



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A hybrid meeting of the CABINET will be held on
Tuesday, 20th July, 2021 at 11.00 am

Contact: Emma Wilkins - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 07385401935)

Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Friday, 16 July 2021 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh. It must be noted that the facility to address the Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chair and each request will be considered based on the agenda items being considered, the public interest/interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. To make such a request please email:- ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

Note:

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

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on the 17th and 24th June 2021 respectively as accurate records.

(Pages 7 - 26)

3. CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL PLAN 2021/2022

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services providing Cabinet with the Annual Plan for 2021/22 for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.

(Pages 27 - 52)

4. CWM TAF MORGANWG CARERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services seeking Members approval for submission of the 2020/21 Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Annual Report to Welsh Government.

(Pages 53 - 70)

5. LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICE OFFER

To receive the report of the Group Director Community & Children's Services providing for Members consideration key information and issues relating to the Council's current day service offer for people with a learning disability.

(Pages 71 - 90)

6. DRAFT WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

To receive the report of the Director of Education and Inclusion Services providing Members with an opportunity to consider the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and to seek agreement to engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders.

(Pages 91 - 214)

7. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES PROGRAMME - MUTUAL INVESTMENT MODEL (MIM) - UPDATE

To receive the report of the Director of Education & Inclusion Services providing Members with an update on the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) funding element of Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme in relation to the Council's MIM Pathfinder Project.

(Pages 215 - 272)

8. PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR THE LLANILID HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

To receive the report of the Director of Education & Inclusion Services providing Members with an update on the proposal to establish new primary education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan.

(Pages 273 - 292)

9. A PROPOSAL TO PILOT A VIRTUAL SCHOOL MODEL TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER

To receive the report of the Director of Education and Inclusion Services providing Members with an opportunity to consider a joint pilot strategy between Education and Inclusion Services and Children's Services to improve the educational outcomes of children who are looked after (CLA) by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) through the creation of a Virtual School Model (VSM).

(Pages 293 - 326)

10. STANDARD ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

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

(Pages 327 - 362)

11. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31ST MARCH 2021 (QUARTER 4/YEAR END)

To receive the report of the Director, Finance and Digital Services, which provides the Cabinet with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, for the financial year ended 31st March 2021.

(Pages 363 - 390)

12. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING UPDATE

To receive the report of the Director of Finance and Digital Services, providing Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2021/22 to 2024/25, based on current modelling assumptions in advance of formulating the detailed budget strategy proposals for 2022/23 during the autumn.

(Pages 391 - 436)

13. TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

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

14. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018/23: INTERIM UPDATE

To receive an exempt report from the Director of Corporate Estates providing Cabinet Members with progress against the key themes of the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/23.

(Pages 437 - 462)

15. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Smith', is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

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

Officers: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Nigel Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Paul Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources
David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Andy Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Louise Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Derek James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development
Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services

This page is intentionally left blank



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 17 June 2021 at 10.30 am at the Virtual.

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

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

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Mr D James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development
Mr M Crumbie, Head of Procurement Delivery
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services
Ms A Richards, Temporary Service Director - 21st Century Schools and Transformation
Ms J Parry, Trading Standards & Registrar Services Manager

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations were made:

- The Deputy Leader declared the following personal interests in Item 6 of the agenda – Consideration for Family Engagement Roles: “I am on the Governing Body of Heol Y Celyn which is referenced within the report” and in Item 8 of the agenda - 21st Century Schools Programme - Proposals to Reorganise Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Provision in the Greater Pontypridd Area: “Cardinal Newman School is within my ward and is referenced within the report”;
- The Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing declared the following personal interest in Item 6 of the agenda – Consideration for Family Engagement Roles: ‘I am on the Governing Body of Tylorstown Primary School which is referenced within the report’;
- The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services declared the following personal interest in Item 6 of the agenda

- Consideration for Family Engagement Roles: ‘I am on the Governing Body of YGG Abercynon which is referenced within the report’;
- The Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services declared the following personal interest in Item 6 of the agenda – Consideration for Family Engagement Roles: ‘I am on the Governing Body of Trealaw Primary School which is referenced within the report’;
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language declared the following personal interest in Item 6 of the agenda – Consideration for Family Engagement Roles: ‘I am on the Governing Body of Llanharan Primary School which is referenced within the report’; and
- The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services declared the following personal interest in Item 8 of the agenda - 21st Century Schools Programme - Proposals to Reorganise Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Provision in the Greater Pontypridd Area: ‘I am employed by Coleg Y Cymoedd which is referenced within the Impact Assessment’.

2 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 29th April 2021 as an accurate reflection.

3 LEADER'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note for information the Leader's Scheme of Delegation for the 2021/22 Municipal Year, following the changes reported to the 26th Annual General Meeting of the Council.

4 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided Cabinet Members with a draft work programme for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year, which listed matters requiring consideration by Cabinet.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report and were advised that the programme is a live document to allow for any additional / deletion of reports throughout the year. The Service Director reminded Members that in response to the requirements of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, at the Council's 26th Annual General Meeting, it was agreed that further detail would be provided within the Cabinet Work Programme going forward to allow sufficient opportunity for consultation and pre-scrutiny and as such, the Council's constitution had been amended to reflect those changes.

The Service Director informed Members that the content of the Work Programme would support discussions between Scrutiny Chairs and Cabinet Members at future engagement sessions and subsequently assist development of the future Work Programmes of the Scrutiny Committees.

The Deputy Leader noted the content of the draft work programme and commented that the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires

information about forthcoming executive decisions must be made available to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to ensure the Committees are best informed to undertake and better plan their work. The Deputy Leader acknowledged that the development of an accurate and robust Cabinet Work Programme would further strengthen the robust Governance arrangements within the Local Authority.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Work Programme for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year (with appropriate amendment where necessary) and to receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

5 COVID-19 SPEND

The Head of Procurement provided the Cabinet with a summary of the expenditure that was not on contract but was required in order to facilitate critical and timely support in respect of the Council's corporate responsibilities to both its residents and workforce, in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic risks.

The officer spoke of the options made available to public sector organisations in March 2020, under the Regulation 32(2)(c) under the Public Contract Regulations 2015, to assist with the response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Members' attention was drawn to Section 5 of the report, which detailed the Council's application of Regulation 32. The officer emphasised that the key priority was to ensure that all frontline staff (both Council staff and staff working for Council commissioned services) had sufficient PPE that met the required safety standards to protect its residents.

The Leader was happy to note the report and took the opportunity to thank the officers for the work undertaken through the pandemic and spoke of the vigorous checks of PPE to ensure the standards were met for the safety of staff and residents.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services was pleased to note that despite the urgency of the situation, officers maintained up to date records and noted that due diligence was undertaken to ensure product specification and certificates of conformity were met. The Cabinet Member was also pleased to note that the vast majority of contracts were met by either companies based within RCT or the surrounding regions, which supported the local economy. Upon concluding, the Cabinet Member echoed the Leader's thanks to officers and commended staff and regional businesses for their innovation and stepping up to the challenge.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note that all procurement actions detailed within the report were undertaken to ensure that safety and wellbeing of our frontline staff; and
2. To acknowledge that wherever possible, and appropriate supply is available and deliverable (option to collect) within sometimes very tight timescales, the Council has targeted the engagement of local businesses to fulfil its supply requirements.

6 CONSIDERATION FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER ROLES - FEEDBACK

The Director, Education and Inclusion Services presented the report to Cabinet which sought to consider the impact and potential extension of the Family Engagement Officer (FEO) pilot currently in six secondary/through schools to help tackle barriers to engagement in education.

The Director advised that following Cabinet's approval on 13th February 2020 to fund a pilot across six secondary/through schools, the role of the Family Engagement Officer had been invaluable and had supported improvement in a number of key areas such as attendance and learner and family wellbeing. The Director advised that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was difficult to acquire data in respect of the role's impact on attendance and therefore a full rollout of the role was not requested but the Director felt it would be beneficial to consider the impact of the roles in some of the primary settings with pupils from high deprivation areas and with low historic attendance.

Based on a simple ranking/scoring system of those with the highest percentage of pupils living within the top 20% of deprived communities as identified in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation and the ranking of overall attendance in the last complete academic year in 2018/19, the Director proposed that the following primary schools were included within the pilot:

- Pontygwaith Primary School;
- Penywaun Primary School;
- Perthcelyn Community Primary School;
- Treallaw Primary School;
- Maerdy Primary School;
- Penrhys Primary School;
- Pontrhondda Primary School;
- Tref-y-Rhyg Primary School;
- Tylorstown Primary School;
- Heol y Celyn Primary School;
- Pengeulan Primary School;
- Penpych Primary School; and
- Penrhiwceibr Primary School.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion took the opportunity to thank officers for the detailed report. The Cabinet Member was pleased with the initiative and acknowledged that despite the inability to fully measure or gauge improvements in school attendance due to the pandemic, all six secondary schools reported some improvement in attendance and in engaging learners.

The Cabinet Member was in support of the rationale detailed within the report and commented that there was a need to continue with the roles in the secondary sector, in order to improve attendance levels and to support wellbeing. Referring to Appendix 2 of the report, the Cabinet Member was of the view that there was justification in piloting the roles in primary schools where, particularly in the most deprived areas, the pandemic had had a significant impact on attendance.

The Deputy Leader was in support of the proposals and subject to Cabinet approval, questioned when the additional schools would be informed of the pilot. The Director informed the Cabinet that contact had been made with the schools and agreement of the match funding had been made in principle, pending

Cabinet's decision.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that non-attendance was often linked with vulnerable families and emphasised the importance of the role in addressing the different scenarios experienced by families which may then affect attendance and wellbeing.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the information contained in the report;
2. To agree to the extension of the Family Engagement Officer pilot programme in six secondary/through schools for an additional 12-month period until August 2021; and
3. To agree to the introduction of a primary phase pilot for 24-months within thirteen primary schools.

7 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION PROVISION FOR YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG LLYN-Y-FORWYN

The Director, Education and Inclusion Services advised Cabinet Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of proposals to carry out a regulated alteration to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn-y-Forwyn ("YGG Llyn-y-Forwyn"), by way of transferring the school to a new building on a new site.

Referring to Appendix 1, which detailed the consultation responses, the Director advised that out of the 72 responses received, 70 were in agreement with the proposal, 1 respondent was not and 1 respondent was unsure.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services was happy to support the recommendations and was pleased to note the positive Estyn report and consultation responses. The Cabinet Member commented that progressing the proposals would increase capacity and improve the quality of Welsh Medium Primary education within the County Borough.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the information contained within the attached Consultation Report, which includes a summary of correspondence received during the consultation exercise, including the full response from Estyn, feedback received from the online survey, and notes of the meetings held; and
2. To progress the proposals to the next stage of the consultation process by issuing an appropriate Statutory Notice which will trigger the start of the Objection Period.

8 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME - PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE GREATER PONTYPRIDD AREA

The Temporary Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation provided Cabinet Members with an update on the proposals to reorganise schools in the Greater Pontypridd area.

The Temporary Service Director spoke of the following proposals:

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

The Temporary Service Director referred Members to Section 4 of the report and reported the changes that had taken place since approval was granted by Cabinet in July 2019. It was explained that following delays, work to progress the proposals had recommenced and a re-programming exercise undertaken, the outcome of which was that the implementation date for the 3 proposals that gained Cabinet approval would be delayed until September 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services commented that it was unfortunate that the Judicial Review had delayed progression of the new facilities. The Cabinet Member commented that the Council is responsible for delivering high educational standards and efficient primary, secondary and sixth form education provision that serves the local community and is achieved by ensuring that the right schools, are the right size, are in the right location, and are fit for the 21st Century learner.

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication informed the Cabinet that should the report be approved, agreement would be sought from the Presiding Officer, to exempt the report from the 3 working day call-in period, to allow for the completion and submission of the Outline Business Cases to Welsh Government by July 2021, for the next stage of the funding the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the information contained within the report;
2. To note the impact of the Judicial Review on programme and costs;
3. To delay the implementation date of the proposals in all schools, with the exception of Cardinal Newman CS School, to September 2024; and
4. To note that Outline Business Cases for each of the projects will be

submitted to Welsh Government for consideration in July 2021 with a decision expected in August 2021.

9 ONLINE ACTIVE TRAVEL CONSULTATION: OUTCOME OF EXERCISE

The Service Director, Frontline Services provided Members with details of the outcome of an online active travel consultation exercise that the Council undertook a few months previous, in collaboration with the Welsh Government.

Members were advised that the level of public response to the Council's online active travel consultation exercise was very encouraging. It demonstrated the interest that exists amongst residents to improve walking and cycling facilities and / or remove the barriers which can cause difficulties for them and prevent additional walking and cycling journeys from being made. The Service Director continued by advising that as well as updating the Integrated Network Map / Active Travel Network Map, where appropriate, and / or forwarding details of the comments received from stakeholders to other parties as necessary, it is intended that the Council will continue to undertake the statutory active travel consultation exercise, as previously reported, later this year.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services commented on the report and the distinction between the active travel routes as apposed to leisure routes, and commented on the number of responses relating to the latter and comments received in respect of Rights of Way, although she added that the comments would be passed to the relevant services for consideration.

The Cabinet Member spoke of the positive response rate to the consultation with 695 responses although commented on the disappointing number of younger people responding and the need to do more to engage with the young people. The Cabinet Member commented on the opportunity to utilise the 'Lets Talk RCT' which could assist in the future with such engagement. The Cabinet Member concluded by advising of the updates to be taken forward with the network travel maps and positives going forward in relation to active travel across the Authority.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the comments received during the period the online active travel consultation exercise was live.
2. To note the response of the Council to the comments received.
3. To note the next stage to be undertaken as part of the ongoing active travel consultation process.

10 NORTH WEST CARDIFF CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION STUDY: UPDATE

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication advised Members that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had undertaken pre-scrutiny of the Transportation study at its meeting on the 15th June, and a detailed note of Members comments had been circulated in advance of the Cabinet meeting to assist Members in their deliberations.

The Service Director Frontline Services provided Members with an outline of the report which identified the short-term and long-term public transport options that offer the best business cases in order to improve access through from RCT through North West Cardiff towards the city centre.

Members were advised that the transportation study and related Business Case process had highlighted the advantages of a 'joined-up' approach to developing a range of public transport proposals in the Cardiff Capital Region, many of which will operate cross boundary. It also highlighted the importance of achieving improved connectivity to/from central Cardiff and between local and regional destinations elsewhere.

The Service Director commented that the project was of regional significance and had the potential to attract several hundreds of millions of pounds of funding into the area. If delivered, the public transport solutions would transform travel behaviour and provide a safe, reliable, convenient and sustainable transport option. As well as facilitating transport from Rhondda Cynon Taf into Cardiff, it could also encourage travel into Rhondda Cynon Taf, particularly in association with the development of the new town centre at Talbot Green. It is possible that the wider economic benefits could extend northwards into the Rhondda Valley and Gilfach Goch areas as the creation of new employment in Talbot Green and planned reduction in journey times to/from Cardiff will offer residents in these communities with improved access to new jobs, training and learning opportunities.

The Service Director concluded his report by advising that the next steps would be the WeITAG Stage 2 process which would be used to inform the final recommendations. However, it should be noted that a proposed transport scheme for the North West Cardiff – Talbot Green / Llantrisant corridor would require further development before any of the transport investment options for serving this area of planned major development could be determined.

The Leader of the Council commented on the large piece of work entailed within the transportation study and the opportunities within to improve communities within RCT. The Leader advised of the long-term projects and the need to plan for the next decade.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the outcome to date of the North West Cardiff Corridor Transportation Study.
2. To note the next stage in progressing this study – WeITAG Stage 2.

11 UK GOVERNMENT LEVELLING UP FUND - OPPORTUNITIES IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

The Service Director, Prosperity and Development provided Cabinet with a summary of the UK Government Leveling Up Fund and the potential project opportunities and timescales for the development, appraisal, and submission of project applications.

Members were made aware of the 3 staged approach to assessment and decision making and referred Members to section 5 of the report which outlined

the proposed projects.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Planning commented on the significant amount of money across the four schemes and the recognition of the schemes across the County Borough. The Cabinet Member spoke of the tight timescales in respect of the fund and the need for expenditure to be used within the financial year. He also commented on the good working practice of demonstrated pipelines for future schemes in development and took the opportunity and thanked officers for the work involved.

The Leader commented on the opportunities for the County Borough if successful with the funding and how the Authority deserved to be recognised for the funding due to the high level of deprivations within the County Borough, the impact of the floods and the impact in respect of covid.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To agree to progress development of a project application package for submission as set out in section 5 of the report.

(**N.B.** Due to the timescales in respect of the funding, it was advised that the decision would be taken forward as exempt from call in, subject to the agreement of the Presiding Officer.)

12 HOME OFFICE - WIDENING ASYLUM SEEKER DISPERSAL SCHEME

The Interim Head of Community Safety and Community Housing provided Members with details of the Widening of the Asylum Dispersal Scheme, and the participation by the Council in making a practical and humanitarian commitment to assist some of the most vulnerable persons fleeing conflict in their home country. The Officer added that the strength of partnership working in Rhondda Cynon Taf, along with the support of the local communities has been integral to the success of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. Participation in the Widening Dispersal Scheme would provide the opportunity to build on this success.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services referred to the proud record of support by the Council adding that it was appropriate for the Authority to participate in the scheme. The Cabinet Member spoke of the importance of the distinction of the 'dispersal zone' and 'dispersal scheme'. The Cabinet Member commented on the cross organisation work with Health, education and other providers to ensure individuals are given the right amount of support to live within the County Borough.

The deputy Leader spoke on the importance of the support available within the communities to support individuals within the scheme, referencing the use of the church, community and voluntary groups and the local Member.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve participation in the Widening Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme within the County Borough, building on the positive experience and learning gained from the delivery of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme.

2. To agree that the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services can start discussions with the Home Office, WSMP and Clearsprings Ready Homes to determine how many individuals/families can be supported in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

13 PROPOSED PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR THE UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND

With agreement of the Leader as Chair of the meeting and in accordance with the provision of Section 100(b)4(B) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Proposed Priority Projects for the UK Community Renewal Fund report was considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances.

The Trading Standards & Registrar Service Manager provided Members with a detailed overview of the report, concentrating on the identified projects to be put forward to the scheme for approval by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), subject to Cabinet agreement.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services thanked the officers for the work involved within the fund and commented further on the project bids presented before Members. The Cabinet Member commented that the projects identified were aligned to the Council corporate priorities. He added that there were many notable projects that had been put recognised, although unfortunately not all could go forward. He also commented that there was no guarantee that those projects put forward would be approved by the scheme.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To review the priority projects, summarised at 4.6.1 – 4.6.8 of the report
2. To approve the same, for submission to UK Government via MHCLG; and
3. To acknowledge that submitting an application does not infer that the project will receive funding from UK Government.

(N.B It was reported that due to the timescales for submission of the projects to the UK Government the decision would be exempt from Call In, subject to agreement by the Presiding Officer.)

This meeting closed at 11.51 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 24 June 2021 at 10.30 am at the Virtual.

