (Flood Alleviation) schemes, the Council is frequently able to benefit from Welsh Government (WG) grant support (85%) as

the Land Drainage Authority under Section 59 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the Lead Local Flood Authority under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. In support of this process the land drainage capital programme identifies a number of project business cases targeted at attracting external funding support. These business cases will be carried out on a rolling 3-year programme with 1-2 completed per year.

- 4.3.3 Progression of schemes will be dependent on successful application for grant following the 5-case business model process through Strategic Outline Case (SOC), Outline Business Case (OBC) and Full Business Case (FBC) and where appropriate a Business Justification Case (BJC) and on occasion attracting other third party contributions. An allowance has been made within the drainage improvements programme for progression of such business cases and schemes in order to provide the required match funding. Appendix 2a identifies the business cases and projects currently under development.
- 4.3.4 Appendix 2b identifies projects which had a grant bid submitted to the Welsh Government in January 2021 for Resilient Roads Fund grant. This is the second year that councils have had the opportunity to secure funding aimed at mitigating the effects of Climate Change on the transportation network. Over £3M was allocated to RCT during 2020/21.
- 4.3.5 As these bids are centred on areas of high flood risk to the network, they are included in this section. Progression of the projects will be dependent on grant confirmation.
- 4.3.6 In addition, the Mynydd yr Eglwys landslip continues to require ongoing monitoring by specialist geotechnical engineers.
- 4.3.7 The details of the Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements Programme for 2021/22 with £0.140M of council funding allocated is provided in Appendix 2.

4.4 Traffic Management

- 4.4.1 As part of its network management duties under the Traffic Management Act and the Highways Act, the Council has the ability to implement improvements to the management of traffic within the County Borough. Finance for the programme is provided by an allocation of core capital funding of £0.160M.
- 4.4.2 The Council's capital allocation will enable the implementation of small scale schemes and provide safety aids such as warning signs, the introduction of traffic orders and the provision of residents parking. Details of the 2021/22 Capital Programme are included in Appendix 3.

4.5 Car Parks

- 4.5.1 An ongoing programme of repairs and upgrades to the Council's car parks will continue with a £0.045M allocation in 2021/22.

4.6 Transportation Infrastructure

4.6.1 The total allocation for Transport Infrastructure for 2021/22 in the Capital Programme amounts to £11.936M.

4.6.2 The allocations are as follows;

1. Llanharan Bypass - £1.500M

Good progress is being made in respect of this project which has now been allocated £3.861M including Local Transport Fund Grant from Welsh Government. Preliminary design, which includes ecological surveys and geotechnical investigation, has recently been completed. It is the intention to commence the pre-application planning consultation during the Spring of 2021. This project will provide the eastern leg of the bypass as a continuation of the existing western leg and is subject to completion of the central section, which is required to be provided by developers of adjacent residential development, and phased to accord with triggers attached to their planning consents. The eastern leg will connect with the A473 to the east of Llanharan and reduce the impact of traffic along the existing route, providing relief for affected communities, particularly around Llanharan Square. It is anticipated that significant developer contributions will be secured to assist funding the delivery of this project in future years.

2. Dualling A4119 Coedely to Ynysmaerdy (known locally as Stinkpot Hill) - £5.452M

Good progress is being made in respect of this project which has now been allocated £7.817M including Local Transport Fund Grant from Welsh Government. Preliminary design has been completed to dual the existing single carriageway and substandard section of the strategic transport corridor linking the Rhondda Fawr with Llantrisant/Talbot Green and Junction 34 of the M4 motorway. The scheme proposes to extend the existing high quality dual carriageway from the M4 to Ynysmaerdy, right up to the Coedely roundabout which serves the strategic development site at Coedely. The current substandard single carriageway is perceived by developers as being major barrier to development on this site. The scheme will therefore not only improve connectivity along this key corridor but is already acting as a catalyst for development of this strategic site. The detailed design is ongoing and scheduled to be complete in late spring 2021. Planning consent for a new active travel compliant footbridge at Coedely roundabout, which will also serve the Coedely development, has recently been approved. The Compulsory Purchase Order and Side Roads Order for the project was made in November 2020 and the Council is currently awaiting confirmation from Welsh Government on any objections.

3. A465 Cynon Gateway North Link Road - £1.780M

Good progress is being made in respect of this project which has now been allocated £4.039M including Local Transport Fund Grant from Welsh Government. Preliminary design has been completed on the project which continues on from previous feasibility work undertaken. A pre-planning application consultation was undertaken in late 2020 with the planning application submitted in February 2021. The Council continues to work with

the Welsh Government and their appointed contractor in respect of the integration of the bypass and the A465 (Heads of the Valleys) Dualling of Sections 5&6 project. The dualling scheme now includes a roundabout at Croesbychan which will accommodate the Cynon Gateway link road. This will provide a gateway from the trunk road to the Cynon Valley and will aid in relieving traffic from Llwydcoed and Penywaun. The importance of this road has been recognised by the Welsh Government and they continue to work with RCT towards early delivery of this project.

4. Gelli Treorchy Relief Road - £0.393M

Feasibility studies have commenced on investigation of options to relieve traffic congestion in Treorchy. Stag Square is a major bottleneck causing congestion and delays to users of the road network including public transport. The study will look to identify potential options to reduce congestion.

5. Park and Ride Programme - £0.586M

The Park and Ride programme is intended to create additional parking capacity at rail stations across RCT to enable car drivers to switch to rail travel encouraging modal shift in favour of more sustainable forms of travel that contribute to reducing congestion and harmful emissions.

Park and Ride is a key element to enable mode shift and promote accessibility to the Metro and opportunities to add value to Metro will be kept under review as the full scope and detail of the Metro project crystallises.

4.7 Making Better Use (MBU) Programme- £1.800M

4.7.1 During 2016/17 a Making Better Use (MBU) programme was introduced. The ethos of this programme was to identify low cost, high value improvements for congested sections of the Council's highways network, to improve traffic flows, ease congestion and have a positive impact on road safety.

4.7.2 The programme was continued and has effectively delivered several successful projects. This programme will be extended into 2021/22 for which an allocation of £1.800M is proposed.

4.7.3 £1.5M is allocated towards creating a new active travel link in the form of a crossing and a new river bridge between the bus and rail stations at Aberdare. This will also enhance linkage between the town centre and the college, school, residential areas as well as the new industrial units currently under construction at Robertstown. The project will have the added benefit of relocating the current crossing on the A4059 and easing congestion through Ynys Roundabout. The proposed programme of investment in MBU projects is included at Appendix 4.

4.8 Miscellaneous Improvements - £0.425M

4.8.1 A series of miscellaneous improvements are proposed to deal with a number of operational issues covering safety, accessibility, efficiency and capacity. The detail is included at Appendix 5.

5. EXTERNAL GRANTS

- 5.1 At the time of drafting this report, over £7.056M of Welsh Government transport related grants have been secured by RCT during 2020/21 via Local Transport Fund, Local Transport Network Fund, Road Safety Grant, and Safe Routes in the Community Grant. The Council continues to explore the potential to accommodate any further potential 2020/21 WG budget underspends.
- 5.2 Bids were submitted on 29th January with grant offers anticipated before the start of the new financial year.
- 5.3 A new pilot fund has been established to support making up of unadopted roads. The success of the pilot will inform the potential establishment of a new programme. A bid of £0.475M has been submitted to make up unadopted roads known as Belle Vue in Trecynon, Aberdare. If the bid is successful, a fully prioritised programme of unadopted roads will be established to inform future funding bids.
- 5.4 At the time of drafting this report, over £7m of Welsh Government Drainage/Flooding related grants have been secured by RCT during 2020/21. Projects identified on the Welsh Government pipeline for capital investment in Land Drainage/Flood Risk Improvements have been submitted for inclusion for 2021/22 at approx. £3M, and await confirmation of approval in principle, also pending business case approval. Grant Bids have also been submitted for 11 Small scales schemes (£1.1M) and 19 Schemes under Resilient Roads (£3M).
- 5.5 It is anticipated that ongoing work to repair infrastructure damaged during exceptional storm events and expenditure related to ensuring the safety of former coal spoil tips will continue to be fully funded by Welsh Government.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Equality and Diversity issues will be considered as part of determining the final detail of the proposed schemes.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There are no consultation requirements relating directly to the report but the proposed schemes will (or have) involve varying degrees of consultation, some of which will relate to statutory processes (such as Traffic Regulation Orders).