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

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

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Mr C Davies, Corporate Policy & Consultation Manager
Ms A Richards, Temporary Service Director - 21st Century Schools and Transformation
Mr R Waters, Service Director, Frontline Services

14 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made pertaining to the agenda:

- County Borough Councillor R Bevan – Agenda item 3 Additional Repairs and Maintenance Investment in Schools “I am on the Governing Body of Pontygwaith Primary School which is referenced within the report’
- County Borough Councillor J Rosser – Agenda item 3 Additional Repairs and Maintenance Investment in Schools “I am on the Governing Body of Trealaw Primary School which is referenced within the report’
- County Borough Councillor R Lewis – Agenda item 3 Additional Repairs and Maintenance Investment in Schools “I am on the Governing Body of YGG Abercynon which is referenced within the report’
- County Borough Councillor M Norris – Agenda item 3 Additional Repairs and Maintenance Investment in Schools “I am on the Governing Body of Cwm Clydach School which is referenced within the report’
- County Borough Councillor G Hopkins– Agenda item 3 Additional Repairs and Maintenance Investment in Schools “I am on the Governing Body of Llanharan Primary School which is referenced within the report’
- County Borough Councillor A Morgan – Agenda item 3 Additional Repairs and Maintenance Investment in Schools “I am on the Governing Body of Glen Boi and Darren Las Primary School which is referenced within the report’

- In respect of agenda item 8 - Councillor R Bevan referenced the dispensation received from the Standards Committee in November 2020 allowing him to speak on all matters pertaining to the Children & Young People, as his daughter works within the Directorate.
- The following declaration was made pertaining to agenda item 8 'Review of Senior Management Structure' by the Monitoring Officer on behalf of the following the Senior Officers in attendance at the meeting
 - Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
 - Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
 - Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
 - Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
 - Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
 - Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
 - Mr C Davies, Corporate Policy & Consultation Manager
 - Ms A Richards, Temporary Service Director - 21st Century Schools and Transformation
 - Mr R Waters, Service Director, Frontline Services

"I wish to declare a Personal and Pecuniary interest on behalf of myself and all Chief Officers present in relation to Agenda Item 8 as our posts are referenced in the report. All Chief Officers will leave the meeting for this item save for the Chief Executive, as the author and presenter of the report and the Director of Human Resources who will remain in the meeting to address any Member queries. Whilst I will leave the meeting during its discussion I shall be available should any legal or constitutional queries arise during discussion of the item."

15 ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN DEMOCRACY

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication provided Members with an update in respect of the introduction arrangements to enable the broadcasting of committee meetings and the ability to operate through a hybrid approach. It was added that these developments aim to encourage engagement and improve public participation in the democratic process.

Members were provided with a proposed roll out of the hybrid and webcasting facilities, as well as details of further proposals to improve the provision of hybrid facilities by taking forward changes within the smaller committee room settings. The Service Director also took the opportunity to advise of the changes to the Council Committee pages on the website to promote the webcasting provision.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the phased approach to hybrid meetings and the importance of demonstration meetings and training to members on the different systems in place to ensure the continuation of successful committee meetings.

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) To note the development of the provision of webcasting within Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, in line with the requirements of the Local Government & Elections Wales Act, 2021.

- (ii) To note the development of webcasting to further assist with the promotion of public engagement and transparency of decision making by the Council;
- (iii) To note the decision of the Democratic Services Committee in respect of the meetings that are proposed to remain as virtual meetings and those that will be facilitated through a future hybrid approach, subject to the caveats outlined within the report
- (iv) To note the meetings that will be webcast and live streamed through the Council website and the roll out of such meetings.
- (v) To note the move to the Modern.Gov system to publish information to the Council website, including Member attendance details.
- (vi) To note the funding received via the Digital Democracy Fund to further support the developments needed to be taken forward with webcasting within the Council Headquarters.

16 ADDITIONAL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS

The Temporary Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation provided Members with details of further repairs and maintenance works for approval for 2021/22 as a result of additional funding awarded by Welsh Government in March 2021 and supplemented by the Council's earmarked reserves.

Members were advised that the works listed within the Appendix attached to the report would continue to support schools, improve building stock and address essential condition and health and safety issues across the school estate. It would also continue to ensure school buildings were able to comply with Welsh Government operational guidance as the Council continue to work with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services welcomed the added investment, which would look to improve schools within the County Borough, improving wellbeing and creating safe educational environments.

The Leader also welcomed the investment which was over and above the capital programme and spoke of the benefits of the investment to the local economy, with the creation of local jobs.

Following discussion's it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To agree the additional schemes for 2021/22 as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report and to approve scheme commencement.

(N.B. As referenced in Minute no.14 number of Members declared an interest in respect of this item.)

17 PRE SCRUTINY - DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY (2021-2025) CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided the

Cabinet with the feedback of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which met on the 14th and 15th June 2021, respectively, to consider a report on the Draft Climate Change Strategy (2021-2025) Consultation Responses.

Members were advised of the responses received from the Committees before being provided with an overview of the consultation responses in respect of the draft climate strategy. Members were advised of the methods used to consult on the strategy with use of the 'Lets Talk RCT platform'.

Members were referred to section 6 of the report which presented the key findings to the consultation responses, with 76% of respondents to the survey agreed that the Council's work to tackle Climate Change should be set out in one plan. Members were advised that Overall, 392 people took part in the engagement on the Climate Change Strategy, with 220 people engaged directly in the engagement via the Let's Talk Climate Change engagement tool. 349 were informed (viewed documents and multiple pages) and 608 were aware (visited the site).

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services and Chair of the Climate Change Steering Group commented on the high level of support for the strategy and the need to become a carbon neutral County Borough. The Cabinet Member welcomed the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the consultation responses.

The Leader welcomed the public involvement and commented on the joined up approach needed by the Council and the communities to take forward the climate changes to ensure the whole County Borough is Carbon Neutral as close as possible to the 2030 target.

Following discussion's it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the report considered by the [Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group](#) and the [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#);
2. To note the comments and observations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group following consideration of the report at its meeting on 14th June 2021; and the comments and observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following pre-scrutiny of the report at its meeting on 15th June 2021 as referenced within the report.
3. To the recommendations presented within the Draft Climate Change Strategy (2021-2025) Consultation Findings, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, and for ease of reference listed below:
 - i. Request that Officers use the feedback to inform the development of the final Climate Change Strategy.
 - ii. Agree to support the approach of facilitating an ongoing climate change conversation with residents, local businesses and partners, linked to the final Climate Change Strategy workplan.

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group, which met on the 14th June 2021, to consider a report on the Queen's Green Canopy Project 2021-22.

Members were advised that to mark the platinum Jubilee in 2022, Her Majesty the Queen has recently launched the [Queen's Green Canopy \(QGC\)](#), to celebrate 70 years of service to the Nation. The campaign is focused on the role of trees and woodlands in enhancing the environment and includes elements of sustainable planting and the protection of ancient woodland and veteran trees.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services and chair of the climate change steering group commented on project and acknowledged that the Council's participation in the project would make a positive contribution to the Council's climate change priority, and the unanimous support from the group to engage with the project. The cabinet Member referenced the intention to engage with Community and Town Councils regarding the most appropriate locations for tree planting.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the initiative to celebrate the queen's jubilee and commented on the need to protect the existing woodland, including ancient woodland.

The Chief Executive advised Members that a tree planting strategy was being prepared and acknowledged that previously this was an area that had been under invested. He added that it was the intention to bring the strategy forward to Cabinet in the Autumn for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the content of the report (attached as Appendix A) considered by the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group on the 14th June 2021; and
2. To note the observations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.

19 TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

Members **RESOLVED** that press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) for the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 12 and 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

20 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR AND ASSOCIATED MANAGEMENT POST STRUCTURE

The Chief Executive provided Cabinet with details of his exempt report which sought approval for the implementation of further proposals to revisions to the Council's Senior and Associated Management post structure. Members were advised that if taken forward, implementation of all of the revisions would provide an overall estimated reduction in annual management costs at the Senior and Associated Management grade levels of £250,000 (inclusive of on-costs). The Chief Executive advised of 3 small amendments within the report which are

reflected in the resolution below.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the revised directorate structures shown at Appendices 2(i), 2(ii) and 2 (iii) be implemented from the 1st August 2021 and structure at 2(iv) be implemented from the 1st October 2021. Agreed to approve a further structural change as shown at Appendix 3(i), which will be effective from the 1st May 2022 (subject to the necessary staff consultation process).
2. To note that implementation of all of the revised structures would provide an overall estimated reduction in annual management costs at the Senior and Associated Management grade levels of £250,000 (inclusive of on-costs);
3. To note that as part of the ongoing efficiency savings programme, then subject to any required approval of the Council's Appointment's Committee, it would result in the deletion of the following posts from the Council's structure, in line with the above structural amendment dates in decision 1 above:
 - i) Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (Group Director grade);
 - ii) Service Director of Community Services (Service Director Level 2);
 - iii) Service Director of Public Protection (Service Director Level 2);
 - iv) Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside (Head of Service Level 1); and
 - v) Head of Customer Care* (Head of Service Level 1)

** please note this post was subject of an agreed VER request on the 30th April 2020. This post is not associated with the estimated reduction in management costs as detailed above but now needs to be formally removed from the Council's structure.*

4. To note that emanating from the decision in 1 above Cabinet would be authorising:
 - a) the amendment of the post Director – Corporate Estates (Director Level 2) to Director – Corporate Estates (Director Level 1);
 - b) the amendment of the post of Head of Corporate & Management Accounting (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Corporate & Management Accounting (Service Director Level 2);
 - c) the amendment of the post of Head of Education & Financial Reporting (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Education & Financial Reporting (Service Director Level 2);
 - d) the amendment of the post of Head of Community & Children's Finance (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Community & Children's Finance (Service Director Level 2);
 - e) the amendment of the post of Head of Organisational Development (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Organisational Development (Service Director Level 2);
 - f) the amendment of the post of Head of Employee Relations (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Employee Relations (Head of Service Level 1);
 - g) the amendment of the post of Service Director – Pensions,

- Procurement & Transactional Services (Service Director Level 2) to Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services (Service Director Level 1);
- h) the amendment of the post of Head of Revenues & Benefits (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Revenues & Benefits (Head of Service Level 1);
 - i) the amendment of the post of Head of Accommodation Services (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Accommodation Services (Head of Service Level 1);
 - j) the amendment of the post of Director – Education & Inclusion Services (Director Level 2) to Director – Education & Inclusion Services (Director Level 1);
 - k) the amendment of the post of Head of 21st Century Schools (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director- 21st Century Schools & Transformation Services (Service Director Level 1);
 - l) the amendment of the post of Head of Transformation & Education Information (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Transformation, Admissions and Governance (Head of Service Level 1);
 - m) the amendment of the post of Head of Achievement Secondary (0.5) (soulbury grade) to Head of Secondary Achievement & Wellbeing (soulbury grade);
 - n) the amendment of the post of Head of School Advisory Support (soulbury grade) to Head of Primary Achievement (soulbury grade);
 - o) the amendment of the post of Head of Strategic Investments (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Transportation, Enforcement & Strategic Investments (Service Director Level 2);
 - p) recommends to Council the amendment to the post of Group Director – Community & Children’s Services (Group Director grade) to Deputy Chief Executive & Group Director – Community & Children’s Services (Group Director grade);
 - q) the creation of the post of Head of Technology (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - r) the creation of the post of Head of Digital Transformation (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - s) the creation of the post of Head of ICT Operations (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - t) the creation of the post of Head of Data, IM & Systems (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - u) the creation of the post of Head of Learning Disability & Mental Health (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - v) the creation of the post of Head of Community & Welsh Language Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - w) the creation of the post of Head of Arts, Culture & Library Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - x) the creation of the post of Head of Leisure, Sports & Parks Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - y) the creation of the post of Head of Public Protection & Regulatory Services (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - z) the creation of the post of Head of Community Protection & Housing Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - aa) the creation of the post of Head of Planning (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - bb) the creation of the post of Head of Major Developments &

- Investments (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - cc) the creation of the post of Head of Housing Strategy & Investments (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - dd) the creation of the post of Head of Infrastructure Asset Management (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - ee) the creation of the post of Head of Flood Risk Management and Strategic Projects (Head of Service – Level 2); and
 - ff) the amendment of the post of Service Director – Frontline Services (Service Director – Level 1) to Director of Frontline Services (Director Level 1)
- 5 That as a consequence of the proposals outlined in 1 above, to transfer certain functions outlined in the report from Frontline Services to Corporate Estates;
 - 6 That as a consequence of the decision taken in 1 above, to transfer certain functions outlined in the report from the Public Health, Protection & Community Services to Frontline Services;
 - 7 To authorise the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, to commence the staff consultation process in accordance with the Council’s agreed Managing Change Policy and, subject decision 8 below, thereafter implement the proposals;
 - 8 Subject to the completion of the consultation process above (decision 7), and where necessary, refer the matter of the terms and conditions of employment and remuneration of the posts included in the proposed revised directorate’s structure, shown at Appendices 2(i) to 2(iv) (subject to the amendments detailed in 10 and 11 below) and 3(i) to the report, to the Appointments Committee and/or full Council as appropriate;
 - 9 To note that consequential changes would be required to the Council’s Constitution in terms of the removal and creation of Chief Officer posts;
 - 10 To note an amendment to Appendix 2(iv) in respect of two Head of Service Posts which should fall under the Frontline Services Directorate and not the Prosperity & Development Directorate namely the Head of Flood Risk Management & Strategic Projects (reporting to Service Director – Transportation, Enforcement & Strategic Investments) and Head of Infrastructure Management (reporting to Service Director – Highways & Engineering); and
 - 11 To note an amendment to Appendix 2(iii) (Corporate Estates Directorate) namely that the post of Head of Operational Property Services is to be renamed as Head of Energy & Carbon Reduction

(N.B As referenced within minute No.14 Chief Offices in attendance left the meeting when the matter was discussed and voted upon, except the Chief Executive and Director, Human Resources who remained in the meeting to present the report to Members.)

This meeting closed at 11.04 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**

This page is intentionally left blank



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL PLAN 2021/2022

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS: COUNCILLOR HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR LEYSHON

Author: Nikki Kingham, Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board
Business Manager, Tel No: 07814 627207

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to share with Cabinet the Annual Plan for 2021/22 for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes and endorses the content of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Plan for 2021/22.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board has a statutory responsibility to publish an Annual Plan on 31st March each year, which sets out its priorities for the coming year. This year, due to the COVID pandemic, the deadline for submission to the Welsh Government was extended to the 30th June 2021.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (CTMSB) is a statutory partnership made up of the agencies that are responsible for safeguarding children and adults at risk in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area. The Board ensures that people of all ages, living in the region, are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. This also

involves preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm from happening.

- 4.2 The two key safeguarding objectives around protection and prevention underpin the work of the Safeguarding Board and inform the priorities that we have agreed in the Annual Plan for 2021/2022.

5. ANNUAL PLAN 2021/2022

- 5.1 The Board has acknowledged the difficulties and challenges partner agencies have faced over the past year. This year's Annual Plan recognises those challenges and aims to learn the lessons from a year of unprecedented demands on services.

- 5.2 The Plan identifies what the Board will be focusing on during 2021/22, in pursuit of our aim to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf Morgannwg are safeguarded from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

- 5.3 Members of the Board met in March 2021 to agree the key priority areas that needed to be focussed on in the coming year. This decision was based on a detailed review of the lessons learned by partner agencies over the past year and an analysis of the current and prevalent safeguarding issues affecting the region. These priorities will be carried out alongside and in addition to the Board's core statutory safeguarding functions and are as follows:

- 5.4 Ensure an Effective Response to the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Board has recognised that as we slowly emerge from this period of challenge, that there are lessons that can be learned for the future, that some work deemed as non-essential at such a critical time should now be re-introduced and that we need to manage the impact that the pandemic has inevitably had on our partner agencies, our staff and the people that we have a responsibility for protecting.

- 5.5 Strengthen Safeguarding Links to other Partnerships in the Region

The Board wants to improve and strengthen links with other Partnerships to maximise any opportunities to work collaboratively to safeguard children and adults in the region. Good progress has already been made, particularly in relation to the response to Domestic Abuse and Suicide Prevention. This year, the Board will further enhance and build on established links and to extend to other areas of commonality and concern.

- 5.6 Improve our Approach to Public Protection Concerns

The world of Safeguarding is increasingly crossing over to the realms of Public Protection which has a wider focus on protecting and improving the health, safety and well-being of the general population of the region.

The Board has, over the past few years, ensured that training and awareness raising for staff across all partner agencies has been delivered in relation to areas of concern. This includes criminal exploitation (also known as County Lines), radicalisation and modern slavery. This year, the Board will strengthen its approach to Public Protection concerns by further embedding this into safeguarding practice and Board functions.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment form has been completed and there is no impact. The document will be available in Welsh.

8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 The Annual Plan has been approved by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board and shared with the Welsh Government and the National Independent Safeguarding Board.

- 8.2 A copy of the report has been published on the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board website www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board uses the national funding formula to identify annual financial contributions from statutory partner agencies.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the responsibilities and the functions of the Regional Safeguarding Boards.

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

11.1 The Board contributes to elements of the work of the Public Service Board by reporting on safeguarding activity.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 A detailed work plan for the Board and its sub groups will sit underneath the Annual Plan. The work plan will include the actions required to achieve the improvements required, who is responsible, timescales and measures of success. The progress of the work plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis and will form the basis of the Annual Report for 2021/2022.

Other Information:-

Contact Officer; Nikki Kingham

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

**REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S
SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO
HOLDERS: COUNCILLOR HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR LEYSHON**

**CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL PLAN
2021/2022**

Background Papers

None.

Officer to contact: Nikki Kingham

This page is intentionally left blank



Cwm Taf Morgannwg Bwrdd Diogelu Safeguarding Board



Annual Plan 2021-2022



**GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES**
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board



Gwasanaeth Prawf
Cenedlaethol
National Probation
Service



**VOLUNTARY ACTION
MERTHYR TYDFIL
GWETHREDU GWIRFODDOL
MERTHYR TYDFIL**

Table of Contents	Page
FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD	3
SAFEGUARDING IN CWM TAF MORGANNWG	4
WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES THAT WE PROPOSE TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR?	6
1. Ensure an Effective Response to the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic	7-10
2. Strengthen Safeguarding Links to other Partnerships in the Region	10-12
3. Improve our Approach to Public Protection Concerns	12-13
WHO DO WE INTEND TO COLLABORATE WITH TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?	14
OUR BUDGET	15
ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONE?	16
APPENDIX 1 - BOARD MEMBERSHIP	17 – 19
APPENDIX 2 - BOARD STRUCTURE	20

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD

Welcome to the Annual Plan of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.

As the new Chair of the Regional Safeguarding Board, I have acknowledged the difficulties and challenges our partner agencies have faced over the past year. This year's Annual Plan recognises those challenges and we are all keen to learn the lessons from a year of unprecedented demands on services.

This Plan identifies what the Board will be focusing on during 2021/22, in pursuit of our aim to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf Morgannwg are safeguarded from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

Members of the Board met in March 2021 to agree the key priority areas that needed to be focussed on in the coming year. This decision was based on a detailed review of the lessons learned by partner agencies over the past year and an analysis of the current and prevalent safeguarding issues affecting the region. These priorities will be carried out alongside and in addition to the Board's core statutory safeguarding functions.

We continue to place a strong emphasis on partnership working and collaboration, as we have recognised the amount of work that is being undertaken by various organisations and groups, in relation to safeguarding and wellbeing throughout the region. By working together on common themes and objectives, we will be in a stronger position to deliver on what is needed to help to keep our communities safe.

This year, the Board will ensure that we continue to seek opportunities to engage with children, adults at risk, families and professionals in its work. We would encourage anyone who would like to be involved to contact our Regional Safeguarding Board Business Unit on 01443 490122 or email: ctmsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk

Paul Mee, Chair of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board



1. SAFEGUARDING IN CWM TAF MORGANNWG

The area of Cwm Taf Morgannwg covers the local authority areas of Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf with a total population of almost 440,000.

The **Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (CTMSB)** is a statutory partnership made up of the agencies that are responsible for safeguarding children and adults at risk in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area. The Board ensures that agencies in the region have effective arrangements in place to ensure that people of all ages, living in the region, are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. This also involves preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm from happening.

Keeping children and adults who may have needs for care and support safe is everyone's responsibility. This means feeling safe and being safe within their home or in their community, school, work place or anywhere else they go.

The two key **safeguarding** objectives around **protection** and **prevention** underpin the work of the Board and inform the priorities that we have agreed in this Annual Plan for 2021/2022.

What is Abuse and Neglect?

- Abuse means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.
- Neglect means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being.

Safeguarding for All People

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board carries out its objectives in line with the national statutory guidance as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. Our aim is to improve safeguarding arrangements for everyone. Collaboration between children and adults safeguarding arrangements in the area has resulted in a number of joint functions,

including a joint Regional Safeguarding Board. The Board continues to take every opportunity to collaborate across children and adults safeguarding to support joint working and the sharing of information and learning.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs

In the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region there are two Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH):

The **Cwm Taf Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** and the **Bridgend Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.

The purpose of the MASH is to act as the single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns. MASH provides the opportunity for a higher standard of safeguarding by providing all professionals with more information on which to make better, more informed decisions. This has significantly improved the sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse.

Who are the Members of the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The Lead Partner for the Board is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the membership complies with the statutory guidance issued under Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014. A list of members is attached as Appendix 1.

What are the Core Functions of the Regional Safeguarding Board?

Every Regional Safeguarding Board has a statutory responsibility to carry out core functions in relation to multi-agency safeguarding. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board carries out these day to day functions via specific committees and sub groups (see Appendix 2). These include:

- Contributing to the development, implementation and monitoring of protocols and procedures that support the protection of adults and children and to prevent abuse

- Raising awareness of the Board’s objectives to protect and prevent adults and children from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect and other forms of harm, and to provide information about how this might be achieved
- Reviewing the efficacy of measures taken by agencies to implement the objectives of the Board and to make and monitor recommendations
- Undertaking child practice reviews, adult practice reviews, audits, investigations and other reviews as are required in pursuance of its objectives and to disseminate learning and information arising from these reviews
- Reviewing the performance of the Board and its partners and bodies represented on the Board in carrying out its objectives
- Facilitating research into protection from, and prevention of, abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm
- Review the training needs of practitioners working in the area of the Board in order to identify training to assist in the protection and prevention of abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm

2. WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES THAT WE PROPOSE TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR?

In 2021/2022, the Board will:

- 1. Ensure an Effective Response to the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic**
- 2. Strengthen Safeguarding Links to other Partnerships in the Region**
- 3. Improve our Approach to Public Protection Concerns**

A detailed work plan for the Board and its Sub Groups will sit underneath this Strategic Annual Plan. The work plan will include the actions required to achieve the improvements required, who is responsible, timescales and measures of success.

The progress of the work plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis and will form the basis of the Annual Report for 2021-2022.

An overview of what the Board intends to do to achieve its priorities for the coming year is provided below.

Strategic Priority 1: Ensure an Effective Response to the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

What does this mean for the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent lockdowns undoubtedly had a major impact on the work of the Board and its partner agencies. During these unprecedented and challenging times, the Board needed to ensure that those most at risk continued to be protected from abuse, neglect and other kinds of harm.

Interim measures were established to ensure that critical safeguarding work continued and the pressure on partner agencies was managed and supported. This involved standing down any non-essential work and introducing local Bronze and regional Silver Command meetings to ensure that a co-ordinated response to safeguarding concerns continued.

The Board recognises, as we slowly emerge from this period of challenge, that there are lessons that can be learned for the future, that some work deemed as non-essential at such a critical time should now be re-introduced and that we need to manage the impact that the pandemic has inevitably had on our partner agencies, our staff and the people that we have a responsibility for protecting.

Priority Area	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure success?
Learning Lessons to Improve Multi-Agency Safeguarding	<p>The Board will build upon our enhanced, blended approach to multi-agency working that has been put in place over the past year. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximising opportunities to deliver virtual safeguarding training and E-Learning. ▪ A new approach to Practice Review Learning Events using virtual platforms. ▪ Using different methods of engaging with children, adults at risk and their families through virtual means and a hybrid approach to meetings. 	<p>The Board will continue to monitor and review these arrangements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular reports to the Safeguarding Board from Sub Groups and partner agencies ▪ Communicating with staff on a regular basis using electronic methods as well as face to face briefings where this is possible ▪ Carrying out a Section 135 partner agency safeguarding

		compliance audit and benchmarking this against 2019/2020 data.
Finalise the Outstanding Actions from 2020-2021	<p>We have acknowledged that there remains work that needs to be finalised this year, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development of a Regional Safeguarding Board Learning Framework with an aim to embed a culture of learning in all aspects of the work of the Board ▪ The implementation of a Self-Neglect protocol and process for adults ▪ Ensuring that all of our Child and Adult Protection protocols and guidance are regionalised and are compliant with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures ▪ The completion of outstanding audits to ensure that outcomes and learning are disseminated appropriately 	<p>By March 2022 the Board will have in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Learning Framework which will be embedded into the work of the Board. ▪ A regional approach to managing Self-Neglect in adults ▪ All Regional Adult and Child Protection protocols updated and approved ▪ At least 5 completed audits where learning can be shared with partner agencies across the region
Give People their Voices Back	<p>The lockdowns will have inevitably had an impact on how children, but especially adults at risk, will have been able to engage with services. We need to make sure that those most at risk are able to re-engage with agencies and their voices heard. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic Abuse victims ▪ Vulnerable people who may have been shielding for a considerable amount of time 	<p>We will identify the most appropriate methods of engagement and communication and measure effectiveness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The use of surveys, questionnaires and evaluations ▪ Seek opportunities to work with a range of agencies to support with our engagement, including providers of advocacy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents involved in Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups to give them more choice on how they interface with agencies 	
Safeguarding People living in Care Homes	<p>Following the devastating impact of the pandemic, we want to ensure that we continue to safeguard people living in Care Homes by maximising opportunities as lockdown eases. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that professionals and family members are safely going back into the Care Homes, in person, to support and enhance safeguarding practice. In line with the above, putting in place face to face contact to support the wellbeing of our residents Ensuring that we respond to any government guidance and initiatives to support the above 	<p>The Board will receive reports, via its Adult Quality Assurance and Performance Sub Group, on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of contract monitoring visits taking place Safeguarding reports linked to Care Homes The number of DoLS¹ assessments being completed in Care Homes
The Wellbeing of the Workforce	<p>The past year has brought significant challenges to the workforce, with changes to working arrangements, shifts in priorities and staff sickness/isolation being key features of working practice. We want to continue to ensure that staff are supported and their wellbeing prioritised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and enhanced communications from the Board to partner agencies on issues that matter to staff Ensuring that our partner agencies have robust staff support services in place, including access to training and development via virtual platforms and face to face as lockdown eases 	<p>The Board will receive reports, via its multi-agency Sub Groups, on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and Learning activity Communication and Engagement activity Workforce Development issues

¹ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

Managing Demand	<p>The true impact of the pandemic on the safety and wellbeing of individuals is yet to be seen. However, as we return to some degree of normality, we need to be prepared for increasing demand on services and staffing resources. This may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increase in incidents of Domestic Abuse being reported. ▪ The mental health and wellbeing of children and young people as they return to school. ▪ An increase in safeguarding referrals as health and social care services return to face to face visits. 	<p>The Board will seek assurances from partner agencies that they have the resources and capacity to meet any potential increase in demand. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular data reports to the Board's Quality Assurance and Performance Sub Groups ▪ Escalation to the Board on any identified risks that require a response.
------------------------	--	---

Strategic Priority 2: Strengthen Safeguarding Links to other Partnerships in the Region

What does this mean for the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The partnership landscape in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region is detailed and complex. Many of our partner agency representatives will sit on multiple Boards and Groups that will have a vast range of responsibilities and functions.

Within the ethos of 'Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility', we want to improve and strengthen our links with other Partnerships to maximise any opportunities to work collaboratively to safeguard children and adults in the region.

We have already made good progress on this, particularly in relation to our responses to Domestic Abuse and Suicide Prevention. This year we wish to further enhance and build on our established links and to extend to other areas of commonality and concern.

Priority Area	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure success?
Scoping the Partnerships	<p>The Board will identify and scope the role and remit of the partnerships operating in the region in relation to safeguarding. This will support our understanding and to maximise any opportunities for collaboration.</p>	<p>By March 2022 the Board will have completed:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A high-level scoping exercise of the partnership landscape in the region. ▪ Identified opportunities to collaborate on existing work and agreed actions to progress with this ▪ Agreement on data reports being received from other partnerships on their key safeguarding activities
Community Safety	<p>The Board already has effective links with the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This year we will work with the CSPs in relation to the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The new Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process ▪ The Area Planning Board, specifically around substance misuse and the links to suicide prevention ▪ Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime ▪ The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Process (MARAC) 	<p>The Board will monitor progress on this collaborative work through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An agreement on the governance and implementation of the SUSR in conjunction with the Welsh Government and the Home Office ▪ Increased engagement with Substance Misuse providers in the Board's Sub Groups and Panels ▪ Raise awareness of and monitor training activities in relation to ASB and Hate Crime
Mental Health	<p>In 2020, the Board set up a cross-partnership approach to suicide prevention in the region, in conjunction with the Regional together for Mental Health Partnership. We will continue this work in the coming year by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with the Welsh Government's Regional Co-ordinator for Suicide Prevention to strengthen the governance and planning framework for the region. 	<p>The Board will monitor the rates of completed suicide through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data reported via the regional Suicide Review Group ▪ Reports from the Suicide Prevention Steering Group on progress on the regional strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully embed the new cross-partnership arrangements in respect of the Talk to Me 2 strategy for Wales to ensure effective measures are in place to reduce the number of completed suicides in the region. 	
--	--	--

Strategic Priority 3: An Improved Approach to Public Protection Concerns

What does this mean for the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The world of Safeguarding is increasingly crossing over to the realms of Public Protection which has a wider focus on protecting and improving the health, safety and well-being of the general population of the region.

The Board has, over the past few years, ensured that training and awareness raising for staff across all partner agencies has been delivered in relation to areas of concern. This includes criminal exploitation (also known as County Lines), radicalisation and modern slavery. This year we want to strengthen our approach to Public Protection concerns by further embedding this into safeguarding practice and Board function.

This Priority will link to Priority 2 of this Plan as extended partnership working will be integral to the success of this work.

Priority Area	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure success?
Exploitation	<p>Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or adult at risk. This is becoming an increasingly prevalent issue in the region, structures are already in place in relation to child sexual exploitation but there is a need to expand our focus to consider the impact of additional areas of concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal exploitation On-line abuse Radicalisation 	<p>The Board will have in place by March 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Exploitation Strategy that will set out how we will respond to identified priority areas of concern Monitoring arrangements will be agreed for reporting to the Board on a quarterly basis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hidden exploitation and issues emerging from the pandemic 	
Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	<p>The Board wants to ensure targeted work is carried out with partner agencies and in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnerships to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a multi-agency response via a regional Modern Slavery Steering Group Identify the links to radicalisation by linking to the Prevent and Contest processes 	<p>The Board, in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnerships, will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Modern Slavery Steering Group is set up and is reporting on progress on a quarterly basis Training is delivered on a regional basis and reported on a quarterly basis
Contextual Safeguarding	<p>Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experience of significant harm beyond the family environment. Again, there are strong links with Exploitation and the use of Contextual Safeguarding to manage a response. We will therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a regional approach in respect of Contextual Safeguarding (link to WSP) 	<p>The Board will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a regional approach to Contextual Safeguarding in place and that progress in implementation is reported.

CROSS CUTTING THEME – ENGAGEMENT, PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

This year, the Board will ensure that we continue to seek opportunities to engage with children, adults at risk, families and professionals in its work. We will maximise a range of communication methods to share information and invite people to participate in the work of the Board. In addition to what has previously mentioned, the Board will:

- Implement a Participation Strategy to assist with engaging with our communities and encourage participation of all groups, including young people, in the work of the Board.
- Consider and agree the key topics/areas of work, linked to this Annual Plan, that we want people to be involved in.

- Maximise the opportunities that National Safeguarding Week brings to improve our communications and engagement activities
- Liaise with the identified key points of contact within our partner agencies who have already well-established links in the community, to maximise opportunities for community involvement.
- Consider the use of cross-partnership communication channels to maximise reach.

3. WHO DO WE INTEND TO COLLABORATE WITH TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

Effective collaboration with other partnerships and agencies, whether it be on a regional or national basis, is key to the effective delivery of the Board functions.

In addition to the partnerships we have already identified, we will develop and/or build on collaborative activities as follows:

Who will we collaborate with?	Areas to collaborate?
Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies and legislation in relation to safeguarding ▪ Sharing Child and Adult Practice Reviews ▪ Practice Guides for safeguarding
National Inspectorates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receive reports and action plans in relation to partner agency inspections
Third Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage their participation in the work of the Regional Safeguarding Board ▪ Safeguarding Training ▪ Suicide Prevention

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploitation
Other Regional Safeguarding Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent policies and processes across Wales ▪ Sharing learning and best practice ▪ Sharing Child and Adult Practice Reviews ▪ Delivering joint training and communications activities
National Independent Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeking advice on national safeguarding issues

4. OUR BUDGET FOR 2021-2022

The Board budget for the year will be resourced by financial contributions from the statutory partner agencies. The budget set will enable the Board to delivery its priority outcomes as set out in this Annual Plan and will be allocated as follows:

Business Management Unit Staff Costs and Accommodation:	£286,290
General Expenditure:	£16,180

Are You Concerned About Someone?

If you suspect that a **child or young person** is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed then you have a duty to report it immediately. All calls concerning worries about children are treated seriously. Contact your local Safeguarding Team on the numbers provided below:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425006
In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000
In Bridgend: 01656 642320

Opening Hours:
Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm
Friday - 8.30am - 4.30pm

If you suspect that an **adult** is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed then you have a duty to report it immediately. All calls concerning worries about vulnerable adults at risk are treated seriously. Contact your local Safeguarding Team on the numbers provided below:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425003
In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000
In Bridgend: 01656 642477

Opening Hours:
Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm
Friday - 8.30am - 4.30pm

To contact Children or Adults Services outside office hours, at weekends and bank holidays, ring the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Emergency Duty Team on 01443 743665.

If you suspect that a child, young person or an adult is at immediate risk of harm call 999 and speak to the Police.

If you would like to report a non-urgent incident, or have a problem or general query, you can call 101, the 24 hour non-emergency number for the police. **Use 101 when the incident is less urgent than 999.**

Remember - safeguarding is everybody's business!

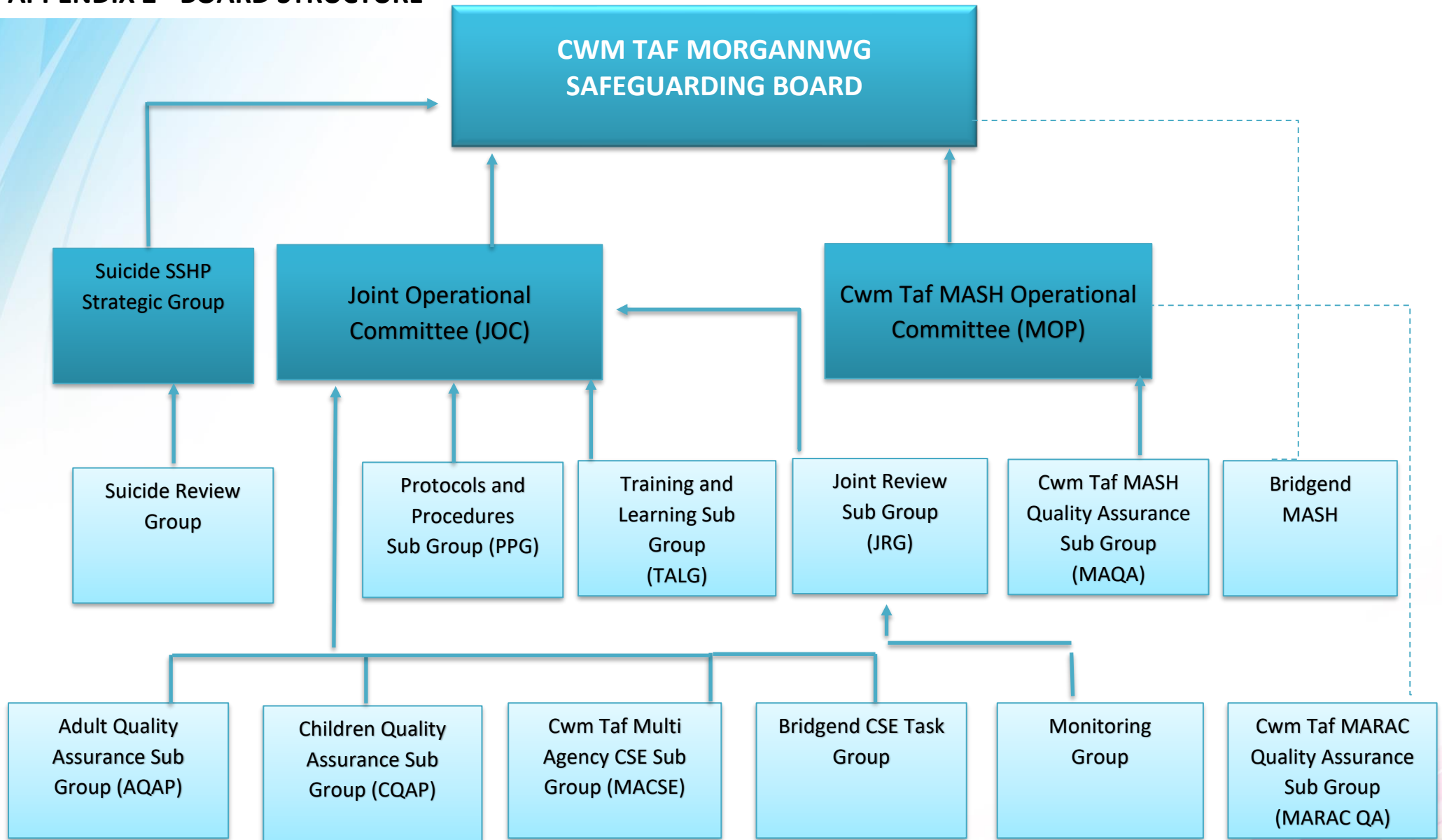
For more information and advice visit: www.ctmsb.co.uk