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The funding allocation to support schemes contained within this report was agreed by Council on the 10th of March 2021 as part of the three year Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24. This report does not commit any additional spend over and above this agreed allocation.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

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

- 10.1 This investment programme supports the Council's Corporate Plan Priority 'Places – Where people are proud to live, work and play'.
- 10.2 The programme is wide ranging. It deals with the maintenance and provision of transport assets created in order to meet travel demand. The programme supports enhanced connectivity to link homes with employment opportunities, education, and health facilities, and to act as a catalyst for development and regeneration. In conjunction with grant applications, a range of sustainable and active travel opportunities are promoted.
- 10.3 The programme also seeks to reduce flood risk and insulate communities from the damaging impacts of climate change in light of more frequent extreme weather events.
- 10.4 The programme supports the Well-Being goals fostering prosperity and resilience with inclusive and sustainable transport options supporting more cohesive and vibrant communities.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The above programme continues the enhanced levels of investment under the RCTInvest initiative, delivering sustained improvements to the resilience and durability of our highways and transportation infrastructure, promoting sustainable transport opportunities and network efficiency.
- 11.2 Consequently, Frontline Services will coordinate and deliver significant investment in a number of important areas during 2021/22 and the proposed programme is accordingly recommended for approval.
- 11.3 The Welsh Government LGBI programme concluded in 2014/15 and combined with core capital resources totalled an unprecedented £84M highway maintenance investment programme over nine years. This has enabled significant improvement in the condition of the highway network.
- 11.4 RCT is one of the few Councils that has continues to make meaningful and significant investments in its highway network since the demise of LGBI funding. The table below demonstrates the level of progress that has been made.

Indicator	2010/11 Indicator	2019/20 Indicator
THS011a – percentage of A class roads requiring maintenance	16.2%	4.7%
THS011b – percentage of B class roads requiring maintenance	15.2%	6.2%
THS011c – percentage of C class roads requiring maintenance	15.3%	3.5%
THS012 – percentage of all classified roads requiring maintenance	15.7%	4.8%

- 11.5 The Council, in common with all LAs across the UK faces significant challenges in maintaining this enormous and complex asset. It is encouraging that WG has recognised these challenges and continued to support the Local Government Public Highways Refurbishment Grant across Wales. The indicators above are directly impacted by the levels of funding available to maintain the asset. Whilst there is clearly a level of funding required in maintaining asset condition in a steady state, reducing funding below an optimum level creates greater challenges for the future. The ongoing level of investment respects that principle and should continue to see the highway network in RCT improving in comparison with other local authorities.
- 11.6 The condition of the Council's highways structures assets is recognised as a significant challenge with enhanced and continued capital and revenue funding allocated every year since 2017/18 with £7.2M available to invest in 2021/22.
- 11.7 The commitment of the Council to invest in transport infrastructure enables the Council to be able to engage with Welsh Government and provide flexibility to accommodate WG underspend. The Council has continued to benefit significantly from this strategy in 2020/21, approval of this capital programme will ensure grant opportunities can be maximised into 2021/22
- 11.8 The programme is as always subject to minor changes due to possible engineering difficulties or programming and coordination issues with statutory undertakers. Whilst it is anticipated that the unprecedented challenges of 2020 will diminish as we move through 2021, programme delivery will still be immensely challenging and the flexibility to switch funding across programmes will ensure the best outcomes for RCT.

Appendix 1

Additional schemes for Inclusion in Carriageway Works Pool

Street Name	Town	Treatment	Budget (£)
Holly Street	Rhydyfelin	Strengthen	62,000
Brynna Road	Brynna	Strengthen	60,000
Oxford Street	Mountain Ash	Strengthen	51,000
Abercynon Road	Abercynon	Strengthen	82,000
Llewellyn Street	Pontygwaith	Strengthen	55,000
High Street	Graig	Strengthen	61,000
Salisbury Road	Abercynon	Strengthen	37,000
A4059 Trecynon to Penywaun	Trecynon	Inlay	58,000
Llanwonno Road	Ynyshir	Strengthen	39,000
Total			505,000

Proposed Highway Structures Schemes 2021/22 (Including reported slippage)

Street No	Street Name	Town	Budget (£)
A4061	Bodringallt Bridge	Ystrad	150,000
	Brook Street Footbridge	Ystrad	2,757,000
	Major Retaining Wall Refurbishment (to be chosen from reserve scheme below)	Various	138,000
A4061	Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge	Treorchy	1,500,000
	Advance Preparation		285,000
	Project Management		160,000
Total			4,990,000

Reserve Schemes Previously Prepared

Street No	Street Name	Town	Budget (£)
Eirw Rd	Imperial Bridge	Porth	1,600,000
U/C	Darren Ddu Bridge	Ynysybwl	150,000
B4595	Gwenllian Terrace Walls	Treforest	70,000
	Brewery Terrace Wall	Pontygwaith	60,000
A4058	Salem Terrace Wall	Llwynypia	65,000
A4054	Taffs Well Wall	Taffs Well	150,000
	Bryn Eirw Wall	Trehafod	150,000
A4059	Cae Garw Wall	Mtn Ash	100,000
Adj A4059	Robertstown Footbridge Approach walls	Robertstown	100,000
B4273	Glyncoch to Ynysybwl Phase 2		300,000
Lanelay Rd	Lanelay Bridge	Talbot Green	250,000
Total			2,995,000

Advance Preparation Schemes

Street No	Street Name	Location
B4275	Ynysmeurig Bridge	Abercynon
A4061	Rhigos Rock Anchors	Blaenrhondda
A4061	Bwlch Rockface	Bwlch
A473	Llanharan Railway Footbridge	Llanharan
A4058	A4058 Cantilever	Pontypridd
B4278	Brittania Bridge	Porth
B4278	Rheola Bridge	Porth
	Cross Bychan Bridge	Llwydcoed
A4233	New Rheola Bridge	Porth
	Machine Bridge North	Treforest
A4093	Craig Las Bridge	Hendreforgan
	Glanffrwyd Culvert	Rhigos
	Glan Road Bridge	Aberdare
	Factory Road Culvert	Treorchy
A4058	Trehafod By Pass Bridge	Trehafod
B4275	Cynon Star Bridge	Abercynon
C229	Dinas Riverbridge	Dinas
	Mountain Ash Comprehensive Bridge	Mountain Ash
	Nant Llanilid Footbridge	Thomastown
Moy Road	Glan y Llyn Bridge	Taff's Well
B4273	Graig Bridge	Ynysybwll
A4059	Meirion Street River Underbridge	Aberdare
Ynyshir Rd	Wattstown Stone Arch Bridge	Wattstown
Rhigos Rd	Bwllfa Road Culvert No. 1	Rhigos
A4233	Pontygwaith Riverbridge	Pontygwaith
	Cwm Pennar Bridge	Cwmpennar
A4054	Nant Llonydd Bridge	Hawthorn
	Leiners Bridge and Footbridge	Hawthorn
A4059	Afon Cynon Bridge	Cwmbach/Aberdare
N/A	Nantygwyddon to GelliGaled Park Footbridge	Llwynypia
N/A	Nantygwyddon to Sherwood Street Footbridge	Llwynypia
B4275	Mountain Ash Town Bridges	Mountain Ash
	Llwyncelyn Street Embankment	Porth
	Glyncoch Ash Tip Instability	Glyncoch
	Margaret Street R/Wall (Storm Cristoph)	Pontygwaith
	Glyncoch to Ynysybwll Cutting	Glyncoch

Proposed Parks Structures Spend and Pool of Schemes 2021/22

Street No	Street Name	Town	Budget (£)
	Advance Preparation	Various	160,000
	Project Management		80,000
	Various R/Wall, Culvert and Bridge Refurbishment/Repair		510,000
Total			750,000

Pool of Parks and Countryside Projects

Maes-y-Felin Footbridge	Pontyclun
Colliery Street Footbridge	Pontypridd
Penrhys Playing Fields Footbridge	Penrhys
Ynyshir Park Tunnel	Ynyshir
Gelli Isaf Tramroad Bridge	Aberdare
Abercynon Recreation Ground FB	Abercynon
Tylcha Fawr Bridge	Tonyrefail
Dare Valley Retaining Walls	Aberdare
Rhondda Heritage Park Walls	Trehafod
2021-22 Timber Footbridges	Various
Barry Sidings Retaining Wall	Hopkinstown
Graig Yr Alt Bridge, Taff Trail	Taffs Well
Cwn Ynys Mintan Footbridge	Penywaun

Proposed Street Lighting Programme

Location	Work required	Budget (£)
Drop Down columns (various locations)	Replacement of columns inaccessible using MEWP	50,000
A4119 – Castle Mynach Jcn – School Road Jcn	Replacement of life expired columns and cable overlay	60,000
The Graig, Pontypridd	Replacement of life expired columns	30,000
Columns overhead fed – various locations	Removal of overhead cable systems	25,000
Various Locations	Project to replace/upgrade lighting	35,000
	Total	200,000

Structures Affected by Storm Dennis and anticipated to be fully funded by Welsh Government;