APPENDIX 1 - BOARD MEMBERSHIP

NAME	TITLE	AGENCY
Paul Mee (Chair)	Director of Community and Children's Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Lisa Curtis-Jones (Vice Chair)	Chief Officer, Social Services	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Claire Marchant (Vice Chair)	Director of Social Services and Wellbeing	Bridgend County Borough Council
Cheryl Emery	Head of Public Protection	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Jackie Neale	Adult Safeguarding Service Manager	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Neil Elliot	Service Director, Adult Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Julie Clark	Head of Safeguarding and Support (Children)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Gaynor Davies	Director of Education and Lifelong Learning	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Annabel Lloyd	Service Director, Children Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Cara Miles	Head of Legal - Community Care and Children	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Jon Eyre	Safeguarding Principal Manager	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Alyn Owen	Chief Officer, Community Regeneration	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Susan Walker	Chief Officer, Education	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Taryn Stephens	Head of Children Services	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Angela Edevane	Head of Adult Services	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Carys Kennedy	Head of Legal and Governance	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Jacqueline Davies	Head of Adult Social Care	Bridgend County Borough Council
Laura Kinsey	Head of Children's Social Care	Bridgend County Borough Council
Nicola Echanis	Head of Education and Family Services	Bridgend County Borough Council
Greg Dix	Director of Nursing, Midwifery & Patient Services	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Louise Mann	Assistant Director for Quality and Safety	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Karen Thomas	Superintendent, Northern BCU	South Wales Police
Sue Hurley/John Lane	Independent Protecting Vulnerable Person Manager	South Wales Police
Eirian Evans	Assistant Chief Officer	National Probation Service
Sharon Richards	Chief Officer	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil
Maria James	Third Sector Representative, Merthyr Tydfil	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil
Lyndon Lewis	Head of Service	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
Virginia Hewitt	Designated Nurse (National Safeguarding Team)	Public Health Wales
Nikki Harvey	Assistant Director Quality, Safety & Patient Experience	Welsh Ambulance Service Trust
Jason Evans	Head of Young Person's Unit	HM Prison & Young Offenders Institute, Parc
Ian Coles	Interim Deputy Director	HM Prison & Young Offenders Institute, Parc

APPENDIX 2 - BOARD STRUCTURE



This page is intentionally left blank

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

CWM TAF MORGANWG CARERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLOR HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR LEYSHON

AUTHOR: Mari Ropstad, Service Manager – Carers, RCT Council

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve for submission to Welsh Government the 2020/21 Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Annual Report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the 2020/21 Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Annual Report attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Notes the publication by Welsh Government of a Strategy for Unpaid Carers in March 2021 and acknowledges this as a key document in planning and delivering carer services across the Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Welsh Government provided transitional funding of £1million per annum for Wales in 2020/21 (£161,000 for Cwm Taf Morgannwg) to protect and build on progress to date and to support the expansion of Carers rights under the implementation of the SSWB Act.
- 3.2 The annual report details how the transitional funding was spent in Cwm Taf Morgannwg during the year. The full report is attached, but key areas of work across the region have included:
- Around £135,500 of the Carers Grant funding was allocated to third sector organisations through an application process.
 - Support to encourage GP surgeries to take part in accredited Carer Awareness training to become Carer Champions.
 - Improvements to the hospital discharge process for unpaid carers.

- 3.3 Local authorities are key partners in ensuring the four National Priorities set out in the Strategy for Unpaid Carers are considered when planning, developing, commissioning, and delivering services and support to unpaid carers. The Strategy will be followed by a more detailed action plan in the autumn of 2021.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 RCT has supported the work across the region and have maintained carer support services throughout the pandemic. Developments during the year for RCT include:

- **Carer Conversations:** New guidance, co-produced with unpaid carers, was issued to staff across social care and its effectiveness was audited with very encouraging results and feedback.
- **Contingency and emergency planning:** Work has started on improving opportunities for unpaid carers to make robust contingency plans for unforeseen situations.
- **Young carers and sibling carers:** The Young Carer Card launched in RCT in March 2021. It offers young carers an easy way to start a conversation about their role and we have also been able to attach discounts in local shops to the card. Chromebooks, received from WG, were supplied to 25 young carers and YACs aged up to 20.

For full details on the Young Carer support provided during the pandemic, please see the report to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 3rd February 2021 (link provided in the Background Papers section).

- **RCT Carers Support Project:** Support has continued throughout the pandemic with regular newsletters and a varied programme of online events and activities. The new Carers Hub in Pontypridd was finalised during the year thanks to a capital Integrated Care Fund grant and will become the new home for all-age carer support services during 21/22.
- **Happy@Home grant:** The Happy @ Home grant scheme proved extremely popular, receiving 198 applications from unpaid carers for up to £300 to support wellbeing at home.
- **Carer Friendly Employer:** We are scoping the possibility of achieving the Carer Friendly Employer accreditation offered by Carers Trust. This will involve a cross-departmental working group to propose a standalone Carers Policy and improve support for unpaid carers within the workforce.

- **Young Adult Carers (YACs):** YACs in RCT continue to be supported by a specific support worker. Their programme of events focuses on emotional wellbeing and building resilience.
- 4.2 For full details on the response of Adult Services during the pandemic in relation to unpaid carers, please see the report to the Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 8th February 2021 (link provided in the Background Papers section).
- 5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**
- 5.1 There are no foreseen equality and diversity implications associated with this report.
- 6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**
- 6.1 There are no immediate Welsh Language implications relating to the proposals within this report. The Council will ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards if a consultation process is initiated in relation to the proposals outlined within this report. All recommended proposals if implemented will comply with Welsh Government's "More Than Just Words" Strategic Framework in Health and Social Care".
- 7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT**
- 7.1 The multi-agency Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Partnership has led the implementation and monitoring of the Statement of Intent and the Welsh Government national priorities for carers. It has representatives from the Health Board, all three Local Authorities, Third Sector organisations and Carers. The work also involves a range of other partners including Department of Work and Pensions and Job Centre Plus.
- 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**
- 8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Partnership oversees the use of the Welsh Government transitional funding, reporting to the SSWB Transformation Leadership Group and the SSWB Partnership Board.
- 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**
- 9.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 and is intended to transform the way services are delivered. It repeals the majority of community care legislation including the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010.
- 9.2 The newly published National Plan for Unpaid Carers will become important for developing strategies and delivering support to carers going forward.

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

- 10.1 The work to implement the Statement of Intent for Carers and the Welsh Government national priorities for carers has complemented the Council's priorities to: "Promote independence and positive lives for everyone", including Carers of all ages.

Other Information:

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
- Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLOR HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR LEYSHON

CWM TAF MORGANNWG CARERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Background Papers:

Young Carers report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, 3rd February 2021:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/ChildrenandYoungPeopleScrutinyCommittee/2021/02/03/Reports/Agendaltem4ScrutinyYoungCarersAnnualReport.pdf>

Welsh Government Strategy for Unpaid Carers:

<https://gov.wales/strategy-unpaid-carers>

Adult Service report to Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, 8th February 2021:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/HealthandWellbeingScrutinyCommittee/2021/02/08/Reports/Agendaltem4AdultsServicesCovid19responseandsupportocarer.pdf>

Officer to contact: Sian Nowell, Head of Service, Care and Support (Adults)

This page is intentionally left blank



Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers End of Year Progress Report 2020 – 2021

Eligible activity includes:

- 1) **Supporting Carers in general practice** - working with your partners, through the primary care clusters, to implement a scheme that supports health professionals working in primary care and community care to develop their carer awareness and understanding of how to identify carers, the issues that carers face and ways of working to better support carers; and
- 2) **Discharge from hospital planning** - taking steps to support and engage carers in the patient's discharge planning, for example better information, advice and assistance (IAA) provided to all carers when the person they care for is discharged from hospital.

1) Supporting carers in general practice

What action/ activity have you undertaken to work with partners to support health professionals working in primary care and community care to develop their carer awareness and understanding of:

- how to identify carers,
- the issues that carers face and,
- ways of working to better support carers.

Action taken

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, 2020/21 has been challenging for all. In order for services to continue to meet the need of Carers across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) region, organisations have had to adapt their working practices. Bridgend County Borough Council (Bridgend CBC), Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC), Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council (RCTCBC) and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) have continued to work collaboratively in improving support, information and recognition of Carers, whilst making best use of a wide range of knowledge, expertise and support services.

Services for Carers in CTM are provided by a range of organisations in the statutory and Third Sector. As well as accessing general services, like GP Surgeries, there are also specific services to support Carers, including young Carers and young adult Carers. These include:

- In RCT, a Carers Support project run by the Local Authority.
- Services commissioned from the Third Sector including Action for Children, Barnardos and Age Connects Morgannwg.
- A network of Carers Champions in settings across the health sector.
- In Merthyr, services to support Carers were commissioned from third sector organisations and MTCBC have appointed a Carers Coordinator.
- Across Bridgend, Carers Trust South East Wales provide Information and Advice to Carers.
- A Carers Hospital Discharge project across the CTM Region.

In CTM to enable GP surgeries to identify Carers, we ensure each surgery has a Carers Champion, a Carers noticeboard that is updated regularly and dissemination of relevant and timely Carer related information to enable swift signposting of Carers to Carers services in their area.

The transitional funding to support Carers provided by Welsh Government (WG) since 2016/17 to support the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 (which came into force April 2016, is very welcome in maintaining the momentum of the Carer related work achieved to date.




The Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) Carers Partnership Group works to prevent any negative impact on Carers services and support. The CTM Carers Partnership Group ensures the continued development and raising awareness of Carers throughout the region, meeting the increased responsibilities for partners under the Social Services Well Being Act.




CTM continues to have representation at the COLIN (Carers Officer Learning and Improvement Network) meetings with representatives from Local Authorities and CTMUHB attending.

Throughout 2020/21 CTMUHB, Bridgend CBC, MTCBC and RCTCBC have sustained the success of the previous year and continued to work collaboratively in improving support, information and recognition of Carers. This CTM End of Year Report highlights the key areas of work and provides examples of the progress made.



Following discussion with colleagues from Bridgend CBC, MTCBC, RCTCBC, Bridgend Association Voluntary Organisation (BAVO), Interlink Rhondda Cynon Taf, Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil (VAMT), the CTM Regional Planning Board (RPB) and CTMUHB – recommendations were made to the CTM Carers Partnership Group and then approved by the RPB’s Transformation Leadership Group in the allocation of the 2020/21 Welsh Government’s Carers Grant.

£135,634.00 of the WG Carers funding was allocated to the Third Sector through an application process.. Organisations were able to bid up to £50,000 of projects to engage with Carers of all ages. The successful projects are listed below:

Name of organisation	Project Name	Outline of project/Areas included	Projects End of Year Reports Received
CTMUHB	Carers Co-ordinator	The Carers Co-ordinator will work across the region with GP practices, hospitals etc. and engage with Local Authorities and Third Sector organisation assisting them to identify Carers in the community.	 Carer Co-ord End of Year Report 20-21
Citizens Advice Merthyr Tydfil (CAMT)	CAB4Carers	CAMT will deliver a bespoke service focussing on Carers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital Discharge • Ongoing support in the community This will be delivered across the region.	 CAB END OF YEAR REPORT 2021.pdf
Action for Children RCT Young Carers Project	School Delivery Works	Action for Children will work in schools throughout RCT to raise awareness of young Carers and share their stories. This funding is to add additional hours to the current provision.	Action for Children are in the process of developing a report.
CASE (Care & Support Each Other)	CASE YACS	CASE have proposed a calendar with a series of Learning and skills events that reflect the theme of culture, education, physical and mental wellbeing alongside resilience in RCT.	 CASE.docx

ASD Rainbows	Rainbows families	This project will employ a Family Outreach Worker to work across CTM. They will carry out community work with families offering the individualised support needed to enable families to access community activities/support. They will also run a parent and child group for a year.	 End of Year matrix - ASD Rainbows.docx
MTCBC	Barnardos	MTCBC with Barnardos supports opportunities for Young Carers to socialise with other Young Carers outside of school and offers opportunities to be active and go on holidays without the people they care for.	 Barnardos MT.docx  End of Year matrix (003) 2.docx
Taf Memory Assessment Service, CTMUHB	Support Projects	This funding will be distributed between a number of projects that will assist Carers and also individuals living with Dementia. Accessing professional and peer support for not only their own health and wellbeing, but also in giving them the tools to be able to help maintain the health and wellbeing of the individuals they are caring for. This will be in the Taf area.	Taf Memory Service are in the process of submitting a report.

The remaining £25,366.00 of WG Carers Grant was allocated through the CTM Carers Partnership Group and agreement by the RPB Transformation Leadership Group. These projects are set out below:

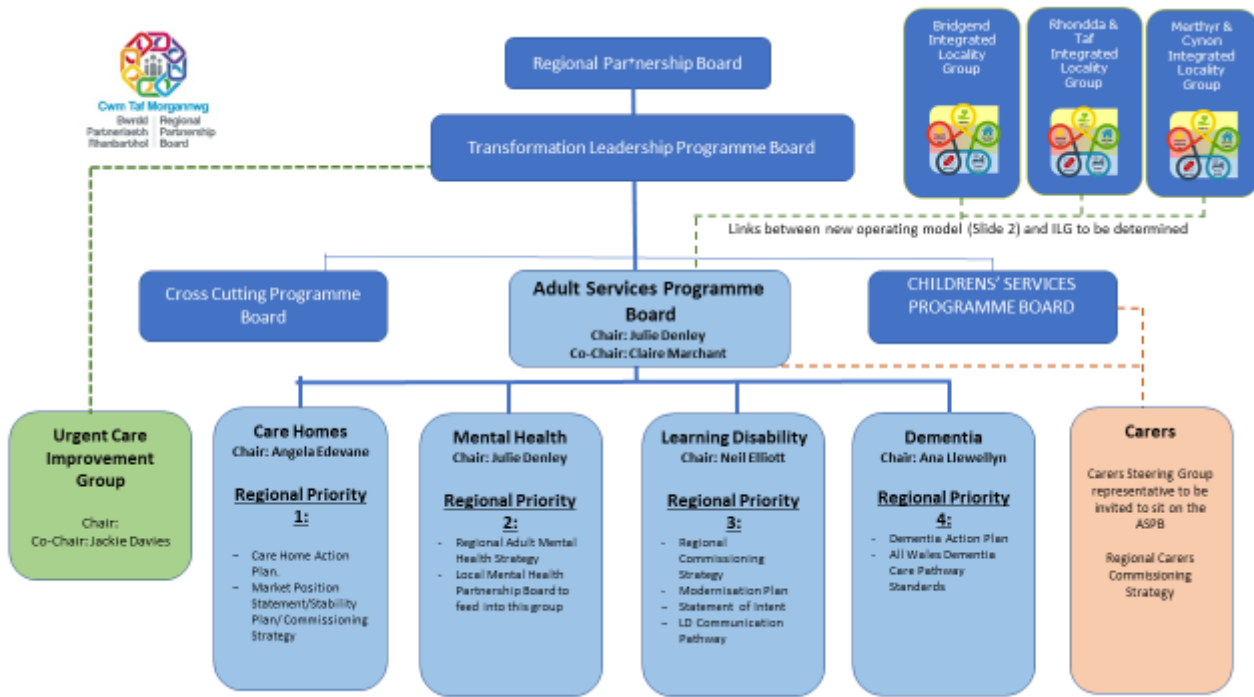
Carers Trust South East Wales (CTSEW)	Carers Emergency Fund	This emergency grant was allocated across Cwm Taf Morgannwg . Merthyr: Received a total of 9 applications from Merthyr (3 applications were from people aged 19-24, 6 applications were from people aged 25-64). Rhondda Cynon Taf: Received a total of 72 applications from RCT (4 applications were from people aged 0-18, 12 applications were from people aged 19-24, 54 applications were from people aged 25-64, 2 applications were from people aged 65+). Bridgend: Received a total of 140 applications from Bridgend (3 applications were from people aged 0-18, 10 applications were from people aged 19-24, 127 applications were from people aged 25-64, 0 applications were from people aged 65+).	
CTSEW	Counselling	Additional counselling hours were bought to their current service provision.	CTSEW are in the process of submitting a report.
RCTCBC	Counselling	Additional counselling hours were bought to their current service provision.	 CTM Counselling End of Year matrix (C
MTCBC	Meaningful care matters	12 week programme supporting unpaid Carers of dementia	 MTCBC.docx

Please explain:

How you have **worked with partners** to implement and deliver improved support for carers?

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Partnership Group

The CTM Carers Partnership Group was established in 2019 and oversees the CTM Carers Statement of Intent. The governance of the partnership has been reviewed by the CTM RPB. The CTM Carers Partnership will report to the Adults Services Programme Board that sits underneath the RPB's Transformation Leadership Programme Board.



The CTM Carers Partnership Group has met during 2020-21. Currently membership consists of: Bridgend CBC, Merthyr Tydfil CBC, RCT CBC, VAMT, BAVO, Interlink, Citizen Advice Bureau RCT, Merthyr and Valleys MIND, a Carer representative and CTMUHB.

Statement of Intent for Carers

Following the end of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy on the 30th March 2019, CTMUHB, in partnership with BCBC, RCTCBC and MTCBC produced a Statement of Intent for Carers.



Statement of Intent Carers.docx

The CTM Carers Partnership Group await guidance from WG on their proposed Action Plan and the Ministerial Advisory Group as to whether there will be a requirement to produce a regional Carers Strategy or a regional Action Plan to implement WG proposals.

Young Carers Cookery Classes

Following on from a pilot project in 2019-20, working with Barnardos Merthyr Tydfil, Public Health Wales and the CTMUHB Carers Co-ordinator, Barnardos were able to continue delivering cookery books and food produce for young Carers throughout the pandemic.

It is reported that young Carers miss on average 48 days of school a year. By engaging them and giving them life skills this will boost their confidence, give them a sense of inclusion and hopefully inspire them to continue learning. During lockdown these skills proved invaluable as young Carers were able to produce healthy, well balanced meals for their family.

Going forward this opportunity will also be provided for young carers in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend.

Activity resources were also distributed to the young Carers. CTMUHB also identified technology which enabled young Carers to engage with family, friends and education during lockdown which Barnardos has kept as a future resource.

CCTM Carers A-Z Guide

Throughout the pandemic, CTMUHB has sustained the delivery of A-Z Carer Guides across our region. This resource is available online or hard copies and has proven to be a valuable resource for organisations and Carers living in the CTM region. Copies have been sent to GP practices and outpatient departments on all Acute General Hospital sites.

Partner organisations across the region have also received a supply, including the Community Co-ordinators who are based across the RCT and Merthyr Tydfil region. Age Connects Morgannwg distributed these across the Bridgend region.



49925-51 Cwm Taf Cares A-Z English w
49925-51 Cwm Taf Cares A-Z Welsh wel

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

CTMUB has supported MTCBC in shortlisting and interviewing to reappoint to their Carers Co-ordinator post. The successful applicant commenced in April 2020.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Carer Conversations: A pilot programme was introduced across social care in RCTCBC in January 2020 to improve the experience and offer of Carer assessments to unpaid Carers. The pilot included new staff guidance co-produced with Carers. This pilot was audited in November 2020 with some very encouraging results and feedback from staff and carers. As a result this is now being rolled out as a permanent approach to carer assessments. Additional funding was obtained to increase the Carers Counselling Service due to increased demand for psychological support.

Carer Friendly Employer: RCTCBC are scoping the possibility of achieving the Carer Friendly Employer accreditation offered by Carers Trust. This will involve a cross-departmental working group to propose a standalone Carers Policy and improve support for unpaid carers within the workforce.

Cares Support Project: The RCT Carers Support Project has continued to support unpaid carers online during the pandemic with a varied programme of online events and activities. The new Carers Hub in Pontypridd was finalised during the year thanks to a capital Integrated Care Fund grant and will become the new home for the Carers Support Project, the Young Adult Carer Service and the Young Carer Support Service during 21/22. This will provide an all-age co-located carer support service in the county. The Happy @ Home grant scheme proved extremely popular, receiving 200 applications from unpaid carers of up to £300 to support wellbeing at home.

Young Adult Carers (YACs): YACs in RCT continue to be supported by a specific support worker. Their programme of events was also moved online due to the pandemic and supported many to maintain

emotional wellbeing and work on their resilience during the pandemic with many learning-based events like mindfulness, stress management, anxiety and depression awareness and wellness events. Some social activities have also been successful, such as Bake Off, quiz nights and a YAC Festival. A recognition film is currently in production, celebrating the contribution and achievements of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers during the pandemic.

Young carers and sibling carers

RCTCBC launched the Young Carer Card in March 2021. It offers young carers an easy way to start a conversation about their role and we have also been able to attach discounts in local shops to the card.

Chromebooks, received from WG, were supplied to 25 young carers and YACs aged up to 20.

The young carer support service is provided by Action for Children. Online groups were held throughout the pandemic with one-to-one support available for the most vulnerable young carers. A grant scheme was held for young carers, allowing applications of up to £50 to support them and their families during the pandemic. Smaller face-to-face groups were held throughout the year as and when restrictions allowed.

Sibling carers received activity packs and were offered the chance to attend a 10-week emotional wellbeing course online. They also benefited from a grant scheme similar to the young carers.

Bridgend County Borough Council

Bridgend CBC have continued to work in partnership with Carers Trust South East Wales and maintain connections with CTMUHB and partners across our region.

How you have **measured success** using qualitative and quantitative data, (including the number of General Practices registered/compliant)

Annual Action Plans

The CTM Carers Action Plan is not a fixed and final plan, but a framework which sets out work to be taken forward over 2020/21. The Action plan is developed with detailed key actions, lead responsibilities, timescales, resource implications and performance measures, which will focus on the outcomes we (the partners) want to achieve.

During 2020-21, due to the impact of the pandemic on the working process, we were not able to update the action plan. It is our intention to update this action plan in the coming months with a view to developing an action plan for 2021-22.



March 2020 v1 Cwm
Taf Morgannwg Car

Outcomes we want to achieve and monitoring progress

The success of this Action Plan and the benefits it delivers will be reviewed regularly. It will be a partnership plan and a variety of staff within a wide range of sectors will be responsible for working in collaboration to implement it effectively.

An annual report on progress of the action plan will be reported to the CTM Transformation Leadership Programme Board, as well as the individual organisations i.e. the three Local Authorities, CTMUHB and WG.

Feedback from carers who have accessed and used these services.

We received this case study from the Citizen Advice Bureau Merthyr Tydfil's Carers Hospital Discharge Project called "CAB4Carers":

Mr X approached the CAB4Carers adviser for help with benefits as they share the caring responsibilities for his disabled son with his partner. Mr X called the CAB4Carers adviser for advice on his son's benefits as he is the appointee for all his son's financial matters due to his health issues. His son's claim to Disability Living Allowance was coming to an end and he was asked to make a claim for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) but was unsure how to do this. His partner was claiming Carers Allowance and was concerned that this would have an effect on his PIP claim.

CAB4 Carers gave advice and helped complete the relevant forms on PIP and what he needed to do next. He was also advised on any issues that could arise in regards to the Carers Allowance claim.

After many weeks Mr X was happy to hear that his son did not need to attend an assessment due to the clear complexities of his condition. He was even happier to hear that the supporting information and form enabled the Department of Work and Pensions to make a decision straight away. The DWP awarded the enhanced rate for both components of PIP for 10 years. This is equal to £77,000 over 10 years. Mr X said he was over the moon and that we had relieved so much stress and anxiety for him and his family.

Specific questions to be addressed:

What awareness raising has been undertaken with practice staff (all professions) on the needs of carers, including young carers?

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Carers Co-ordinator

In CCTMUHB, there is a Carers Co-ordinator who:

- Attends public (currently virtual) events such as the Health & Wellbeing Month.
- Produces promotional materials and merchandise.
- Attends Senior Nurse meetings to discuss the role of a Carer.
- Organises the annual Carers conference
- Attends Nurse Induction sessions for all new nurses joining CTMUHB.

The CTM Carers Co-ordinator has continued to send Carers Champions based in the GP practices information to inform them of any relevant and timely Carers information.

Carers Conference

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic there was no Carers conference in 2020. This is an event we hope to achieve in 2021/22.

Awareness Sessions

During the pandemic CTMUHB and partners have continued to make progress in raising the awareness of Carers of all ages. This has been done through social media and press releases.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Intranet/internet page

CTMUHB have a designated Carers page in the intranet for internal staff to access the latest information, advice and support. We recognise an organisation of our multitude have a high number of Carers and promote the CTMUHB Staff Carers Policy.

CTMUHB also played an integral part in raising awareness of the Covid Vaccine for Carers across our region through information on webpages, social media and fielding telephone calls from Carers.

GP Support Officers (GPSO)

In Merthyr Tydfil Primary Care Cluster they have GP Support Officers (GPSO's) who engage, signpost, offer advice and work with patients to influence cultural and behavioural change for service users within a Primary Care setting. They advise/assess service users and address social issues and offer support. They promote independence and enable service users to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. GPSO's support the reduction of attendance within general practice for non-medical intervention and will make referrals to Merthyr Tydfil CBC and the Third Sector.

GPSO's, during consultations, have often identified Carers who have not identified themselves as a Carers (they are a family member that feel it is their duty to look after their relatives). This cohort of service users were not claiming carers allowance or receiving any support from any groups, such as Alzheimer's or Stroke Society.

GPSO's have been able to support these Carers by identifying what is causing stress and putting some extra support and ensuring the correct financial assistance are put in place. They also ensure links with the relevant agencies and particularly ensuring the required adaptations are made at home.

How many General Practices / health centres have implemented Investors in Carers, something similar, or are planning to implement this accredited scheme?

AGORED Cymru

The CTM Carers Co-ordinator encourages GP practices to enrol on the Carer Awareness AGORED Cymru training course. The course is a tool which GP practices can access to develop their awareness of Carers and how they can be supported within the community.

During the pandemic, and for the safety of staff and visitors the Carers Co-ordinator was unable to visit GP practices and continue training. Discussions have already taken place in how best this can be undertaken and we would expect this training to continue in the near future.

Regular updates are posted on social media and internally to inform Carers what is available to them, there is also a designated Carers page in the internet which provides information for staff who are Carers. This also promotes and encourages Carer champions to be identified throughout clinical settings, we currently have 61 Carer Champions registered who are sent regular bulletins on carer events and information which they can promote in their area of work.

The CTM Carers Co-ordinator will continue to reinvigorate and recruit Carers Champions in 2021/22.

How and what specific support are General Practice staff providing to carers?

GP Leaflets

The Carers Co-ordinator has designed and distributed Carer booklets to GP Practices which has a registration form enabling a Carer to complete and hand to their Carer Champion. This has encouraged Carers to self-identify and engage with their GP surgery. These are available to all GP surgeries across the region.

Carer Notice Boards

Each surgery signed up to the Agored training is given a Carers Notice Board that is updated by the Carers Champion monthly. There is also a Carers Champion poster to notify patients who their Carers Champion is. Relevant information has continued to be disseminated throughout the pandemic.

Carers Champion Badges

Each Carers Champion wears a badge so they are easily recognisable to patients.

Primary Care Communications Lead

The Carers Co-ordinator has liaised with key personal in Primary Care to promote good practice by using case studies of the Carer related work being undertaken in GP surgeries across CTM.

What are the tangible outcomes for carers?

All of the positive outcomes as previously mentioned throughout the report.

What signposting arrangements are in place within the General Practice to enable carers to access other support where needed e.g. third sector helplines, websites or local carers services?

Each GP surgery has a designated Carer Champion who has been issued with a Carers notice board. This is regularly updated by the Carer Champion with information on what events or services are being held in their locality. They also have posters displaying who their Carer Champion is for their surgery.

The CTMUHB Carer's Co-ordinator also sends timely and relevant information they may find beneficial. If there is a specific request that Carer Champions may not know where to signpost, they are able to contact the CTMUHB Carer Co-ordinator for advice. There are also community coordinators in each GP surgery which Carer Champions are able to signpost Carers for further information and advice. GP surgeries also use their television monitors to inform patients of Carer services.

2) Discharge from hospital planning

What action/ activity have you undertaken to support and engage carers in the patient's discharge planning? For example: better information, advice and assistance (IAA) provided to all carers when the person they care for is discharged from hospital.

Action taken

Carers Hospital Discharge Project

During the pandemic resources were utilised to support the pressures faced by the NHS. The CTMUHB Carers Co-ordinator has built strong working relationships within the acute general hospitals offering advice, support and information to Carers who could be staff members and signposting to support organisations. Links with Carer Champions were upheld informing them of any Carer related announcements.

Building on the success of the Carers Hospital Project run by Citizen Advice Merthyr Tydfil (CAB) in 2019-20, plans were put in place to further our engagement on hospital wards. Meeting with the Head of Nursing at Prince Charles Hospital, it was agreed CAB would have weekly access to two hospital wards. This would enable Carers to be identified on admission and identify barriers that would threaten a timely discharge.

The pandemic has for now halted this project but we continue to work with CAB in readiness to resume once safe to do so.

Please explain:

How you have **worked with partners** to implement and deliver improved support for carers

By increasing our engagement network we have been able to establish good working partnerships with more departments within Local Authorities and other third sector organisations.

For young Carers we are working in partnership with Barnardos and Public Health Wales to deliver an accredited cookery class. By building up a trusted relationship with the young Carers we will be better equipped to identify what matters them and how we can collectively support them further.

On Carers Rights Day we raised awareness of Carers of all ages on our social media platforms. This was in place of the information stands in each of our general hospitals with third sector organisations that would have normally been held. These information stalls enable our partners to promote their services to Carers.

How you have **measured success** using qualitative and quantitative data, (including the number of General Practices registered/compliant)

Throughout Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend there is a total of 80 General Practitioners. All were sent letters inviting them to nominate a Carer champion and the opportunity to undertake the AGORED training. We had an initial response from 18 requesting more information. From these, 10 practices enrolled staff to undertake the training, in total 13 staff (with some practices putting two through training). To date we have successfully certificated 8 learners (2019-20) and the remainder are continuing with the AGORED course. No members of staff completed the training course in 2020-21 but have continued the course so will complete in the coming months. We use an in-house spreadsheet that is regularly updated to track the learner's progress. In addition we send letters to all 80 General Practitioners on a regular basis to try to engage them further and increase nominations for this course.

Feedback from learners indicates the learning has given them the confidence to approach a "What matters" conversation with Carers and they feel more confident identifying Carers. Largely due to the training course they are able to signpost Carers for additional support and advice.

Feedback from carers who have accessed and used these services.

We received this case study from the Citizen Advice Bureau Merthyr Tydfil's Carers Hospital Discharge Project called "CAB4Carers":

Mr X called the CAB4Carers adviser for advice in regards to his benefit situation. He is a carer for his daughter who has complex needs and until recently, was working part time. This created severe anxiety for Mr X as he was worried about how this would affect his life and caring responsibilities for his daughter. Unsure what to do next, he was already claiming Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and knew that the Working Tax Credit would come to an end as he was no longer working. Mr X sought advice to see if there was anything he could claim.

The CAB4Carers adviser assessed Mr X's financial and personal situation. It was established that he could make a claim to Universal Credit. He received specialist advice in regards to the claim and how much he could expect to receive. He was also advised on Council Tax Reduction and Carers Allowance. He would now be able to claim over £1,250 of Universal Credit per month. This equates to over £15,000 of secured income a year. Mr X was so grateful - he said with our help, he is now better able to care for his daughter.

Specific questions to be addressed:

Have hospital procedures regarding patient discharge been adapted, or introduced, to improve staff awareness of, and input from carers?

CTM Stay Well @ Home team are investigating how they can adapt their policies so they can assist not only the service user but also the Carer. It is hoped that clinical staff can take an holistic approach, where Carers are involved, in supporting the service user to go home. There are 4 members of the Stay Well @ Home staff currently undertaking the AGORED training.

Normally, the CTMUHB Carers Co-ordinator delivers Carer Aware training to graduate nurses on a regular basis but this was not possible over 2020-21 due to the pandemic. There is an online Carer Aware e-learning package which all staff are encouraged to complete. Although this is not mandatory it is something we hope to make mandatory in the future.

How are carers being proactively involved in the hospital discharge/discharge plans for the patient?

If Carers are identified by clinical staff, they can be referred to our hospital discharge project. This will give the Carer the opportunity to raise any concerns they have regarding the service user being discharged.

It may be they require additional support or home adaptations. If identified these issues could be addressed before discharge, therefore giving the Carer more confidence to continue with their caring role at home and possibly reduce the need for re-admission.

We continue to make the links with other projects being run from the hospital setting, such as Care & Repair and Age Connects Morgannwg.

Are carers being pro-actively signposted to third sector support or local authority social services for information, support, or to obtain a carers needs assessment (as appropriate), as part of the patient's discharge process?

Further to the information on page 3, to date CAB4Carers hospital discharge service have signposted to 178 Carers to services provided by either Local Authority or Third Sector. In total, the CAB4Carers project have dealt directly with 315 Carer related queries.

This page is intentionally left blank

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH JULY 2021

LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICE OFFER

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR G HOPKINS

AUTHOR: Neil Elliott, Director of Adult Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider key information and issues relating to the Council's current day service offer for people with a learning disability and seek Cabinet's approval to continue on-going engagement with people with a learning disability, their families and carers, staff and partners and co-produce a new day opportunities strategy to transform the Council's current day service offer and future service provision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Considers the information provided in this report, including the summary of key observations and feedback from the engagement undertaken as part of the implementation of the new Learning Disability Transformation Programme.
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, approves the on-going engagement with people with a learning disability, their families and carers, staff and partners and the proposals to co-produce a new day opportunities strategy to transform the Council's current day services offer and future service provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf as set out in Section 9 of the report.
- 2.3 Subject to 2.2 above, agrees to receive a further report that presents the co-produced draft day opportunities strategy for people with a learning disability for approval prior to formal public consultation.
- 2.4 Subject to 2.2 above, approves to Treforest Day Centre remaining temporarily closed and for arrangements to continue to be made to support people registered at Treforest Day Centre and their families and carers to meet their assessed need as set out in paragraph 7.21 of the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Whilst over recent years there has been some positive progress in relation to the Council's current day service offer to people with a learning disability, the Council has not yet to respond sufficiently to national and local strategic priorities and drivers for change. The current day service offer is predominantly building based and follows a traditional "day centre" maintenance model that provides services for adults with a learning disability with limited scope to offer choice and control and raise aspiration for people - a more innovative and diverse response is required.
- 3.2 At present Covid-19 has impacted on the ability of day services to operate some of the existing building based day services due to the requirements for social distancing and this could have longer term implications. It is important Adult Services take on board any learning and good practice from during the pandemic to help shape the future day services offer.
- 3.3 With this mind, it is recommended to continue ongoing engagement with people with a learning disability, their families and carers, staff and partners and co-produce a new day opportunities strategy to transform the Council's current day services offer for people with a learning disability and ensure that services, both in the short and long term, are arranged and delivered in a way that achieves the best possible individual outcomes for people and make the best use of Council resources. It is recommended that Cabinet receive a new co-produced draft day opportunities strategy for approval prior to formal public consultation.
- 3.4 It is not currently possible to provide a day service at Treforest Day Centre due to the serious flooding and damage in February 2020 and remaining temporarily closed will allow for further evaluation to be undertaken when the proposed draft day opportunities strategy is reported back to Cabinet for approval.

4. BACKGROUND

Local Strategic Context

- 4.1 The **Cwm Taf Joint Statement of Strategic Intent for Children, Young People and Adults with Learning Disabilities (including autism and complex needs) and their families** approved by the Cabinet in November 2017 sets out the local regional strategic outcomes that set out and enable people with a learning disability to have greater equitable access to their communities and realise an 'Ordinary Life' that was meaningful to them and adopts the following key messages:
- Maximising the use of universal services
 - Increased early intervention, prevention, information, advice and assistance
 - Building community support and developing people's independence
 - Sustaining people in their own homes
 - Enabling people to live full lives and achieve their potential
 - Keeping people safe
 - Making best use of our resource

4.2 The introduction of the Statement of Strategic Intent initially raised the profile of learning disabilities, however, work undertaken at the time took place in isolation with limited targeted work to understand how this aligned and impacted upon existing current offers and resources in place in any detail. As a consequence, a pro-active and positive piece of work in ‘making the Strategic Intent personal’ took place in 2019 and facilitated people with a learning disability of all ages, with their families and providers to attend co-production events that focused on establishing ‘what is important to you’. As a result of this work, people with a learning disability and their families clearly communicated their 3 top key priority outcomes that are important for them which were:

- Having Good Health
- Having the right place to live
- Accessing opportunities that is meaningful to them including skills development, training and getting a job that they want.

4.3 However, due to a number of reasons, and in particular the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local service provision and resources there has been a delay progressing these three priority outcomes.

4.4 Notwithstanding the challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused and will continue to do in the future, the Council’s Adult Services have recognised the need to modernise and improve its day services offer so that people can access the right support at the right time, in the most resource efficient way possible and thereby enabling all people with a learning disability to have the best opportunity for a meaningful life with equity, respect and improved wellbeing is more important than ever.

Learning Disability Transformation Programme

4.5 In order to progress the modernisation of the Council’s care and support offer a **Learning Disability Transformation ‘Improving the offer’ Programme** was established during the Covid-19 pandemic. A key focus is the commitment to working in partnership with other key stakeholders and with people with a learning disability and their families and carers to refocus on the delivery of the Statement of Strategic Intent and support the delivery of people’s identified outcomes through co-production. This includes the development of:

- a Multi-Agency Transformation Partnership “Governance” Board to be joint chaired by an individual with a learning disability and the Director of Adult Services, and
- a Citizens Panel to engage with the wider learning disability community.

4.6 The work of the Learning Disability Transformation Programme has been informed to date from evidence gained from the following review activity:

- current care and support offer commissioned by the Council, including the identification of gaps and observations from which projects and activity can be developed from

- user of services and family and carer views, experiences and outcomes
- user of services and carers views of their experience of the management of Covid-19, including the opportunities and challenges in meeting need.