<u>Structure Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Ynysyngharad Park Footbridge	Pontypridd
Castle Inn Bridge	Rhydyfelin/Treforest
Berw Road Bridge	Pontypridd
Feeder Pipe Footbridge	Abercynon
Footbridges on Rights of Way	Various
Ty'n y Bryn Footbridge	Tonyrefail
Taff Trail Mill Farm Rd footbridge	Abercynon
Penydarren Tramroadside	Aberdare
Bailey Street Bridge	Ton Pentre
Canning Street Bridge	Ton Pentre
Maindy Street Bridge	Ton Pentre
Gelligaled Footbridge	Ystrad
Merlin Bridge	Hopkinstown
Campbell Terrace Culvert	Mountain Ash
Heol y Bwnsi Culvert	Taffs Well
Blaencwm River Wall	Blaencwm
Hopkinstown River Wall	Hopkinstown
Berw Rd River Wall	Pontypridd
Sion Street	Pontypridd
Castle Inn River Wall	Rhydyfelin
Pontypridd Road River Wall	Porth
Tonypandy River Wall	Tonypandy
Brook Street R/Wall	Porth
Ynysymeurig Wall	Abercynon

Maerdy Mountain Road A4223	Maerdy/Aberdare
Ynyshir Community Route Landslip	Ynyshir
Taff Trail and other Active Travel Routes	Various
Landslips and Tips	Various
Tylorstown Landslip	Tylorstown/Llanwonno
Nant Gelliwion Bridge	Penycoedcae
Mill Road Culvert	Ynysybwł
Cross Street R/Wall	Ynyshir
Nant Clydach Bridge	Abercynon
Gyfeillion R/Wall	Hopkinstown
Gelli Culvert	Gelli
Afon Dar and Tramway Culverts	Aberdare
Rural Lanes - Storm Damage Repairs	Various
Various repairs and works to culverts, bridges and walls	Various

Appendix 2

Proposed Land Drainage/ Flood Risk Management Capital Programme 2021/22

Scheme/Location	Activity/Work	RCT	WG Grant/ other	Total
		£	£	£
Land Drainage Improvements Allowance (match Funding) for progression of schemes after completion of Strategic Business Case/Small Scale schemes Business Case Assumes WG Approval. See Appendix 2A	OBC/BJC/FBC & Works (15% Match Funding)	70,000	396,000*	466,000
Strategic Outline Business Cases	Production of Strategic Business Cases for future projects. Incl Concept/Prelim Design	20,000		20,000
Mynydd-Yr-Eglwys, Ystrad	Monitoring & Remedial Works	10,000		10,000
Small Works Budget	Small scales works <£10,000 to reduce impact of surface water flows affecting properties and the highway	40,000		40,000
Total		140,000	396,000	536,000*

*Assumes successful grant bids

**Potential third-party contribution and total with contribution.

<u>Appendix 2a</u>		
<u>Schemes under development that will require a successful application for Grant from the Welsh Government.</u>		
<u>Strategic Flood Risk Area (SFRA) and Larger >£150k Individual Flood Alleviation Schemes (FAS)</u>		
Scheme	Location	Activity/Work (2021/22) BJC = Business Justification Case OBC – Outline Business Case FBC- Full Business Case
Nant Gwawr (Phase 2)- SFRA	Aberaman North	OBC Development– Preliminary Design & Development.
Oaklands Terrace, Clifynydd - SFRA	Clifynydd	OBC Development– Preliminary Design & Development.
Park Lane FAS, Aberdare	Trecynon	Finishing Works – Ecology/Landscaping.
Treorchy FAS	Treorchy	Initial BJC – Detailed Design and Development (All Phases) Full BJC – Construction (Phase 1 Only)
Cwmaman FAS - Phase 2	Aberaman South	Initial BJC – Detailed Design and Development Full BJC - Construction
Pentre FAS	Pentre	OBC Development– Preliminary Design & Development.
Glenboi Road FAS - Pumping Station	Mountain Ash West	Initial BJC – Detailed Design and Development Full BJC - Construction
Nant Y Ffrwd – Flood Routing	Mountain Ash East	Initial BJC – Detailed Design and Development.
Bronallt Terrace - Phase 3 (upper Catchment)	Abercwmboi	Initial BJC – Detailed Design and Development
Turberville Rd - Porth	Porth	Initial BJC – Detailed Design and Development

Small Scale Projects <£150k Individual Flood Alleviation Schemes (FAS)		
Scheme	Location	Activity/Work
Mt Ash A4059 Upper catchment scour	Mountain Ash East	Repair and armouring/improvement of the scoured sections of the Ordinary Watercourse Channel
Victor Street - inlet	Mountain Ash West	Replacement and upgrade of inlet with overflow arrangement (if Possible). Channel upgrades/capacity.
Pentre (Volunteer st) FAS (Advanced Works - Lower Nant y Pentre culvert)	Pentre	Installation of an exceedance flow path on the lower section of the Nant y Pentre culvert, with debris control and some attenuation.
Heath Terrace	Ynyshir	Repair and armouring of the scoured sections of the Ordinary Watercourse Channel and replacement of two number ordinary watercourse inlet headwalls and debris screens.
Tyn-Y-Wern	Tonyrefail East	Lining of a structurally weakened ordinary watercourse culvert and rebuild of several Manhole structures.
Standard View	Ynyshir	Lining of a structurally weakened ordinary watercourse culvert and rebuild of several Manhole structures.
Cefn Pennar Road	Cwmbach	Culvert Inlet Upgrade
Trifounder Road, Cwmbach	Cwmbach	Upgrade of the ordinary watercourse culvert inlet with an enlarged headwall and debris screen structure and repair to the channel scour
Nant Cae Dudwg	Cilfynydd	Repair and armouring of scoured sections of the ordinary watercourse channel and replacement of damaged debris screen and channel base
Mostyn Street	Aberaman South	Rebuild of Culvert Inlet with inclusion of a debris platform/catchpit. Replacement/upgrade of culvert (if possible).The works will also re-channel the ordinary watercourse channel upstream of inlet.
Pentre Road - Pleasant Street	Pentre	Instillation of an exceedance flow path and interception drainage (Linear Drainage) to reconnect overland flows back into the culverted ordinary watercourse.
Heath Terrace	Ynyshir	Repair and armouring of the scoured sections of the Ordinary Watercourse Channel and replacement of two number ordinary watercourse inlet headwalls and debris screens.

Cross St	Ynyshir	Upgrade of surface water outfalls through highway wall.
Appendix 2b		
<u>Schemes under development that will require a successful application for Grant from the Welsh Government.</u>		
<u>Resilient Road Grant - Alleviate the effects of climate change (flooding) on transportation infrastructure</u>		
Scheme	Location	Activity/Work
A4059 Aberdare Bypass	Aberdare West	Improvements to the main culvert inlet to improve capacity and manage surface water flows from the highway
A4059 - Aberdare - Asda Roundabout	Aberaman North	Raising of the road by 200-400 mm to avoid flooding onto the highway (1km)
B4275 Bronallt Terrace - Phase 3	Abercwmboi	Replacement of defective masonry culverted ordinary watercourse conveying through Bronallt Terrace highway
A4061 Rhigos Road	Rhigos	Up sizing of culvert/overflow culvert to improve the capacity of the network to manage surface water flows from the highway
A4059 - Abercynon - Mt Ash	Mountain Ash East	Further treatment works to the low point within the verge area required to add capacity and manage the low spot flooding.
A4059 Hirwaun Road	Hirwaun	Up sizing of culvert to increase and improve capacity of highway drainage network
Bwllfa Road, Cwmdare	Cwmdare	Upgrade works to improve the capacity of the highway culvert network
Cynon Valley Monitoring Stations	Hirwaun/Aberdare	Further expansion of telemetry monitoring equipment to be installed at various locations across the Cynon valley
A4058 Tonypany - Porth	Trealaw/Porth	Remedial works to renew pipelines, investigate land drainage and increase gully connections to improve the capacity of the A4058 highway drainage network from Tonypany to Porth
A4119 Bypass Ynysgrug - Tonypany - Coedely	Tonyrefail West	Upgrading the A4119 highway drainage to improve the capacity of the network

A4058 High Street, Treorchy	Treorchy	Upgrades to the carrier line and improvement works to the highway drainage network
A4058 - Pentre Road, Pentre	Pentre	Improvements to the highway drainage of surrounding streets to intercept the overland flow routes and alleviate flooding to the A4058
A4061 - Abertonnllwyd Street	Treherbert	Improvements to the highway drainage of surrounding streets to intercept the overland flow routes and alleviate flooding to the A4061
B4278 Pontypridd Road, Porth	Porth	Improvements to the highway drainage include the installation of additional gullies to improve the capacity of the B4278
B4278 Cemetery Road, Porth	Porth	Replacement of the existing highway drainage with a super gully/catchpit to improve the capacity of the drainage network
A4093 Blackmill Road, Hendreforgan	Gilfach Goch	Increase the capacity of surface water drainage to the Blackmill Road
Rhondda Valley Monitoring Stations	Treherbert/Treorchy/Pentre	Further expansion of telemetry monitoring stations to be installed at various locations across the Rhondda valley
B4278 Llwynceilyn Road	Porth	Recovery works to stabilise the embankment and improve ground water drainage to avoid further flooding impacts to the highway
Margaret Street, Pontygwaith	Tylorstown	Recovery works to stabilise the hillside and improve ground water drainage to avoid further flooding impacts to the highway

Appendix 3 – Proposed Traffic Management Programme 2021/22

Traffic Management Programme 2021/22	Cost (£)
Disabled Persons Parking Permits	10,000
Minor schemes, signs and markings	55,000
Collision Cluster and Capital Programme Review	4,000
Small scale traffic regulation orders (Speed limit, Road Safety and community benefit)	30,000
Residents Parking Review	40,000
Speed Limit Review	6,000
Remedial works resulting from Safety Audits on previous schemes	5,000
Development of schemes	10,000
Total	160,000

In addition to the above the Traffic Management team will be responsible for delivering several Education and Lifelong Learning funded projects throughout the borough including the highway elements of the 21Century Schools programme.

Appendix 4 “Making Better Use” Programme.

Scheme/Location	Work Description	RCT (£k)	Other (£k)	Budget (£k)
Highway Network Improvements				
A4059 Corridor Enhancements	Preliminary design and project development	300		300
A4059 – Bus Station/Rail Station & Leisure Centre	Active Travel Bridge and Pedestrian Crossing	1,500		1,500
Total		1,800		1,800

Appendix 5 Miscellaneous Improvements

Scheme/Location	Work Description	RCT (£k)	Other (£k)	Budget (£k)
Miscellaneous Improvements				
A473 Upper Boat Transport Corridor Enhancements	A473 Upper Boat WeITAG 2 studies, together with safety improvements to Maesmawr Lane	180		180
Pedestrian Enhancements Oxford Street Nantgarw	Pedestrian Crossing	120		120
Network Assessments; Efficiency and Safety	Various assessments and enhancements including traffic signal efficiency, on street parking enhancements, local safety improvements, etc	125		125
Total		425		425

Tudalen wag

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25TH MARCH 2021

NON DOMESTIC RATE (NDR) RELIEF SCHEME FOR RETAIL, LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR M NORRIS)

Author(s): MR MATTHEW PHILLIPS, HEAD OF SERVICE (REVENUES & BENEFITS)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with:

- a) Details of the Welsh Government Non Domestic Rates – Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief (RLH) Scheme for 2021/22

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Note the details of the RLH Scheme and formally adopt the scheme for the year 2021/22

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To ensure that qualifying businesses benefit from the RLH scheme for the whole of the financial year 2021/22 (in relation to business rate payments).

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 In March 2020, in response to the growing concerns about the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the economy in Wales, Welsh Government published details of a financial support package for businesses, which included a new temporary business rates relief scheme for the financial year 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

4.2 The scheme, the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief scheme, provided a business rate “holiday” for all qualifying businesses for the whole period and was fully funded by WG. During 2020/21, around 1,300 businesses in Rhondda Cynon Taf have benefitted from £16M of rate relief through the scheme.

- 4.3 On 3rd March 2021, the WG Minister for Finance and Trefnydd announced the extension of the relief on a temporary basis for 2021-22, details of which are set out in this report.

5. RETAIL, LESIURE AND HOSPITALITY (RLH) RATES RELIEF IN WALES SCHEME

- 5.1 The RLH scheme delivers full rates relief for the financial year 2021/22 and is aimed at businesses and other ratepayers in Wales in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, such as shops, pubs, restaurants, gyms, performance venues and hotels.
- 5.2 The scheme aims to provide support for eligible occupied properties by offering a discount of 100% on the non-domestic rates bill of all eligible premises. The scheme will apply to all eligible ratepayers with a rateable value of £500,000 or less.
- 5.3 The list of the types of businesses able to qualify for the relief is set out at Appendix 1 with those non-qualifying businesses set out at Appendix 2. One of the key qualifying criteria is that the property (hereditament) is used for the provision of goods and / or services to visiting members of the public.
- 5.4 As the scheme is a temporary measure, WG are providing the relief by reimbursing Councils that use their discretionary relief powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. It will be for individual Councils to adopt a scheme and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under Section 47. The Welsh Government will reimburse local authorities for the relief that is provided in line with this guidance via a grant under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Section 58A of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 No consultation was needed on this scheme.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 There are no financial implications on the Council for this scheme as it is being fully funded by Welsh Government.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The RLH Relief Scheme is in accordance with the Council's statutory powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- 9.2 For the scheme to be applied in Rhondda Cynon Taf, the Council needs to formally resolve to adopt the scheme locally in exercise of its discretionary powers under section 47(1) (a) of the 1988 Act and the Director of Finance and Digital Services will

administer the scheme and make the necessary determinations in accordance with the Council's 'officer scheme of delegation'.

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

- 10.1 The proposals are aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, one of which is 'Prosperity – create the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The Welsh Government Non Domestic Rates – Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief (RLH) Scheme for 2021/22 will provide further much needed financial support and certainty for local businesses to meet their 2021/22 rate liability and will supplement the Council's wider commitment to maintain vibrant town centres across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Appendix 1

Examples of the types of retail premises that **may** qualify for assistance under the Wales Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme:

- Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:
 - Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off-licences, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc)
 - Charity shops
 - Opticians
 - Pharmacies
 - Post offices
 - Furnishing shops or display rooms (such as carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
 - Car or caravan showrooms
 - Second hand car lots
 - Markets
 - Petrol stations
 - Garden centres
 - Art galleries (where art is for sale or hire)
- Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:
 - Hair and beauty services
 - Shoe repairs or key cutting
 - Travel agents
 - Ticket offices, eg. for theatre
 - Dry cleaners
 - Launderettes
 - PC, TV or domestic appliance repair
 - Funeral directors
 - Photo processing
 - DVD or video rentals
 - Tool hire
 - Car hire
 - Cinemas
 - Estate and letting agents
- Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and / or drink to visiting members of the public:
 - Restaurants
 - Drive-through or drive-in restaurants
 - Takeaways
 - Sandwich shops
 - Cafés
 - Coffee shops

- Pubs
- Bars or Wine Bars

We consider assembly and leisure to mean:

- Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of sport, leisure and facilities to visiting members of the public (including for the viewing of such activities) and for the assembly of visiting members of the public:
 - Sports grounds and clubs,
 - Sport and leisure facilities,
 - Gyms
 - Tourist attractions,
 - Museums and art galleries,
 - Stately homes and historic houses,
 - Theatres,
 - Live Music Venues
 - Cinemas
 - Nightclubs
- Hereditaments that are being used for the assembly of visiting members of the public:
 - Public halls,
 - Clubhouses, clubs and institutions

We consider hotels, guest & boarding premises and self-catering accommodation to mean:

- Hereditaments where the non-domestic part is being used for the provision of living accommodation as a business:
 - Hotels, Guest and Boarding Houses,
 - Holiday homes,
 - Caravan parks and sites

Appendix 2

Examples of the types of retail premises that **will not** qualify for assistance under the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief Scheme:

- Properties being used wholly or mainly for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:
 - Financial services (eg. banks, building societies, cash points, ATMs, bureaux de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawnbrokers)
 - Medical services (eg. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
 - Professional services (eg. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents, financial advisers, tutors)
 - Post Office sorting offices
 - Day nurseries
 - Kennels and catteries
 - Casinos and gambling clubs
 - Show homes and marketing suites
 - Employment agencies

There are a number of further types of hereditament which the Welsh Government believes should not be eligible for the relief:

- Hereditaments that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public

If a hereditament is not usually reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public, it will be ineligible for relief under the scheme even if there is ancillary use of the hereditament that might be considered to fall within the descriptions in Appendix 1.

In addition, the following properties will not be eligible to relief under the scheme:

- a) Properties with a rateable value of more than £500,000
- b) Properties that are not occupied
- c) Properties that are owned, rented or managed by a local authority
- d) Properties owned, rented or managed by a local authority, such as visitor centres, tourist information shops and council-run coffee shops or gift shops attached to historic buildings, are exempt from this scheme

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Finance & Performance

(Terms of Reference of each of the Scrutiny Committees to assist Officers with selecting the correct Committee.)

Contact Officer

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

March 2021

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN *DISCUSSIONS*
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR M NORRIS)

Item:

**NON DOMESTIC RATE (NDR) RELIEF SCHEME FOR RETAIL, LEISURE AND
HOSPITALITY**

Background Papers
NONE

Officer to contact:

MR MATTHEW PHILLIPS, HEAD OF SERVICE (REVENUES & BENEFITS)

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25th March 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st December 2020 (Quarter 3)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)

**AUTHOR: Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance and Improvement
Services (01443) 680609**

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first nine months of this financial year (to the 31st December 2020).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the continued unprecedented circumstances Council Services are operating within as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Revenue

- 2.2 Note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 31st December 2020 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) including the on-going Welsh Government Covid-19 funding to support service delivery.