4.7 A brief summary of some of the key observations in relation to the above activity, and in particular to the Council's current day service offer is provided below:

- The current offer appears to be service focused and based on the existing services available, including where the person lives with less focus on the specific aspirations and outcomes of the individual
- There is a sense of a lack of progression for people with a learning disability and a sense of risk aversion and a culture of paternalism that can impact the opportunities for people and their family progression
- Whilst there have been efforts to transform the Council's day service offer this has been challenging and slower than anticipated - it has also been in isolation from the rest of the health and social care system
- Within the Council's Day Service, the current high use of people accessing group work will often translate to a lower focus on individual skills development and progression – there is also a need to be mindful of repetitive processes that can result in fatigue and time wasting for the person and duplication of resources for the organisations concerned.
- There is a need to focus on what the Council's Day Service does well and how it fits with the wider market and needs of the population - embracing the opportunities presented by Covid-19 to reshape and redesign day services to focus on specific groups of people with higher support needs and complexities, including autism.

4.8 Further detail in relation to the engagement with people with a learning disability and family and carers is provided Section 7 below. From the feedback received to date it is clear that it is not only the Council's day service offer for people with a learning disability that requires transformation. As people with a learning disability access a range of other specific services, including supported living, residential care, short breaks and community support services, many of which are also rooted in traditional approaches rather than supporting the best practice principles of prevention and progression, it is clear that the Council will need to look at how it can improve and refocus its care and support offer for people with a learning disability in order to meet people's needs currently and for the future.

4.9 The findings and feedback from this transformation programme will provide an evidence base to inform the development of a coordinated and sustainable delivery plan that will bring together future activity to transform the Council's care and support offer and improve the outcomes for people with a learning disability. This work will be reported to Cabinet, where relevant, for consideration and decision in due course.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 When making decisions on strategic and policy matters, Cabinet must have regard to the Council's public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010, namely: Public Sector Equality Duty and Socio-Economic Duty. The Council's Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process ensures that due regard is paid to these duties.
- 5.2 An EqIA pre-screening exercise has been completed reviewing the impact of the recommendations made in Section 2 above. Whilst there are some temporary changes to the provision for current people supported by Adult Services, the focus will continue to be on meeting assessed care and support needs through existing and, if relevant, new care and support provision so impact will be minimalised.
- 5.3 If Cabinet agree to the recommendations in Section 2 of this report, a full EqIA will be completed evaluating any impact of the proposed co-produced new day opportunities strategy and this will be included in the subsequent report to Cabinet for consideration prior to any future decision being made to change the Council's day service offer for people with a learning disability.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no immediate Welsh Language implications relating the proposals within this report. The Council will ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards if a consultation process is initiated in relation to the proposals outlined within this report. All recommended proposals if implemented will comply with Welsh Government's "More Than Just Words" Strategic Framework in Health and Social Care.

7. COUNCIL'S DAY SERVICE OFFER FOR PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

- 7.1 The provision of day services is a key offer in the provision of care and support for people with a learning disability that should help them to have a fulfilling life, provide the opportunity to take part in various interests and activities, make friends, develop relationships, gain new skills, and enable them to make a positive contribution to the community in which they live. Day services should also provide support to carers by means of creating respite so that they can pursue their own interests outside of their caring role.
- 7.2 The Council's current day service offer is well valued by people who access it and their families and carers. However, as already reported, it is predominantly building based and follows a traditional "day centre" maintenance model that provides services for adults with a learning disability rather than a progressive person centred community based model of support which supports and encourages choice and control for people through opportunities to engage in meaningful community activity.

- 7.3 Research shows that in the majority of other local authorities, there has been a significant shift from the reliance on building based day services towards more personalised community based day opportunities in settings such as workplaces, colleges, sports centres and local community hubs. This has been supported by investment in the independent and third sector to create partnerships and an employment first type approach.
- 7.4 Best practice shows that having a job is likely to significantly improve the life chances and independence of people with a learning disability, offering independence and choice over future outcomes. Therefore, the Council's day service offer should reflect a move towards this approach and to support better outcomes for people accessing Adult Services - a key aspect of living an ordinary life is employment.
- 7.5 In order to move away from a predominantly building based service approach to meeting needs, a shift in focus is required to a personal, community assets and place-based approach which bring people and places together, through a range of methods, to support people to live ordinary lives

Current Day Services Offer

- 7.6 The Council's Day Service for people with a learning disability provides daytime activities, primarily in day centres and in some community and work-based facilities. It currently supports around 355 adults with a learning disability and their families and carers with a range of different support needs from those individuals requiring minimal support through to individuals with complex behavioural support needs and a profound and multiple learning disability.
- 7.7 The majority of the people supported by the Council's Day Service have complex behavioural support needs and profound and multiple learning disability. People attend the Council's Day Service either on a full time or a part time basis dependent on historically arrangements along with individual needs. Some individuals attend more than one service during the week.
- 7.8 Because of changes to people's expectations over recent years, more younger adults are choosing to access community based services and older adults are choosing to "retire" from attending day centres and staying at their home. As a consequence, attendances at the Council's Day Service have been decreasing and despite there being a growing demand on adult social care services, the demand for day service support is not expected to grow. However, levels of complexity and need is getting higher.
- 7.9 The age profile of current day service users is increasing - the majority have been attending for over 10 years and the most of these live at home with parents, many of whom are themselves approaching or past retirement age. Because of the original purpose of the Council's day centres the expectation of many existing people and their families and carers relates to attending a day centre each weekday. The Council's Day Services are valued by the majority of people who use them and by their families and carers as valuable respite, which supports them to continue in their caring role.

- 7.10 The Council's Day Service is often seen as a 'safe place' for people; hence people tend to remain in current services for long periods of time, sometimes for significant periods of their lives. As a result, the Council's Day Service provision encourages dependency over time as opposed to promoting resilience and independence - rarely do adults with a learning disability move on to other forms of provision.
- 7.11 The Council's current day services offer is often just seen as a solution and the person fits the service, rather than service responding to a person's needs and desired outcomes. Social care reviews do not always take place in a timely way and therefore sometimes do not consider a person's strengths, skills, and interests. Any change to the Council's current day service offer will require a move away from merely providing services and one-size-fits-all solutions and instead will need more innovative, flexible, community based solutions, which build aspiration for people at any age.
- 7.12 Across Rhondda Cynon Taf, there are a number of different day service activities available to people with a learning disability with a range of different support needs, which are delivered across 3 large day centres and 11 small community day centres and worked based sites, including those commissioned externally.
- 7.13 Two of the large day centres (Treforest and Llwynypia) were originally designed as 'adult training centres'. The third (Gadlys) is a former residential care home. These centres are dated buildings, and their size and age mean that they are expensive to heat and have significant repair and maintenance costs. They were designed and built at least 25 years ago to fulfil very different purpose from the ones they do today. Whilst the quality of the care by staff is good, they generally have an institutional and somewhat unwelcoming appearance. Over the years the style of service has changed significantly, and the buildings need modernisation to meet the needs of the people currently, and those in the future, using the service with significantly higher support needs. Whilst the buildings have received some refurbishment over the years to meet the increasing needs of people, they do not meet the standards that are found in more modern facilities.
- 7.14 The majority of the small centres, with the exemption of Abercynon Day Centre are community centres where rooms are hired to provide a day service and, as a result, there are some limitations within the service provided from a building perspective. Some other facilities are used to provide alternative community and work based projects, for example Cwm Cycling and Maesyffynnon Garden Centre, which offers activities around its market gardening facilities.
- 7.15 People with less complex needs sometimes use the buildings as a base and may attend other community based activities. However, the current day services offer to people with more complex needs and those with a profound and multiple learning disability is primarily building based and follows a traditional day centre model which, due to the numbers of people attending, have staffing ratios that do not facilitate a greater community presence and participation for this group.

- 7.16 The majority of day service provision operate over 5 days a week, 9:00 am until 4:00 pm Monday to Friday. People using the service will normally attend from 9:30 am to 10:00 am until 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm; this structure is largely inflexible and relates to the availability of arranged transport which the majority of clients use. There may be the potential to make services available outside these hours to include evenings and weekends, although the demand for such services is not known.
- 7.17 Many local authorities have reduced their directly provided resources and grown the external market offer; however, the majority of this Council's Day Services are run directly by the Council and only some are commissioned externally from the third and independent sector. Over the past two years, Adult Services have worked with our commissioned supported living providers to develop and shape the independent market for day services support to ensure a variety of different offers to meet people needs. However, the offer remains underdeveloped and underutilised and there is need to stimulate a wider care and support market to develop a range of opportunities for people with a learning disability to participate in, instead of attending day centres.
- 7.18 Rhondda Cynon Taf is ranked as the 2nd highest spender on day care support for adults aged under 65 with a learning disability – this is almost exclusively in-house day service provision.
- 7.19 Direct Payments provide people with greater choice and control to purchase the support which best meets their needs, e.g., by employing personal assistants, people can choose to be supported to access community groups and education classes rather than attend traditional day services. However, Direct Payments remain underutilised, with people preferring to use day service provision or request additional support to remain at home, including supported living accommodation rather than continue to use building based day services. As already mentioned, the independent market is also underdeveloped to offer different support options for people to purchase the support which best meet their needs.

Treforest Day Centre

- 7.20 Prior to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, Members will be aware that in February 2020, Treforest Day Centre was seriously flooded and damaged during Storm Dennis and immediate action taken to temporarily close and make the centre safe, pending further inspection and assessment of the damage. At the time everyone who used Treforest Day Centre were assessed based on need and risk and some people offered alternative support at an alternative centre or at their home with their family or within their supported accommodation.
- 7.21 Because of the significant refurbishment needed to return Treforest Day Centre to a safe, yet minimum standard of fitness, due to the serious flooding and limitations of the centre and the ongoing requirement of guidance to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is not currently possible to provide a day service at the Treforest. Therefore, in the short term it is proposed that:

- Treforest Day Centre continues to remain temporarily closed to allow for further evaluation to be undertaken when the proposed draft day opportunities strategy is reported back to Cabinet for approval.
- Adult Services continue to work with people and their families and carers who are registered at Treforest Day Centre to support them to utilise different methods of achieving what matters to them while the day centre remains closed.
- Adult Services and, where applicable, commissioned providers and Direct Payments are used to provide outreach home based support, whilst supporting people to enhance their day opportunities, where safe to do so.

Covid-19 Response

- 7.22 All practice and priorities changed for the Council, Adult Services and its commissioned providers shortly after in March 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 7.23 Due to the vulnerability of people attending the Council's Day Services there has been a need to be vigilant to the risk of continuing service provision so that it is safe in terms of sufficient staffing resource and compliant with Welsh Government social distancing and infection control guidance.
- 7.24 Despite the vast majority of local authorities closing their day service provision, the Council has maintained a prioritised service for those people assessed as critical due to their own needs or crisis situations. This prioritised day service provision has been in place throughout the pandemic. However, due to easing of Covid-19 cases and restrictions and increased demand for care and support, the Council has continued to make available additional day service capacity to prioritise supporting adults and their families and carers based on need and risk.
- 7.25 Covid-19 restrictions have meant that the Council's Day Service hasn't been able to offer as many places as they could prior to the pandemic and it has tried, under often very difficult circumstances, to work with people, their families and carers confirm support arrangements.
- 7.26 Currently, the Council's Day Services are supporting around 210 adults with a learning disability with a range of different support needs at its Centres compared to around 355 prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Plans are in place to reopen more day service provision as Covid-19 cases ease.
- 7.27 Through the pandemic, staff have continued, where possible based on need and risk to provide welfare checks and stayed in touch with people and their families and carers. Some people have also received additional targeted outreach home support and Direct Payments to meet their needs. The Council will continue to work closely with people and their families and carers to find solutions to best support their eligible needs and what matter to them.

8. ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

People First

- 8.1 In late July 2020, Officers, via a workshop arranged by Cwm Taf People First, engaged with a small cohort of individuals who use the Council's Day Service and other day time opportunities along with families and carers from the Grapevine to learn from their experiences throughout lockdown and consider more fully formed options for the future delivery of day services. Further engagement with people with a learning disability and service providers was arranged by People First in early October 2020. A summary of the engagement feedback relating in particular to day services is below:
- need for people and their families to be involved is vital to co-produce future strategy developments and service transformation going forward
 - more easy read information, as well as visual aids, is needed
 - most people wished to return to day services, including employment and volunteering opportunities, when it is safe to do so
 - some people said that day services provided them more autonomy and improved their self-esteem and said that being out in local communities as their most enjoyable pastime and one of the things they missed most
 - some people would like to try an alternative activity to day centre attendance
 - respite for carers provided by the Council's Day Service is important and some families and carers have struggled during the pandemic due to reduce levels of provision
 - Covid-19 have impacted on people's friendships and relationships and opportunities for these to be maintained are extremely important to people
 - accessible transport has been an issue (for a long time) for many people
 - more use of Direct Payments to provide greater opportunity for people to use as an alternative to day services and allow people to participate in activities in the wider community and spend more time with friends
- 8.2 In addition to the above, People First launched their My Day My Way Phase 1 Report on 16th May 2021. The My Day My Way project is set up to collect and use the experiences and thoughts of people with a learning disability to challenge, hold account and lead future service development of daytime services in the hope of creating a more meaningful and purposeful life for them. Through the Phase 1 activities People First spoke to 60 people with a learning disability across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Region as experts by experience. The report contains their experiences, thoughts, hopes and dreams through a range of engagement tools and innovative analysis to highlight trends, patterns and recommendations for the future. It is important that Adult Services use this engagement feedback to co-produce current and future day service offers.

Learning Disability Transformation Programme

8.3 During Autumn 2020, as part of the development of the Learning Disability Transformation Programme it was decided to engage with Adult Services social work and care staff and its commissioned providers to explore and draw out their perspectives on how people with a learning disability move through certain pathways and current service offers. A summary of some of key observations in relation to day services is provided below:

- staff are a constant in people's lives and know them really well
- specialist autism day services are held in high esteem by people and families and carers and demand for places in these settings outstrips supply
- there is a growing range of online activities and support that are addressing social isolation and helping people develop new skills as alternative to going into day services
- there are lots of building assets and some great projects
- Day Services enables people to stay living at home with families
- Supported Living Providers would like the opportunity to assist in the wider modernisation of day services by providing alternatives such as using pooled Direct Payments
- there is a lack of choice around day support and some people spend a long time travelling to and from their day centres
- opportunity to refocus the Council's Day Services on people with more severe and profound learning and physical disabilities as part of a network of respite support for family and carers
- people are not encouraged to move on and may use services for years longer than is necessary, including employment and volunteering
- there is a need to begin conversations around employment and volunteer options at a younger age.

8.4 In addition, further engagement with a small cohort of people with a learning disability and their family and carers was also completed. A summary of some of the key engagement feedback specific to day services is provided below.

- some good initiatives to support people through the pandemic, but most people are bored and lonely and are longing for work, learning and leisure opportunities and being able to reconnect with loved ones and friends
- need for clear communication about both short-term availability and the long-term future of day services
- need for a wider range of day services and activities with a focus on life skills
- need to support to more people with learning disabilities to think about employment and volunteering opportunities

- most people said that they enjoyed day services and were really missing their friends and their activities – more support needed to maintain the friendships they have built up through day services

9. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND PROPOSALS FOR DAY SERVICE TRANSFORMATION

9.1 The initial analysis and findings from the transformation programme, including the Council's response to Covid-19 and, in particular, the feedback received through the engagement activity undertaken to date, as summarised above, identifies the need to transform the Council's current day services offer for people with a learning disability and create a new offer in order to meet current and future assessed need in the most efficient and cost-effective way that promotes independence, social inclusion and positive outcomes for people with a learning disability and their families and carers. From the work already taken place this is likely to require:

- improved assessment and care and support planning, delivering strength based, person-centred creative plans that drive change by better identifying positive outcomes rather than focusing on a referral to services
- greater focus on a wider approach to promoting independence, rather than solely looking at building-based day services. This will mean reviewing the persons journey more holistically and not solely focusing on one set of services. In order to move away from a predominantly service-based approach, a broader scope is required which incorporates assets which support a meaningful day
- work to address barriers to accessing community facilities, both in terms of physical environment and of changing attitudes to people with learning disabilities, encouraging a more inclusive approach
- challenging limitations imposed, either overtly or inadvertently, by traditional service models, including staffing, use of buildings, transport arrangements and a reliance on group activities
- far greater use of mainstream community options ensuring access to the wide range of opportunities Rhonda Cynon Taf has to offer in order to maximise inclusion, friendships and relationships and to address the concerns over the lives of people with learning disabilities being determined by the availability of services staff
- creative use of resources, particularly staffing based around shared interests of people supported, rather than around location and level of need
- a fundamental change of approach in services towards work, volunteering and contributing to the community, which underpin the key principles of prevention and progression and enabling people to be as independent as possible in their own communities by focusing on their strengths

- maximising the opportunity to use Direct Payments to access support or activities of the person's choice
 - reviewing the need for existing day centres and look to maximise the use of retained buildings and resources. It is recognised that long-term building-based provision will most likely provide the best service for those with the most complex needs, whilst for some individuals, short-term enablement and skills development may support a move into a more community-based environment. Day centres themselves can be assets, providing a base for multiple activities with in-reach and outreach to the local community
 - given the lasting impact of Covid-19, any new day services offer will need to be future-proofed as far as possible, to ensure that provision can be flexible in meeting need in a range of different ways as well as meeting any expected future demand on services.
- 9.2 In order to achieve the above level of transformation required and ensure the new day service offer meets the aspirations of current and future people with a learning disability and their families and carers, it is proposed that a co-production approach is taken.
- 9.3 The intention will be to engage with a wider group of people that have a learning disability and their families and carers, including those who do not use services at present, or who are less frequent users and young people in school to ensure that these groups can contribute to the shaping of current and future day service offers. This work will define what is important to people in living a meaningful and inclusive life in Rhondda Cynon Taf, including of day and evening opportunities and support.
- 9.4 It is proposed that these engagement events and activities will be carried out over the Summer, along with engagement work with other key stakeholders. This engagement will inform the development of a proposed new co-produced day opportunities strategy, which Cabinet will receive for approval prior to formal public consultation.
- 9.5 The aim of the co-produced strategy is to provide a clear set of principles for day opportunities and the components that will need to be in place to support people with care and support needs to have a good and meaningful day. The proposed strategy will have a clear set of actions which will set out the way investment in services needs to change over time and how services would be developed and grown to meet the outcomes of the strategy. It will also importantly provide the co-produced ambition that will influence and drive the pace of change needed across day services for people with a learning disability, leading to a sustainable and diverse range of care and support providers, continuously improving quality and choice, and delivering better, innovative and cost-effective outcomes that promote the wellbeing and independence of people who need care and support.
- 9.6 In addition to the above proposals, Adults Services will continue to undertake operational service delivery improvements already underway and identified

through to the ongoing co-production process being embedded as part of the Learning Disability Transformation Programme. For example, currently this would include continuing to:

- work closely with Colleges, Adult Education and training providers to link workplace training with classroom training to ensure people are equipped to be work ready
- develop an employment pathway inclusive of the different employment support offer available
- encourage people to choose a Direct Payment in order to make their own arrangements for day opportunities and access more community resources with friends and others with a shared interest
- work with Adult Service Commissioners to work with the market in the development of progressive, strength and outcome-based commissioning models
- deliver service improvements identified during the covid restrictions, such as improvements to online digital solutions

9.7 Any changes to the Council's current day services offer will be subject to active engagement and co-production with people with a learning disability and their families and carers. This will take into account all relevant national policies and drivers for change, be informed, where relevant, by examples of best practice and be co-produced. It is also very important that the Council work with people with a learning disability and their families and carers progress at a reasonable and supportive pace to ensure that future service offers, and support are firstly what people need, and secondly, they really work and are cost-effective

10. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

10.1 Engagement has already commenced as described in Section 6 above and this has provided a better understanding of what people with a learning disability and their families and carers want from services and support for the future. However, wider on-going engagement with people with a learning disability, their families and carers, staff and partners is recommended in order to co-produce the proposed new day opportunities strategy to transform the Council's current day service offer and future service provision, which is recommended to be reported back to Cabinet for approval prior to enter public consultation.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The proposals set out in this report have the primary focus of delivering improved individual outcomes for people with a learning disability and their families and carers. Whilst the financial implications are a secondary consideration, future proposals to transform the Council's current day service offer should provide more cost-effective solutions and these will be explored,

subject to agreement of the recommendations in Section 2 above, in more detail in the subsequent report to Cabinet.