Capital

- 2.3 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 31st December 2020 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31st December 2020 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

- 2.5 Note the Quarter 3 progress updates for the Council's agreed Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – c of the Executive Summary).
- 2.6 Note the progress update to enhance the Council's short term and long term response to extreme weather events (Section 6 of the Executive Summary).

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To agree the Council's financial and operational performance position as at the 31st December 2020 to enable elected Members and other stakeholders to scrutinise the performance of the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides Members with the third update of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 2021.
- 4.2 The aim of the report is to bring together the Council's performance into an Executive Summary and make available more detailed information to the reader through electronic links. Information contained in the Executive Summary includes financial data and progress against our Corporate Plan priorities, and exceptions are highlighted within the detailed sections to ensure that elected Members and other readers are able to quickly identify the key issues. The report also sets out a position statement of progress in implementing the recommendations agreed by Cabinet on the 18th December 2020 to enhance the Council's short term and long term response to extreme weather events.
- 4.3 As Members will be aware from the first and second quarter Performance Reports for 2020/21, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented and widespread challenges in the delivery of Council Services alongside significant additional cost and income losses that have, to date, been funded by Welsh Government. The third quarter Performance Report continues to be set within this context and further information in this regard is included within the Executive Summary.

5.0 QUARTER 3 REPORT

- 5.1 The Quarter 3 report is attached and comprises:
- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 3 (i.e. 31st December 2020);

- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – e setting out the detailed projected financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted;
- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – e setting out capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3f covering Prudential Indicators;
- **Organisational Health** – includes information on turnover, sickness absence, organisational health related investment areas and Council strategic risks;
- **Corporate Plan Priorities** – three action plans (Sections 5a – c) setting out progress updates for the priorities of People, Places and Prosperity; and
- **Enhancing the Council's response to extreme weather events** - Section 6 setting out progress made to implement the recommendations agreed by Cabinet on 18th December 2020.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council's Performance Report provides an update on financial and operational performance for the first nine months of 2020/21; as a result, no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed required for the purposes of this report.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Following consideration by Cabinet, this Report will be presented to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee for review, challenge and where deemed required, the scrutiny of specific areas in more detail.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

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

- 10.1 The Corporate Plan progress updates included within this report align with the priorities as set out within the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 "Making a Difference". With regard to the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), at the 4th March 2020 Council meeting, it was agreed that the Corporate Plan priorities would also serve as its Well-being Objectives in line with the Act.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council as at Quarter 3 2020/21, that is, 31st December 2020.
- 11.2 The third quarter revenue budget position is projecting a £1.049M overspend, this representing an improved picture compared to quarters 1 and 2 and reflects the continuation of key pressures primarily within Children's and Adult Services. The position is also set in the unprecedented context of Covid-19 and takes into account additional Welsh Government funding received for the first nine months of the year, and that forecasted to be received for the remainder of the year, in respect of additional expenditure incurred and income loss as a result of the pandemic. As part of the Council's robust service and financial management arrangements, work is continuing across all services to contribute to bringing the financial position closer in line with budget; refresh financial forecasts for the full year as updated information becomes available; and engagement with Welsh Government to highlight the importance of providing additional funding to meet on-going permanent cost pressures.
- 11.3 Capital investment as at 31st December 2020 is £57.483M, with projects across the programme continuing to progress during Quarter 3, taking account of Covid-19 restrictions and safety requirements.
- 11.4 Good progress has been made across the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity during quarter 3, with a continued focus on providing essential support to residents and businesses to help counter the significant impact Covid-19 is having on local communities and, alongside this, progressing the delivery of major projects.
- 11.5 The first progress update on the delivery of recommendations to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events shows a positive position, with key actions being taken forward that provide a clear direction for the future.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: Paul Griffiths

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

25th March 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st December 2020 (Quarter 3)

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item: 15

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 3 2020/21
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Contents

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 2a Education and Inclusion Services;
- 2b Community and Children's Services;
- 2c Chief Executive;
- 2d Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services; and
- 2e Authority Wide Budgets.

Earmark reserve update – Section 2f provides a breakdown of expenditure against service areas.

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital programme budget – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 3a Chief Executive;
- 3b Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services;
- 3c Education and Inclusion Services;
- 3d Community and Children's Services; and
- 3e Capital Programme Funding.

Prudential Indicators – a detailed breakdown is included in Section 3f.

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- Turnover;
- Sickness Absence;
- Organisation Health related investment areas; and
- Council Strategic Risks.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority progress updates – Quarter 3 position statements are included within the following sections:

- 5a – People;
- 5b – Places; and
- 5c – Prosperity.

Section 6 – ENHANCING THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Progress update on the implementation of recommendations agreed by Cabinet on 18th December 2020 to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events.

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Quarter 1 and 2 Performance Reports set out the context Council services were operating within further to the introduction of national lockdown measures in March 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This Executive Summary, bringing together and summarising the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st December 2020, continues to be set within the context of Council service delivery operating within a very challenging and unprecedented environment as a result of the on-going impact of Covid-19. This has required the Council, like all local authorities in Wales, to continue to adapt and change the way it provides services, many in partnership with others, to help meet the needs of residents and businesses.

Where appropriate, service specific information has been included within this Executive Summary to provide the reader with a full as picture as possible in this regard. In addition, throughout the Executive Summary electronic links have been included that enable the reader to access more detailed information, as required.

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance

Service Area	2020/21 – as at 31 st December 2020 (Quarter 3)		
	Full Year Budget £M	Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 3 £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	191.845	191.676	(0.169)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	159.852	160.981	1.129
Chief Executive (2c)	30.644	30.208	(0.436)
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d)	55.167	55.753	0.586
Sub Total	437.508	438.618	1.110
Authority Wide Budgets (2e)	71.239	71.178	(0.061)
Grand Total	508.747	509.796	1.049

Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the full year projected position at Quarter 3

The full year revenue budget variance, projected as at 31st December 2020, is a £1.049M overspend. This forecasted position assumes that additional costs and income losses will be offset by additional funding being made available by Welsh Government to all local authorities in Wales. Specific financial assistance is being provided to local authorities for additional expenditure incurred as a result of Covid-19 (for example, additional costs incurred in respect of housing / homelessness, free school meal payments, Adult Social Services, staff cover due to absence / shielding and increased demand for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme) and also income loss where there has been a need to temporarily suspend or reduce service provision (for example, Leisure Centres and the provision of school meals).

The Table below sets out the total forecasted full-year additional costs and income losses assumed to be recoverable.

Full Year Projection of Additional Costs and Income Losses Associated with Covid 19 and Assumed to be Fully Funded by Welsh Government

Service Area	Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (Quarters 1 - 3)	Projected Additional Costs / Income Losses (Quarter 4)	Total Full Year Additional Costs / Income Losses (Actual and Projected)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Education & Inclusion Services	-9,699	-2,754	-12,453
Community & Children's Services	-15,827	-5,671	-21,498
Chief Executive	-1,840	-685	-2,525
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-5,124	-566	-5,690
Authority Wide	-3,497	-346	-3,843
TOTAL	-35,987	-10,022	-46,009

** Excludes additional costs incurred / projected in respect of Test, Trace and Protect, the funding for which is being made available by Welsh Government.*

The forecasted costs and income losses are subject to ongoing review in light of national updates on restrictions and the associated impact on Council Services.

Revenue budget variances at Quarter 3

1. Community and Children's Services

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.593M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.634M overspend);
- Provider Services (£0.391M overspend); and
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.840M underspend).

CHILDREN SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£2.497M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.531M underspend);
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.214M underspend); and
- Intensive Intervention (£0.946M underspend).

TRANSFORMATION

- Group & Transformation Management (£0.057M overspend); and
- Service Improvement (£0.084M underspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Community Services (£0.247M underspend); and
- Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.104M underspend).

2. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Transportation (£0.150M underspend);
- Facilities Cleaning (£0.093M underspend);
- Waste Services (£0.689M overspend);
- Fleet Management (£0.109M underspend); and
- Group Directorate (£0.053M overspend).

3. Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Human Resources (£0.125M underspend);
- Legal Services (£0.095M underspend);
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.073M underspend); and
- Corporate Estates (£0.097M underspend).

4. Authority Wide Budgets

- Capital Financing (£0.250M underspend); and
- Miscellaneous (£0.193M overspend).

Earmark Reserve Update

- A breakdown of committed expenditure against approved earmark reserves for Service Areas can be viewed at Section 2f by clicking [here](#).

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Council and its contractors / suppliers have continued to build on the work undertaken in quarters 1 and 2 to ensure safe working arrangements and, in doing so, enabled the on-going delivery of capital programme projects during quarter 3.

Capital Programme Budget

Service Area	2020/21 - as at 31 st December 2020	
	Capital Budget £M	Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive (3a)	3.136	1.026
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b)	76.445	41.651
Education & Inclusion Services (3c)	20.992	12.975
Community & Children's Services (3d)	7.579	1.831
Total	108.152	57.483

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 3

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways Capital Grant (£0.589M); WG Valleys Taskforce RCT+ Empty Homes Grant (£2.000M); WG Valleys Taskforce Regional (£0.299M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant (£0.609M); WG 21st Century Schools (£2.399M); All Wales Play Opportunity Grant (£0.248M); Integrated Care Fund (£0.339M); and WG Circular Economy (£1.526M).

For information on how the Capital Programme is funded see section 3e by clicking [here](#).

Prudential Indicators

For a detailed breakdown of Prudential Indicators, see section 3f by clicking [here](#).

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- Turnover**

Service Area	2020/21		2019/20		2019/20	
	As at 31 st December 2020		As at 31 st December 2019		As at 31 st March 2020	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	10,881	5.52	10,555	8.32	10,670	9.85
Community & Children's Services	2,974	5.01	2,858	6.58	2,883	8.50
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	930	4.84	952	5.36	964	8.40
Education & Inclusion Services	1,257	5.57	1,263	7.13	1,265	8.14
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,893</u>	<u>6.27</u>	<u>4,785</u>	<u>10.41</u>	<u>4,855</u>	<u>11.64</u>
Primary	3,058	6.05	3,026	8.79	3,066	9.95
Secondary	1,835	6.65	1,759	13.19	1,789	14.53
Chief Executive's Division	827	3.63	697	7.32	703	8.11

- Sickness Absence**

With specific regard to Covid-19 and the recording of sickness absence, where staff have been unavailable for work due to self-isolating; being part of the shielded list; have underlying conditions that places an individual at risk, such as being pregnant; or lives in the same household as someone that needs to be shielded, these occurrences have not been categorised as 'sickness absence' and as such are excluded from the analysis below.

Service Area	2020/21	2019/20	
	As at 31 st December 2020 %	As at 31 st December 2019 %	As at 31 st March 2020 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	3.84	3.98	4.16
Community & Children's Services	5.96	5.53	5.59
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	5.03	4.44	4.74
Education & Inclusion Services	3.00	3.49	3.70
<u>Schools</u>	<u>2.78</u>	<u>3.35</u>	<u>3.56</u>
Primary	3.07	3.57	3.79
Secondary	2.31	2.97	3.16
Chief Executive's Division	2.45	2.35	2.39

For a more detailed breakdown of Quarter 3 2020/21 sickness absence information, [click here](#).

Organisation Health related investment areas

There will be a continued focus on investing in organisational health related areas, for example, IT infrastructure and invest to save energy efficiency schemes, with projects being delivered operationally within services across the Council.

- **Council Strategic Risks**

The Council's Quarter 3 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by clicking [here](#), with specific updates included setting out the implications to date of Covid-19 and the work being undertaken / planned to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

As part of the update process, it has not been deemed necessary to revise Strategic Risk Register risk ratings further to the review undertaken during quarter 1. This position will however be kept under on-going review and, where revisions are considered necessary, these will be included in future Strategic Risk Register updates.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority action plans for 2020/21 were reported to and approved by full Council on the 21st October 2020 covering the three priorities of People, Places and Prosperity. A summary of the progress made across the three priorities as at 31st December 2020 is set out in Sections 5a – c and electronic links have been included to each approved action plan, providing more detailed information on progress.

Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update

○ **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

Summary of progress to 31st December 2020

Assessments continue to take a person-centred approach as far as practicable, although our focus will be on those with greatest need. Under Alert Level 4 restrictions, there has been a need to return to doing more work over the phone and, for a lot of people, we can do everything we need to do in this way. However, as the pandemic continues, we experience growing pressures as more people need care and support, and workloads across Adult Services remain high and caseloads become increasingly more complex. There remains a waiting list of cases to be allocated across Care and Support and in the ACE (Occupational Therapy) Team. Additional external support continues to be commissioned to address increased levels of assessment and review workloads across Care and Support.

We continue to prioritise hospital discharges and the period since the beginning of December 2020 has continued to be demanding, although the position is now starting to stabilise. Care homes are supporting the admission of patients from hospital, wherever possible and if they can provide the appropriate care safely; however, on-going Covid-19 outbreaks and the subsequent Public Health Wales (PHW) Covid free restrictions placed on admissions is limiting care home placements (in particular, nursing and dementia) resulting in some discharges taking longer to complete. From 26th October 2020 to 7th January 2021, Adult Services supported 191 in-patient discharges and 155 Stay Well @ Home discharges. The success of this response is testament to the strength of the established partnership with CTMUHB and our providers.

The Cwrt yr Orsaf development in Pontypridd continues to make progress towards completion in Summer 2021, despite the significant challenges faced by Contractors due to Covid-19. Proposals to create a new 60-unit extra care housing scheme in Porth in line with the Council's strategy to modernise options for older people and deliver extra care housing as part of the redevelopment of the Dan y Mynydd Care Home were agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3rd December 2020.

We continue to work in partnership with housing providers to deliver modern additional supported housing accommodation for vulnerable people. The Crown Avenue (Treorchy) refurbishment was completed in early October 2020 and people will move in from January 2021, a slight delay to ensure the installation of telecare equipment at the scheme. Construction of supported housing accommodation at Oxford Street (Mountain Ash) has also made good progress and is due to be completed in spring 2021. Assessments of new tenants will start in the new year.

The Council along with its regional Health and local authority partners have recently started to work with our commissioned care providers to plan and support the roll out of asymptomatic lateral flow testing to frontline social care staff, along with the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

The majority of care homes have been subject to PHW Covid free restrictions since 20th December 2020, resulting in limited opportunity to provide outdoors visits since the start of the new Alert Level 4 restrictions. However, where possible, some outdoor “window visits” have taken place in line with risk assessments and PHW and Welsh Government guidance. The Council and care home providers recognise the importance of visiting to residents and their families, and we will continue to review risk assessments and arrangements for visiting in light of the current and any new guidance. In the interim, the Council and care home providers support opportunities, where possible, with virtual visits and calls through various forms of technology to ensure residents remain connected with family members.

Whilst the majority of our day and respite services remain temporarily closed, we have continued to support our most vulnerable people, assessed as critical due to their own or carer’s needs, in their own homes and in the community.

We restarted full operation of the Stay Well@Home 2 service (7 days a week, including out of hours) from 6th July 2020 and this was extended to Merthyr Tydfil from 20th July 2020. Adult Services and our partners are delivering winter plans, with the occurrence of Covid-19 representing an unprecedented position for health and social - Stay Well @Home 2 will be key to reducing unnecessary attendance to hospital, in particular by the Welsh Ambulance Service, by supporting people to remain safely at home.

We reinstated our seven Community Resilience Centres following the introduction of local and national restrictions. From 1st April 2020 to 31st December 2020, a total of 3,393 individual residents have been supported, for example, with shopping, picking up prescriptions, friendly phone calls, dog walking, employment and benefits advice etc.

Performance in tracing cases and their contacts remains very high, this being in the context of a significant surge in cases in December 2020. Staffing capacity for the service has been increased, with staffing resources secured from all three Local Authorities in December to support the change in demand; the Service coped well during this period and ensured appropriate training and completion of workloads. On-going focus is being afforded to ensuring the quality of data within the CRM system and processes are being developed for different settings e.g. care homes and schools, to assist the staff in decision making on any action required.

The Welsh Government funded Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS) has been delivered by the Childcare Team within Education and Inclusion Services. Places were allocated based on the submission of a successful application and children were placed with childcare settings that had remained open. The scheme ran from 1st April to 31st August 2020, with over 750 children offered placements and using 102 childcare providers. Flying Start childcare resumed in September 2020 and has remained fully operational since. Settings are managing staffing challenges well with minimal impact on availability of provision

We continue to encourage residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing. We introduced online exercise classes via our Leisure For Life App in March 2020 and these continue to be made available. We also introduced some open-air classes, utilising our parks and 3G pitches, to allow customers to exercise in a safe manner outdoors in line with social distancing requirements. Our Sports Development Team also delivered safe, socially distanced exercise opportunities in the summer HUB schools. As at 10th August 2020, gym facilities re-opened in line with social distancing and public health guidelines. This was followed by the introduction of indoor fitness classes on 17th August and swimming pools from 24th August. However, during the firebreak lockdown in October and following the implementation of the Alert Level 4 restrictions on the 20th December 2020, gyms were closed

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

and indoor and outdoor classes were cancelled in line with WG restrictions on meeting people outside of your household. In addition, support is also being provided to sports clubs and organisations to access the Sport Wales Be Active Fund and all messages are in line with Welsh Government restrictions e.g. exercising alone or with your household during Level 4 restrictions.