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 12.1 There is a public law duty to publicly consult with people affected by proposals resulting in changes to current and future provision of services. Where consultation is undertaken it should be done when proposals are at a formative stage; give sufficient reasons for any proposal so that respondents can make an informed response and allow adequate time for consideration and response. Cabinet would then be required to give consideration to the outcome of the consultation process prior to any decision(s) being made on any proposals.
- 12.2 Any future provision of services would need to be considered in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. Local Authorities have a general duty under the Act to promote wellbeing. This duty applies when considering decisions in respect of an individual but also when considering broader strategic issues that do not relate to an individual. In doing so, the overall purpose is to produce a sustainable and diverse range of care and support services to deliver better, innovative and cost-effective services and support and promote the wellbeing of every person, and their carer, with the need of care and support. The recommendations made in Section 2 above aim to deliver the highest standards of care and support and is consistent with the above duty.
- 12.3 In addition, the Act and the accompanying Part 4 of the Code of Practice sets out that where an Authority has carried out an assessment which has revealed that the person has needs for care and support then the local authority must decide if those needs meet the eligibility criteria, and if they do, it must meet those needs either by commissioning services from independent organisation or by providing the service directly. The Council's Day Service forms part of this provision. The recommendations put forward in this report will allow the Council to ensure that going forward Rhondda Cynon Taf can meet all eligible needs.

13. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 13.1 This report supports two of the Council's corporate priorities, namely:
- People - promoting independence and positive lives for everyone; and
 - Living within our means - where services are delivered efficiently to achieve value for money for the taxpayer.
- 13.2 The proposals in this report would allow the Council to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. By providing a model of care that meets the needs of people with a learning disability and their families/carers, including those with more complex needs that is sustainable and increases focus on service offered, which promote choice, wellbeing and independence, the

wellbeing goals of a Wales of cohesive communities, a healthier Wales and more equal Wales are supported.

13.3 Due regard has also been made to the five ways of working, included in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the wellbeing goals have been considered in this report:

- **Long Term** – social services is demand led and there is a requirement to meet the needs of people in the longer term and, because of rising demographics and increasing complexity, the transformation of services continues to be a priority as we seek to achieve long term sustainable change to our care and support offer.

The Council's commitment to developing daytime opportunities represents a focus on the long-term wellbeing of individuals using the service and also the sustainability of social care by supporting carers and reducing demand on alternative care and support at home.

- **Prevention** – the report highlights proposals to reduce reliance on traditional services and move to a model focussing on the need to develop more progressive community based services aimed at reducing loneliness and enhancing wellbeing through more volunteering and paid employment opportunities.
- **Integration** – the implementation of the proposal requires the Council to work with partners, particularly within Health to ensure the service offer and future service delivery of care and support for people with a learning disability meets their assessed needs.
- **Collaboration** – the models of care and support and proposals outlined in this report have and will be developed with current and new partner organisations, including third sector organisations and wider communities.
- **Involvement** – the key stakeholders are the people with a learning disability and their families and carers who use social care. There has already been engagement with people in the development of service proposals and models outlined in this report. If these proposals are agreed by Cabinet, then further involvement will be undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to shape care and support provision to ensure benefits and wellbeing opportunities are maximised.

13.4 In addition to the above, there are a number of other national priorities, which will help influence the transformation of day services for people with a learning disability, including:

- The **Statement of Policy and Practice for Adults with Learning Disability published by Welsh Government in 2007** describes the vision, key principles, and outcomes that the Welsh Assembly Government

believes are desirable - this is Welsh Government's latest guidance, and it is still relevant today.

- The **Welsh Government Learning Disability - Improving Lives Programme** communicates an ambition to create a society across Wales that has a desire for change and 'Prosperity for All' improving the opportunities and life outcomes for all people with a learning disability aligning to key equality and human rights principles.
- The **Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act 2018** and its associated statutory **ALN Code** will bring transformational change to the way local authorities in Wales make statutory provision to meet the needs of learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN) over a new extended age range of 0 to 25 years. The change in legislation will have clear implications for adult and education services to work collaboratively to ensure that, where appropriate, young people have access to further education and training opportunities in addition to any other social care needs they may have.

14. CONCLUSION

- 14.1 The need to improve adult social care services is a key priority for Rhondda Cynon Taf and without transforming the way that services are provided, it would not be possible to meet people's changing expectations and needs within the resources available.
- 14.2 This report provides key information evidencing the need to transform the Council's day service offer for people with a learning disability in order to:
- respond to the engagement feedback from people who use services and their families and carers as to what they would like day services to look like and deliver now and in the future
 - meet the current and future increasing need and complexity of the people we support and develop sustainable opportunities for them
 - meet the expectations from people we support and their families and carers for more outcome based opportunities focused on individual progression and achievement that promotes independence not dependence
 - recognise people's abilities, not disabilities, and that everyone with a learning disability can make a positive contribution to the community in which they live
 - improve the delivery of the day service offer, including the current day centre buildings in the most efficient and cost effective way
 - response to the impact of Covid-19

- meet the requirements of the Social Services Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and other national and local strategic priorities

14.3 In order to achieve the above level of transformation required and ensure the new day service offer meets the aspirations of current and future people with a learning disability and their families and carers, it is proposed that a co-production approach is taken and wider engagement is undertaken with people with a learning disability, their families and carers, staff and partners to develop a new day opportunities strategy, which Cabinet will receive for approval to prior enter to formal public consultation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH JULY 2021

LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICE OFFER

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR G HOPKINS

Background Papers:

Cabinet – 3rd December 2020

Cabinet – 21st November 2017

Officer to contact: Neil Elliott, Director of Adult Services

This page is intentionally left blank



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS JOY ROSSER) AND THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT COMMUNITY SERVICES AND WELSH LANGUAGE (COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS)

Author(s): Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services and Grace Zecca-Hanagan, 21st Century Schools

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an opportunity to consider the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and agree to engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report and the draft WESP attached in appendix 1 to the report.
- 2.2 Consider the draft WESP.
- 2.3 Agree for officers to engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders on the draft WESP.
- 2.4 Agree to review the results of the consultation on the draft WESP at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 For the Council to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education during the ten year lifespan of this WESP by 2032.

4. **BACKGROUND**

4.1 Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation Act 2013¹ requires Local Authorities to prepare a WESP. The WESP must contain proposals and targets to improve the:

- Planning and standards of Welsh medium education and teaching; and
- Report on progress made to meet the targets of the previous WESP.

4.2 Since our first WESP was submitted to the Welsh Government in 2016, there have been significant changes in the Welsh medium education sector at local and national levels. These changes have been mainly influenced by Welsh Government legislation, in particular the new Welsh in Education Action Plan and further implementation of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

4.3 The Welsh Government has also updated the regulations regarding WESPs, with the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019² and the WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020³ focusing on four key proposals. The principal two being:

1. Extending the duration of the WESP from its current three year implementation cycle to a ten year implementation cycle; and
2. The removal of the current duty on Local Authorities to plan their provision of Welsh medium education based on demand, with the requirement that Local Authorities achieve targets set by the Welsh Government which aim to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the WESP.

4.4 Our target, during the ten year lifespan of this WESP, that has been set by the Welsh Government, is to:

Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.

¹ [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

² [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

³ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

- 4.5 This target is based on contributing to the overall long term target, set out in Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.
- 4.6 The methodology implemented by the Welsh Government for setting this target involves using baseline data from the 2019 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC). The data from each Local Authority has been compared and Local Authorities have been grouped together based on this and other factors including the models of Welsh medium education provision adopted and the linguistic nature of the Local Authority. This methodology is regarded to be fair, as it acknowledges the different challenges faced by each Local Authority in Wales.
- 4.7 Each group of Local Authorities has a set target by a fixed range of percentage points. The Council is in Group Three alongside:
- Caerphilly,
 - Cardiff,
 - Merthyr Tydfil,
 - Swansea,
 - Vale of Glamorgan and
 - Wrexham.
- 4.8 As well as the target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education, the WESP includes seven outcomes or areas setting out how Local Authorities are expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality. The priorities are:
1. **Outcome 1:** More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
 2. **Outcome 2:** More reception / five year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
 3. **Outcome 3:** More learners continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
 4. **Outcome 4:** More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
 5. **Outcome 5:** More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
 6. **Outcome 6:** An increase in the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with additional learning needs.
 7. **Outcome 7:** Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh.
- 4.9 Although the statutory responsibility for the WESP sits with Local Authorities, several other external groups and organisations have a

role in contributing to preparing, implementing and evaluating it. These include, but are not limited to:

- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.
- Coleg y Cymoedd.
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.
- Menter Iaith.
- Mudiad Meithrin.
- RhaG.
- The Urdd.
- University of South Wales.
- Welsh Government.

4.10 A WESP Steering Group will be established to provide an effective focus for the Local Authority, in partnership with external groups and organisations, to assist in the formulation, implementation and ongoing evaluation of the new WESP. To ensure effective governance arrangements are in place, members of the Steering Group will be asked to agree to a Terms of Reference.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (with Social-Economic Duty) for the draft WESP is attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment for the draft WESP is attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1 The draft WESP will be subject to a comprehensive public consultation with a wide range of stakeholders for no less than an eight week period. In addition, it will be scrutinised by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group.

7.2 The Welsh Language Steering Group will meet on the [19th July](#) to consider the draft WESP and the consultation proposals outlined within this report. Feedback in respect of the comments of the group will be provided verbally at the Cabinet meeting.

7.3 Current circumstances 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.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The following legislation / regulations are aligned to this report:

1. Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
2. The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019.
3. The WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

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

10.1 The main strategies and policies that are linked with the draft WESP are:

- Prosperity for All: The National Strategy and The Programme for Government: Taking Wales Forward which aim to drive forward improvements to the Welsh economy and public services. One of the priorities is to enable all learners to be able to use the Welsh language when they leave school.
- Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers, which sets out the Welsh Governments ambition for reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and encouraging more people to use and speak Welsh in their everyday lives.
- Education in Wales – Our National Mission, which sets out how the education sector will move forward to ensure that the new curriculum is implemented effectively. The intention is for learners to become increasingly bilingual with a strong grasp for other languages. To support this, the Welsh in Education Action Plan and Cymraeg 2050 Action Plan sets the direction for the development of Welsh medium education.

10.2 There are links to the Council's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper:
 - Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

10.3 The delivery of the WESP will contribute to all seven well-being goals within the Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015, in particular:

- A More Prosperous Wales, by developing a skilled and well-educated population.
- A More Equal Wales, by creating a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language, by creating a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

10.4 In addition, due regard has been made to the Five Ways of Working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 The Council has set an ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. The draft WESP sets out the action the Council will take over the forthcoming ten years, by 2032, to make progress towards the achievement of this target.

11.2 In order to meet our target by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively. The Council, therefore, welcomes the opportunity to consult and engage with wide range of stakeholders to seek their views on the achievement of this ambitious target.

11.3 Cabinet are asked to approve the recommendations of this report so that officers can engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders on the draft WESP.

Other Information:

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
2. Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group.

Contact Officer:

Grace Zecca-Hanagan

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER) AND THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT COMMUNITY SERVICES AND WELSH LANGUAGE (COUNCILLOR G HOPKINS)

Background Papers

1. Draft WESP.
2. Equality Impact Assessment (with Social-Economic Duty).
3. Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Officer to Contact:

Grace Zecca-Hanagan

This page is intentionally left blank

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welsh in Education

Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032



DRAFT

July 2021



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN – 2022 TO 2032

This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is made under Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013¹ and complies with The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019² and The WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020³. When setting targets, due regard has been given to the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers.

Gaynor Davies
(Director of Education and Inclusion Services)

DRAFT

¹ [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

² [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

³ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

CONTENTS PAGE

CONTENT	PAGE NUMBER
<u>Our Vision</u>	3 – 5
<u>Outcome 1: More Nursery / Three Year Old Learners Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh</u>	5 – 14
<u>Outcome 2: More Reception / Five Year Old Learners Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh</u>	14 – 18
<u>Outcome 3: More Children Continue to Improve their Welsh Language Skills when Transferring from One Stage of their Statutory Education to Another</u>	18 – 21
<u>Outcome 4: More Learners Study for Assessed Qualifications in Welsh (as a Subject) and Subjects Through the Medium of Welsh</u>	21 – 26
<u>Outcome 5: More Opportunities for Learners to use Welsh in Different Contexts in School</u>	26 – 30
<u>Outcome 6: An Increase in the Provision of Welsh Medium Education for Learners with ALN (in Accordance with the duties Imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018</u>	30 – 33
<u>Outcome 7: Increase the Number of Teaching Staff Able to Teach Welsh (as a Subject) and Teach Through the Medium of Welsh</u>	33 – 38
<u>Marketing</u>	38
<u>Achieving our Vision</u>	39
<u>Annex One: Methodology for Target Setting</u>	40 – 41
<u>Annex Two: Linguistic Profile of the County Borough</u>	42 – 43
<u>Annex Three: Baseline Data</u>	44 – 51
<u>Glossary</u>	52 – 53

OUR VISION

As the Council looks to the future, it wants to build on what it has achieved to date and make sure that every town and community in the County Borough is a great place to live, work and play. The Council's ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all key priority areas.

Integral to achieving this ambition is the vision that:

There are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good English and Welsh medium education.

The Council will deliver this vision by supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years' system, supporting families through the childcare offer and by investing in new and significantly improved school and community facilities through the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

The Council will show clear leadership and commitment in its vision for Welsh medium and Welsh language education and, as such, our target is to:

Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.

This target has been set in accordance with The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019 (the 2019 Regulations) and The WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 (the 2020 Regulations). In setting this target, due regard has been given to The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the 2013 Act). This target is based on contributing to the overall long term target of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, as set out in Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers⁴ (Cymraeg 2050). For a more detailed explanation of the methodology implemented for setting this target, see [Annex One – Methodology for Target Setting](#).

Set against the challenge of decreasing birth rates, the achievement of this target will require a multifaceted approach and the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards it. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.

In recent years, the Council has committed to increasing the quality and availability of early years Welsh medium settings, co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites. This has been achieved through significant investment in a number of extensions to

⁴ [Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers](#)

existing childcare and early years settings and the establishment of new childcare and early years settings for both Flying Start Programme (FSP) and fee paying childcare settings.

Most Welsh medium primary and secondary schools currently have surplus capacity, however, there are a few primary and secondary schools where demand is high and growth in capacity is needed. In these primary and secondary schools, action has or is currently being taken to address these issues. In addition, the Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects totalling £160 million, with the inclusion of a number of projects that propose to increase and significantly improve Welsh medium primary and secondary school capacity and community facilities.

The Council continues to deliver and support its long term strategic investment programme of modernisation, to create school environments that meet the needs of communities and provide the best learning provision and outcomes for children and young people and the wider community. Several Welsh medium primary and secondary school projects have been included in the Council's Capital Programme for the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020. In addition to this, over the same timeframe, the Council has spent approximately £4.7 million on planned programme capital works in Welsh medium primary and secondary schools.

PLASC data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of primary and secondary school aged learners attending English and Welsh medium primary and secondary schools for the previous three academic years, up to and including 2019 / 2020. Alongside this, data indicates that the transition of learners between key stages does not appear to be a significant problem. Neither does the retention of learners between key stages.

Currently, Welsh medium learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), who experience difficulties within mainstream primary and secondary schools and require more specialist support, are supported by a specialist peripatetic team – The Welsh Complex Needs Team (WCNT). The WCNT provide support through an inclusive delivery model, whereby learners are provided with specialist support within their mainstream primary and secondary schools. During the academic year 2019 / 2020, The WCNT supported a number of learners. Analysis suggests that learners accessing support from The WCNT made progress that was comparable to that of their peers in equivalent English medium primary and secondary school settings. Further analysis suggests that this inclusive model adopted in Welsh medium primary and secondary schools has been very positive.

In order to create more Welsh speakers, our education system is dependent on its workforce and we must work nationally with the Welsh Government (WG) and regionally with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSC JES) to ensure we contribute towards creating a workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. The Council is committed to Welsh medium and Welsh language education workforce planning for primary and secondary schools and has and will continue to work in collaboration with other Local Authorities (LAs), the CSC JES and the WG in order to create more Welsh speakers.

Alongside this, we must work to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers and demonstrate that it is never too late to be educated through the medium of Welsh with the use of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers.

Recognising the importance of Cymraeg 2050, and how essential the education system is to achieve its vision, this WESP sets out the Council's ten year plan for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education. It builds on the work of the previous WESP for the period between 2017 to 2022⁵ and sets out a workplan which demonstrates how the Council intends to achieve its ten year vision.

In developing this WESP, all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans have been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. The Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans that impact upon Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

OUTCOME 1: MORE NURSERY / THREE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Early immersion in the Welsh language and support for parents / carers to seamlessly continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education, ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression can be established as early as the ante-natal period. Cymraeg for Kids, working alongside Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board's (CTMUHB) Midwifery and Health Visiting Team ensure that parents / carers receive key early messages regarding the Welsh language during the ante-natal period. During the post-natal period, between the ages of 0 to 2, parents / carers can attend Cylch Ti a Fi and Cymraeg i Blant parent and toddler sessions, followed by Cylch Meithrin nursery groups, organised by Mudiad Meithrin, for children between the ages of 2 to 4 and then onto Welsh medium primary school from the age of 3. These groups and schools are supplemented and supported by a range of programmes including the WGs FSP and the WGs Childcare Offer for Wales. All children who attend these groups and schools will converse through the medium of Welsh. In addition, parents / carers are encouraged to enrol on a Clwb Cwtsh course which is a free eight week taster course in the Welsh language for parents / carers, so they are able to use the Welsh language with their children.

In order to provide parents / carers with information about the advantages of raising children using the Welsh language from an early age, the Council has recently updated its Being Bilingual booklet. The Being Bilingual booklet is designed to give information on the benefits of being bilingual, outline the path to Welsh medium education and answer frequently asked questions on choosing Welsh medium education. It is

⁵ [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council – Welsh in Education Strategic Plan – 2017 to 2020](#)

distributed via CTMUHBs Midwifery and Health Visiting Team, FSP childcare and early years settings and through the community.