A range of weekly wellbeing classes are provided online as part of our Adult Education programme, including Aromatherapy, Singing for wellbeing and lung health, All About Me and Crafts for Wellbeing. A variety of wellbeing self-help videos have also been provided through our social media platforms, including support for individuals with anxiety. Learners on our courses have also received wellbeing calls from course tutors. An online programme of arts activity and performances has been curated and is available through the theatres' Facebook pages and RCT Theatres' YouTube page

Children's Services continues to work to Welsh Government statutory guidance, subject to risk assessment and physical distancing requirements, adapting methods of service delivery as necessary. This guidance was revised in December 2020 to take account of the Alert Level 4 national coronavirus restrictions. Consequently, Children's Services are now once again focusing activity on the four critical areas of work previously identified: access to services and family support, safeguarding duties, children looked after and youth offending. Priority is being given to safely visiting and hearing the voices of children most at risk (children on the child protection register) and those looked after where there is potential placement breakdown or those where input is critical to maintain them at home. We continue to look after children in both residential and foster care, prioritising children and carers most in need of support. We have commissioned UKICS to increase social work capacity in our Intensive Intervention Services. Child Protection Conferences and Children Looked After reviews are now taking place virtually attended by partners and family members where possible.

Youth Engagement & Participation Service (YEPS) staff remain in secondary schools and the support for learners pathway is still in place to ensure those young people who are struggling to return to school have the support to do/ re-engage with school and learning. Proactive street based youth work provision was established in October, with all YEPS staff re-directed to providing information, advice, guidance and emotional support to young people in communities 5 nights a week. In the 8 weeks between October and the end of December (excluding the 2 week fire-break period) 2,699 contacts were made with young people across the County Borough. The Virtual Youth Offer remains available including virtual youth clubs, live Q&A sessions and live chat sessions involving BAROD and Sexual Health Nurses from the local health board.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE		
Investment Area	Investment Value ¹ £M	Quarter 3 Update
Leisure Centre Changing Rooms	0.088	This investment funding relates to works at Sobell Leisure Centre for changing room refurbishment and was completed in August 2020.
Extracare Housing	6.974	Works at the former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site were completed in early 2020 and the first residents moved into the new facility in May 2020. Works commenced at the Pontypridd site in July 2019 and is progressing well, and are due to complete in 2021. Proposals for the extracare housing scheme in Porth were agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3 rd December 2020 and consideration of development proposals for Treorchy and Mountain Ash schemes are on-going.
Tackling Poverty Fund	0.300	This investment funding is to help address areas where there are high levels of poverty (including fuel poverty) to increase the disposable income of households, for example, by supporting households to reduce energy bills, helping to overcome barriers to find employment.
Total	7.362	

¹ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

o **PLACES** (Section 5b)

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play
Summary of progress to 31st December 2020
<p>Street cleaning and waste services continue with normal working and this has included grass cutting and fly-tipping activities with Covid-19 safety measures incorporated within operational practices. The Enforcement Team continue to provide additional Covid-19 related support e.g. marshalling at Covid-19 test centres and supporting Public Health with Covid-19 compliance measures and enforcement. Community Recycling Centres continued to operate within required guidelines. Over the Christmas/New Year period, recycling rates significantly increased to 69.08% (67.09% last year) with additional resources deployed to support recycling performance, for example, Cleansing & Parks teams undertaking Christmas tree collections.</p> <p>The Highways Improvement Programme for 2020/21 continued as planned during quarter 3. Completed projects include St Albans bridge replacement, Rhydyfelin culverts refurbishment and Gwawr Street retaining wall. Work continues on repairs as a result of Storm Dennis with good progress made on Tylorstown Tip and Ynysangharad Park footbridge.</p> <p>Following the return to school in September, our Transportation Service has been managing the safe delivery of the home to school transport provision within required Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidelines.</p> <p>With regard to air quality monitoring, provisional data indicates a positive decrease in nitrogen dioxide levels particularly in urban areas. It should be noted that it could be some time before the immediate and longer term impacts of Covid-19 travel restrictions are fully understood.</p> <p>Substance Misuse service users continue to be supported by telephone, virtual and face to face meetings where appropriate. Recovery and Relapse Prevention Groups are facilitated via the Zoom platform and the Barod website now offers a live chat facility to encourage engagement particularly for those who are not yet accessing services. Offices continue to remain open to provide advice, support and naloxone alongside sterile needle exchange equipment.</p> <p>We continue to support the Syrian Resettlement Programme arranging face to face support where it is required by families. Hate Crime Awareness week took place in October, via online videos and messaging and face to face engagement. We continue to work closely with the Police to address community tensions and Community Cohesion meetings are undertaken virtually.</p> <p>During the quarter, a rise in realistic looking media and internet scams has resulted in closer partnership working with the National Trading Standards Team and North Yorkshire Trading Standards to take down media accounts and websites from which such scams were originating. To support residents, we have also increased scam messaging warnings through social media. New partnership working with the Information Commissioner's Officers (ICO) has commenced and data from Truecall Units is now feeding into a multi-local authority programme managed by Carmarthenshire Trading Standards to further improve the prioritisation of support provided to Truecall customers who are subject to scam callers.</p> <p>Doorstep crime and rogue trader activity is prevalent with case levels being similar to those being reported across the region. We continue to work alongside South Wales Police to tackle this key area and ensure our residents are protected.</p> <p>The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team have continued to work throughout the pandemic, contacting perpetrators remotely whenever possible. Victims of ASB have been supported and</p>

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play

those at high-risk provided with face to face support as required; however, due to on-going restrictions as a result of the pandemic, the main line of communication is by telephone. Our ASB officers have also been involved in multi-agency engagement operations targeted at ASB hotspot areas.

Prior to the December lockdown, we started the process of more engagement work in Pontypridd Town Centre and assisted in developing a Town Centre Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. This will be run by the businesses with support from the Council and the Police.

We continue to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. During November and December, 300 trees were planted in various parks and open spaces, and improvement works continued across our parks and play areas, with the completion date for some projects being re-scheduled for 2021/22 to take account of the on-going impact of the pandemic. We will also recommence our Climate Change Steering Group in the coming months.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ² £M	Quarter 3 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	8.624	The additional resources are being used in conjunction with existing resources to deliver a programme of highways infrastructure repairs between 2020/21 and 2022/23.
Play Areas	0.675	There are 28 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2020/21. As at 31 st December 2020, 12 had been completed, 2 were under construction, 9 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 5 are to be designed. It is anticipated that 7 of the schemes will be carried forward and completed in 2021/22 due to the need to prioritisation team resources and contractor restrictions/delays.
Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas	0.184	There are 4 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2020/21 and include rebuilding and line marking. The on-going Covid-19 restrictions has impacted on contractor availability with 2 schemes under construction and 2 to be designed. It is anticipated that the 4 schemes will be carried forward and completed in 2021/22.
Cynon Gateway South – Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link	4.750	On Friday 16 th October the link road between the A4059 and B4275 Miskin Road was opened.
Structures: St Albans Bridge and Brook Street Footbridge	2.574	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Alban's Bridge – the bridge was opened on 11th December 2020 with some reinstatement works scheduled for quarter 4, for example, panel replacement; and • Brook St. Footbridge – the estimated start date for works is summer 2021 and discussions are on-going with Transport for Wales in respect of the work to be undertaken.
Structures	2.791	<p>The investment funding has been allocated to support structure projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed schemes – Williamstown Footbridge, Station Street bridge (Treherbert), Castell Ifor (Hopkinstown), Rhydyfelin Culverts, Gwawr Street (Aberaman - repairs to walls) and Phase 1 of B4273 Ynysybwll/Glyncoch Retaining Walls; and • New scheme – Bodringallt bridge (Ystrad) - where works are due to start in mid 2021.
Parks Structures	1.335	The investment funding has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks:

² Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ² £M	Quarter 3 Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works completed - Station Street River Wall (Treherbert) and Bridge replacement of Nant Lonydd Bridge (Upper Boat); • Contracting process in progress - Bridge deck and parapet replacement of Maesyfelin Footbridge (Pontyclun); and • Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.
Parks and Green Spaces	1.000	This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites, with 85 schemes planned for 2020/21.
Cemeteries	0.088	<p>This investment funding has been allocated to deliver works at 4 cemetery locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works completed - Maes Yr Arian, Mountain Ash (replace entrance gate and fence) and Byn Yr Gaer, Hirwaun (repair of damaged palisade); • Treallaw - drainage works underway; and • Glyntaff Cemetery - additional roadworks, waste removal, additional top car park, introduction of security measures, materials and decoration of South Chapel and public conveniences and supply and erect timber fence. The majority of works are complete and public convenience work is ongoing.
Llanharan Bypass	2.000	This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology investigations which were completed during quarter 3. The next stage programmed will be pre-Planning Application Consultation that will be undertaken in the first half of 2021.
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	6.000	This investment funding is supporting the dualling of this section of the highway. Preliminary designs have been completed and Cabinet agreed to progress with a number of key elements of the scheme on 18 th July 2019 and also 18 th December 2020. Progress to date includes: submission of a planning application for an active travel bridge at the north of the scheme and submission of the Compulsory Purchase Order for the land required for the scheme. Detailed design is on-going.
Community Hubs	0.401	<p>This investment funding relates to supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porth Plaza – works were completed on 8th June 2020; and • Treorchy – procurement process underway for works to be undertaken to improve the proposed site of Treorchy Community Hub at Treorchy Library (cladding and new windows).

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ² £M	Quarter 3 Update
Gelli/Treorchy Link Road	0.400	This investment funding relates to investigatory works for a solution which will help alleviate congestion at Stag Square. Feasibility and preliminary design options are ongoing.
Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Bypass	2.000	This investment funding relates to the preliminary design for a bypass continuation from A4059 Aberdare to join the A465 Heads Of the Valleys road. During the quarter, preliminary design was completed and pre-Planning Application Consultation has taken place. The feedback received as part of the consultation is being evaluated and will be taken into account as part of considering next steps e.g. submission of a Planning Application.
Bryn Pica Eco Park	1.400	This investment funding is to support enabling works, planning and ecology for the development of an Eco Park at the Waste Management Facility. The RIBA 3 report has been approved and work to progress the design development of RIBA Stage 4 is progressing. High voltage infrastructure works to serve the Eco Park continue with the delivery of the substation due in quarter 4.
Dinas Community Recycling Centre	0.250	This investment funding relates to the provision of a new office building and improvements on the site of Dinas Community Recycling Centre following the demolition of the previous site building. The new office building and service connections have been rescheduled due to Covid-19 impacting on the availability of contractors; these works are anticipated to be progressed during quarter 4.
Land Drainage	0.750	<p>This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes works at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abercynon (Plantation Road) – works complete; • Porth Relief Road – works substantially complete with further surfacing works being undertaken; • Cwmbach - advance works started in September 2020 and the main scheme is scheduled to start in quarter 4; • Nant yr Ffrwd – surveys completed; and • Property Flood Resistance Programme – 360+ properties offered interim expandable barriers. To date, over 120 agreements returned and surveys to commence in quarter 4.
Total	35.222	

○ **PROSPERITY** (Section 5c)

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

Summary of progress to 31st December 2020

Renewed grant offers for businesses in light of Covid 19 and earlier flood events are now being delivered, including the first grants awarded under the new Covid business grant. Since September the refocussed Enterprise Investment Fund has supported 30 businesses with grant awards totalling £165k, and 4 businesses in Pontypridd town centre have benefited from Flood Resilience Grants. Plans are also being developed in partnership with Welsh Government's South East Wales Regional Team to deliver a package of focussed support for manufacturing businesses in RCT.

Construction has completed at the £3.9m Coed Ely business unit, which was handed over to the Council on 15th January, and considerable interest has already been received from potential tenants. Construction for 20 modern business units in Robertstown is now well underway.

Key town centre schemes are under development which will help improve pedestrian access and social distancing, including the Guto Square scheme in Mountain Ash where works will start in quarter 4. In Pontypridd, Transport for Wales have begun their tenancy at Llys Cadwyn and the new footbridge to the park has been completed. Work is also progressing on redevelopment of the YMCA building and Bingo Hall site. Property improvement schemes in town centres are also progressing well, including the Black Lion development which is scheduled for completion this spring 2021. Draft recommendations for improvements to town centre resilience are currently under consideration.

Longer term developments continue to promote RCT as a tourism destination when restrictions allow, including a review of the accommodation sector. Construction of new attractions at Zip World and Dare Valley Country Park are ongoing and a significant National Lottery fund grant awarded in December will allow further improvements at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park. We continue to engage with local tourism businesses, and encourage people to 'stay safe, visit later' through media campaigns.

Work continues on the Local Development Plan review, with the call for candidate sites currently open and work underway on scoping the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal.

Early years childcare settings are being supported to remain open safely in line with covid measures through the provision of updated guidance. Schools continue to be offered support on distance, digital and blended learning, including specific guidance to support pupils with statements of special educational needs. Effective use of grant funding is supporting strategic actions for wellbeing and a helpline for professionals, pupils and families has been maintained.

Significant progress is being made on the second wave of school investments in Band B, with Phase 1 of Hirwaun Primary School completed and design in progress for YG Rhydywaun and YGG Aberdar. Following a successful legal challenge, remaining Band B projects will now be progressed.

Engagement numbers for virtual employment support have increased, with Communities for Work+ supporting 212 people into employment between April and December 2020. A Routes to Employment training course is now available online and the Welsh Government / Digital Communities chromebooks loan scheme is being implemented in RCT. In addition, the Council recruited a further 21 graduates in October 2020 and a further 17 apprentices are due to commence work in January 2021.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 3 Update
Empty Property Grant	1.500	At present, all empty property grant applications are processed via the Welsh Government funded Valley Taskforce Scheme and this approach will continue until the Welsh Government scheme closes on 31 st March 2021.
Schools	0.836	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schemes on-going include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cymmer Primary – demolition of the canteen and erection of fencing was completed in August 2020. Carpark works to be completed during summer 2021; ○ Ferndale Community School – works completed for the main swimming pool hall, construction of new retaining wall and entrance path. New signage to be finalised and installed (delayed due to Covid-19); ○ Gelli Primary - internal refurbishment, two classroom extension, additional external works, fencing, new kitchen windows completed in quarter 2 and resurfacing of driveway and line marking completed in quarter 3; and ○ Llanharan Primary – works to remodel/refurbish foundation phase classrooms, extend yard, alter/fence-in carpark completed in quarter 2 and 2 classroom extension (including toilets and associated external works) completed in quarter 3.
Transport Infrastructure	2.500	<p>This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway Network Improvement completed on the A4059 (near Cwmbach / Aberaman) to improve traffic flow at a roundabout / extending the two-lane approach; • Pedestrian crossings completed in Trealaw, Penrhiwceiber and Mountain Ash to improve road safety and promote active travel; • Design work has commenced at further pedestrian crossing locations including Tonyrefail, Groesfaen and Llanharan (to improve road safety and promote active travel); • A4058 Asda Tonypandy junction - design and development ongoing to improve junction capacity and traffic flow; and • A4059 / Bowls Club junction, feasibility study commenced to investigate improving the junction to improve traffic flow along the A4059.
Tonyrefail Roundabout	0.500	This investment funding relates to Tonyrefail roundabout for feasibility and design to improve the congestion and compliment

³ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 3 Update
		the strategic development at Coed Ely. Works on-going include preliminary design of the main junction together with Active Travel improvements. Further ground investigation work and drainage surveys have been carried out in quarter 3, and design work is continuing.
Llys Cadwyn Development	2.024	Work continued on-site during the period to complete the remaining public realm and highways works and to finalise the fit-out works for Transport for Wales at 3 Llys Cadwyn (with practical completion of the project delivered in October 2020).
Park and Ride Programme	1.000	This investment funding is supporting the development work needed to create additional 'park and ride' car parking spaces at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pontyclun - feasibility design has been carried out and preliminary design is due to commence; and • Porth – phase 3 feasibility design is complete and preliminary design is underway.
Strategic Regeneration Investment	0.200	This funding has been approved for the Guto Square development. The redevelopment of Guto Square in Mountain Ash will provide a bigger and improved area for public use in the heart of the town centre for community events and business uses, and also additional car parking spaces for shoppers and visitors to the town. It will comprise improvements to the existing area and also to a larger area through the Compulsory Purchase of the adjacent derelict parcel of land and acquisition of adjacent disused properties which will provide an improved interface with the Mountain Ash Workingmen's Club. The project is now at the demolition stage, which is due to commence in January 2021, and will then be followed by the construction phase.
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robertstown – with the principal contractor in place, progress includes: ground improvement works and foundations have been completed on specific plots; culvert diversion work is underway; and preparatory work is progressing to enable site levelling works and steel frame installation from quarter 4 onwards; and • Coed Ely - progress includes: the Building, including all internal and external works, are substantially complete and is being cleaned; and Building Control and Fire Officer inspections are scheduled for January 2021.
Total	12.760	

Section 6 – ENHANCING THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

The 18th December 2020 Cabinet meeting agreed a series of recommendations to enhance the Council’s short and long term response to extreme weather events and which limit the impact of flooding on those communities most at risk.

The progress made by Council Services to implement the recommendations can be viewed [here](#) and will be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Tudalen wag

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o Deddf Llywodraeth Leol 1972.

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