In addition, a new Health Visiting model has been introduced as a pilot. The Wellbeing and Resilience Health Programme (RHP) was launched in October 2020 to provide enhanced health visiting services. Underpinning the delivery of the RHP is the Resilient Families Service (RFS) as the single integrated delivery model for family support. The RHP will replace the former FSP Health Visiting model which was only available to eligible families with children. The RHP is universal and includes two additional Health Visitor visits to the standard Healthy Child Wales Health Visiting pattern, an antenatal visit and an additional visit at 20 months to undertake a Schedule of Growing Skills (SOGs) assessment. Promotion of the Welsh medium and Welsh language education does not form part of the RHP, but it could be included.

In addition, information on choosing Welsh medium childcare and early years setting is shared via the Council's Family Information Service (FIS). This is via the Council's website and social media platforms and through verbal conversations. Likewise, the Council's Childcare Team also shares information with parents / carers and support childcare and early years settings to offer services through the medium of Welsh. Part of the Council's Childcare Team role is to promote and raise awareness of the Welsh medium childcare and early years settings available to parents / carers.

The Council's Starting School booklet also provides parents / carers with a range of information including advice on choosing a school, a directory of schools and the provision of home to school transport. In addition, the new RCT Families website is due to be launched. It will be a valuable resource to promote the sharing of information between all relevant groups and organisations could be used to promote the Welsh language and Welsh medium education. Parents / carers are also signposted to information provided by relevant groups and organisation including Welsh4Parents, which is a directory containing links to a wide range of Welsh language resources available on a variety of digital platforms.

To ensure that childcare and early years settings are supported and promoted to parents / carers, the Council also works in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin and other Welsh medium childcare and early years providers and organisations. To facilitate this, the Early Years, Childcare and Play Partnership Group that brings together officers from Council and other Welsh medium childcare and early years providers and organisations has recently been re-established.

There are eighteen Cylch Ti a Fi's and twenty Cylchoedd Meithrin located throughout the County Borough. Data outlines the number of Cylchoedd Meithrin has decreased from twenty five to twenty over the previous five academic years up to and including 2019 / 2020. This, in turn, has had a negative impact on the number of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin between these years with the number of children between the ages of 2 to 4 attending Cylchoedd Meithrin decreasing.

There are seventeen Welsh medium primary schools located throughout the County Borough. Data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of primary school aged learners attending English and Welsh medium primary schools for the previous three academic years up to and including 2019 / 2020. Over the same timeframe, the number of

nursery / three year old learners who receive their education through the medium of Welsh has remained stable.

The Childcare Act 2006⁶ (the 2006 Act), places a duty on all LAs to have a responsibility to secure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that there are sufficient childcare and early years settings in place to meet the requirements of parents / carers who require childcare in order to work, undertake training or education or to prepare for work. LAs have the lead role in facilitating the childcare market to ensure it meets the needs of parents / carers, particularly those on low incomes, those with children with ALN or those who wish their children to attend Welsh medium childcare and early years settings.

The 2006 Act requires LAs to prepare Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSAs) in order to have a clear understanding of the childcare and early years settings in their area, the needs of parents / carers and to develop an action plan to address any gaps identified. This was updated in April 2016 with the introduction of The Childcare Act 2006 (LA Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2016⁷ (the 2016 Regulations).

The Council's CSA for the period between 2017 and 2022⁸ scrutinised a range of data and information in order to have a clear understanding of the childcare and early years settings available alongside the needs of parents / carers. The data demonstrated that there were 195 registered English and Welsh medium childcare and early years settings, offering 775 places and 15 unregistered English and Welsh medium childcare and early years settings offering 16 places. More specifically, the data demonstrated that there were 26 registered Welsh medium childcare and early years settings offering 771 places and 5 unregistered Welsh medium childcare and early years settings offering 80 places.

Using this data and information, an action plan was prepared to identify where, when and what type of childcare and early years settings should be developed or supported. In total, the action plan identified twenty four priorities, of which the following related to Welsh medium childcare and early years settings:

- Aim to recruit additional Welsh medium childminders in the initial WG Childcare Offer for Wales pilot areas.
- Aim to recruit additional Welsh medium childminders in the South Taf area.
- Explore demand for additional Welsh medium childcare and early years settings in the Rhondda Fawr and Upper Cynon areas.
- Upskill school based staff to have the relevant qualifications to work in childcare and early years settings, particularly Welsh medium school staff.

The first annual update of the Council's CSA Action Plan was published in March 2019⁹. This annual update outlined a number of strengths and weaknesses, along with

⁶ [The Childcare Act 2006 – Section 22](#)

⁷ [The Childcare Act 2006 \(Local Authority Assessment\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2016](#)

⁸ [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – 2017 – 2022](#)

⁹ [Annual Update of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – 2017 – 2022 Action Plan – March 2019](#)

priorities and progress made. A further annual update was published in March 2020¹⁰. This annual update outlined the achievement of significant progress. In 2021, the annual update published in March 2021¹¹ demonstrated that despite the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic the Council continues to be well placed with its existing childcare provision to meet the current needs of most working parents. / carers with development work continuing to be undertaken in response to parent / carer demand and in areas where there is an identified need.

A further analysis of this data and information resulted in the successful submission of capital funding bids to the WG to support the development of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings via the Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme¹². As such, the Council successfully received funding for a number of projects. All the projects support capital works that facilitate growth in Welsh medium education, with funding specifically aimed at developing or expanding Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites.

The Council is committed to providing childcare to families eligible for the WGs FSP¹³. As one of the four pillars of the WGs FSP, childcare is a key component, giving eligible families with children between the ages of two to three free childcare for two and a half hours a day, five days a week for thirty nine weeks of the year. An element of FSP childcare is provided by Council run FSP childcare and early years settings, with the vast majority being provided by commissioned childcare and early years settings. At present, approximately 25.0% of FSP childcare commissioned is through the medium of Welsh.

A total of 686 FSP childcare places are commissioned from 32 childcare and early years settings. In total, 77.3% (530) of FSP childcare English medium places are commissioned via 23 childcare and early years settings whilst 22.7% (156) of FSP childcare Welsh medium places are commissioned via 9 childcare and early years settings. Since the last FSP tender exercise, which took place in 2018, as at November 2020, an additional 34 Welsh medium FSP childcare places have been purchased via approved childcare and early years settings, whilst an additional 12 English medium FSP childcare places have been purchased via approved childcare and early years settings taking the total number of childcare places purchased to 732. This is due to parent / carer choice or insufficient space available in local childcare and early years setting.

Of the total 732 childcare places commissioned, only 90.0% (659) were filled. Of the total 156 Welsh medium childcare places originally commissioned only 58.9% (92) were filled. This suggests that the Welsh medium childcare places commissioned were not in the correct localities, hence, the requirement to purchase an additional 34 Welsh medium FSP childcare places (taking the total number of Welsh medium childcare

¹⁰ [Rhondda Cynon Taf Count Borough Council – Record if Urgent Decision of the Cabinet – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Update – 24th March 2020](#)

¹¹ [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Update 2021 – 25th March 2021](#)

¹² [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council – Cabinet – Childcare Offer Capital Grant Funding Bid – 8th May 2019](#)

¹³ [Welsh Government – FSP Programme](#)

places commissioned to 190). In total, 19.1% (126) of children attending a FSP childcare are attending a Welsh medium childcare and early years settings.

The Council was proud to have been selected as one of the early implementers of the WG Childcare Offer for Wales¹⁴ when it was launched in in 2017. Now available throughout Wales, the WG's Childcare Offer for Wales offers up to thirty hours per week of combined Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) education and additional funded childcare for eligible children between the ages of three to four. This flagship policy aims to support parents / carers into employment and reduce the negative effects of poverty on them and their children.

In order to support Welsh medium childcare and early years settings and school staff to use techniques that enable children to use the Welsh language more easily, the Council has recently taken advantage the Croesi'r Bont programme, via Mudiad Meithrin. The Croesi'r Bont programme is currently established in 50.0% of Welsh medium REP childcare and early years settings and will be established to the remaining Welsh medium REP childcare and early years settings as soon as possible. In addition, the Council runs the Clebran programme to support the use of the Welsh language in English medium REP childcare and early years settings. The Clebran programme, supports English medium REP childcare and early years settings to incorporate the Welsh language using workshops and online resources. The Council's Childcare Team also promote Welsh language training courses to childcare and early years settings and work in partnership with them to develop Welsh medium training where possible.

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008¹⁵ (the Measure) places a statutory duty on all LA's to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe walking distance to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area for English and Welsh medium, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream primary, secondary, special school / class or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) as appropriate. The law relating to safe walking distance is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

The Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the Measure to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles.
- Free transport to the nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to learners who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday).
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles.

¹⁴ [Welsh Government – Childcare Offer for Wales](#)

¹⁵ [The Learner Travel \(Wales\) Measure 2008](#)

- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education (the last Friday in June of the school year in which a learner reaches the age of 16). This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner's home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.

The Council's Learner Travel Policy, Information and Arrangements¹⁶ contains information and advice to parents / carers and learners on how the policy is practically implemented and ensures that it is applied consistently and equitably.

The Council's current policy is that learners attending the nearest Welsh medium or dual language school receive free transport in accordance with its agreed policy on walking distance and safe routes.

The discretionary elements of the Council's policy are not currently subject to review, but there is an appreciation that if they were to be reviewed in the future, any changes to discretionary provision could have an adverse effect on Welsh medium education. Any proposed changes would be subject to a consultation with parents / carers and learners and, if agreed, would usually apply from the start of a school year and would have regard to the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014¹⁷.

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW DO WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

- It is not possible to obtain projection data on the number of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrins. However, data for the previous four academic years demonstrates that the number children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin has decreased.
- Data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of learners who could attend English and Welsh medium primary schools during the forthcoming five academic years.
- Based on November 2020 provisional forecasts, the number of nursery / three year old learners who will receive their education through the medium of Welsh during the first five academic years of this WESP is projected to increase.

In order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work to further increase this projection.

The Council will continue to work with external groups and organisations to support parents / carers to immerse their child in the Welsh language from an early age outlining the continuum of linguistic progression available, working in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to ensure that Welsh medium childcare and early years settings are

¹⁶ [Learner Travel Policy, Information and Arrangements](#)

¹⁷ [Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014](#)

available and are easily accessible. In addition to this, Mudiad Meithrin will continue to encourage parents / carers to enrol on and increase uptake of the Clwb Cwtsh course.

Information about the advantages of raising children using the Welsh language from an early age will continue to be provided to parents / carers through numerous strategies including the use of the Being Bilingual booklet and the Council's Childcare Team continuing to promote and raise awareness of the Welsh medium childcare and early years settings available to parents / carers.

The Council will continue to progress and deliver the remaining projects funded via the WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme. These projects support capital works that facilitate growth in Welsh medium education, with funding specifically aimed at developing or expanding Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites. The projects recently completed or due for complete during the first five academic years of this WESP comprise:

- Dolau Primary School (including Welsh unit).
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar.
- Ysgol Llanhari.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Abercynon.
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Gymraeg Llantrisant.

When complete, it is anticipated that these projects will increase places for nursery / three year old learners to receive their education through the medium of Welsh by an additional 65.0%.

In order to gain a detailed understanding of all Welsh medium childcare and early years settings, a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium childcare and early years settings will be undertaken. These findings will be analysed, and a gap analysis produced along with areas for improvement identified with proposed strategies for achieving improvements.

Currently, every parent / carer who requests a Welsh medium FSP childcare place is offered one – either in a Council run FSP childcare setting or via a commissioned childcare setting. Despite this offer, parents / carers often decline the place due to there being an English medium childcare setting in closer proximity to their home, hence, locality is favouring their original language preference. The Council's Programme Flexibility Team aims to re-commission Welsh medium FSP childcare settings to ensure there is enough opportunity for parents / carers to access Welsh medium FSP childcare in their locality. This will be achieved by commissioning small numbers of placements, across a greater number of settings to ensure adequate geographical spread across the County Borough. The Council aims to provide at least 25.0% of all FSP childcare places through the medium of Welsh.

In addition, enhanced marketing of Welsh medium FSP childcare and early years settings will be used to actively encourage parents / carers to consider them as an option for their child.

The Council will continue to ensure that the WG Childcare Offer for Wales is marketed and administered effectively and continues to meet local demand, allowing parents / carers to conveniently access FPN education and additional funded childcare in one location.

Welsh medium childcare and early years settings and school staff will be encouraged to use techniques that enable children to use the Welsh language more easily through the Croesi'r Bont programme, via Mudiad Meithrin, in Welsh medium REP childcare and early years settings and the Clebran programme to support the use of the Welsh language in English medium REP childcare and early years settings. In addition, where possible, the Council's Childcare Team will continue to promote Welsh language training courses to childcare and early years settings and work in partnership with them to develop Welsh medium training.

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

In order to meet the target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, an emphasis could be placed on encouraging parents / carers to choose Welsh medium childcare and early years settings for their children. This would work to ensure that children are immersed in the Welsh language from an early age. Cymraeg 2050 outlines that Welsh medium education is the principal method for ensuring that children develop their Welsh language and for creating new Welsh speakers and highlights the importance of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings to increase the demand for Welsh medium education.

Investment made across a number of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings via the WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme have provided additional places for nursery / three year old learners to receive their education through the medium of Welsh. At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, the WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme will have been completed, delivering capital works that facilitate growth in Welsh medium education, with funding specifically aimed at developing or expanding Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites. These projects will have increased places for nursery / three year old learners to receive their education through the medium of Welsh by an additional 65.0%.

During the lifespan of this WESP, it is anticipated that additional funding will be available to further invest in Welsh medium childcare and early years settings. When additional funding is made available, the Council will be ambitious with its proposals to invest in Welsh medium childcare and early years settings in order to meet the target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032.

Alongside this, the Council will have gained a detailed understanding of all Welsh medium childcare and early years settings, through the completion of a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium childcare and early years settings. The analysis of these

findings will have identified areas for improvement and implemented strategies for achieving improvements.

The Council aims to provide at least 25.0% of all FSP childcare places through the medium of Welsh. Enhanced marketing of Welsh medium FSP childcare and early years settings will be used to actively encourage parents / carers to consider them as an option for their child.

The Council recognises the development of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites is vital to contributing towards one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050. This investment is supporting parents / carers to seamlessly continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education, ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression for their children. The Council will continue to work in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to support parents / carers of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin to continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education.

The Council will continue to ensure that the WG Childcare Offer for Wales is marketed and administered effectively and continues to meet local demand, allowing parents / carers to conveniently access FPN education and additional funded childcare in one location.

English and Welsh medium childcare and early years settings and school staff will be encouraged to use techniques that enable children to use the Welsh language more easily through the Croesi'r Bont programme, via Mudiad Meithrin the Clebran programme. Continued promotion of Welsh language training courses to childcare and early years settings will continue along with partnership working with them to develop Welsh medium training.

KEY DATA

The data in the table that follows outlines the projected number and percentage of nursery / three year old learners who could receive their education through the medium of Welsh and is based on November 2020 provisional forecasts, compared to the projected number and percentage of nursery / three year old learners who should receive their education through the medium of Welsh if the Council is to achieve its target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP.

Projected Number and Percentage of Nursery / Three Year Old Learners Receiving their Education Through the Medium of Welsh During the Lifespan of this WESP		
Academic Year	Projected Number and Percentage of Nursery / Three Year Old Learners Who Could Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh (Based on November 2020 Provisional Forecasts)	Projected Number and Percentage of Nursery / Three Year Old Learners Who Should Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh if the Council is to Achieve its Target of 720 Year One Learners in Welsh Medium Education by 2032

	Number	%	Number	%
2022 / 2023	481	20.6%	481	20.6%
2023 / 2024	460	18.7%	509	20.7%
2024 / 2025	471	19.3%	537	22.1%
2025 / 2026	476	19.5%	568	23.3%
2026 / 2027	485	19.9%	601	24.7%
2027 / 2028	485	19.9%	636	26.1%
2028 / 2029	485	19.9%	672	27.6%
2029 / 2030	485	19.9%	711	29.2%
2030 / 2031	485	19.9%	750	29.6%
2031 / 2032	485	19.9%	750	29.6%

OUTCOME 2: MORE RECEPTION / FIVE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

There are seventeen Welsh medium primary schools located throughout the County Borough. There are two all through schools for 3 to 19 year olds, three dual language primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds and 12 primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds. All learners who attend these schools' study all their education through the medium of Welsh.

Data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of primary school aged learners attending English and Welsh medium primary schools for the previous three academic years up to and including 2019 / 2020. Over the same timeframe, the number of reception / five year old learners attending Welsh medium primary schools has increased.

The capacities of all schools are kept under regular, annual review by the Council's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services using data obtained from PLASC, school forecasts, annual admission requests and live birth information from CTMUHB. Any increase in learner populations, particularly within Welsh medium education, is closely monitored and, if the increase is sustained and clear within the catchment area of a particular school, consideration is given to making the required increase in capacity, by whatever means is most appropriate and most suited to that particular school. On an annual basis the Council is required to provide the WG with the Planning of School Places Return, which details the capacity of every school, the number learners on roll and the projected number of learners. Detailed forward planning is undertaken by comparing the capacity every school against the projected number of learners.

The majority of the Welsh medium primary schools currently have surplus capacity. Based on 2019 / 2020 PLASC data, there is currently 19.6% surplus capacity in Welsh medium primary schools. However, there are a number of primary schools where growth in capacity is needed, therefore action has or is currently being taken to address these issues. Such action includes:

- The creation of the new 3 to 19 Ysgol Garth Olwg through the closure of the former primary school, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Garth Olwg, and former

secondary school, Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg, enabling the former primary school to expand into surplus capacity available in the former secondary school.

- The expansion of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn into the former Llwynceilyn Infants School building (following the opening of Porth Community School).
- The expansion of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail into the former Tonyrefail Primary School building (following the opening of Tonyrefail Community School).

The Council continues to deliver and support its long term strategic investment programme of modernisation to create school environments that meet the needs of our communities and provide the best learning provision and outcomes for children and young people and the wider community. This long term strategic investment programme is supported with Council and WG funding including but not limited to:

- Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.
- Childcare Grant.
- Community Hub Grant
- Community Infrastructure Levy Grant.
- Early Years Capital Grant
- Reducing Infant Class Sizes Capital Grant.
- Welsh Medium Capital Grant.

Band B of the WGs 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme will invest £2.3 billion in school and college infrastructure across Wales. One of the key investment objectives of the WGs Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme is to provide efficient and effective educational infrastructure that will meet current and future demand for learner places by 2024. More specifically, to provide the right number of learner places for the delivery of English and Welsh medium education. The Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects totalling £160 million, with the inclusion of a number of projects that propose to increase Welsh medium primary school capacity.

Further investment has been made across a number Welsh medium primary schools over the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020 providing additional Welsh medium primary school learner places and creating improved accommodation for learners. This has been achieved through the Council's Capital Programme which includes a combination of refurbishments, remodels, demolitions and new builds. Over the same timeframe, the Council Planned Minor Capital Works Programme, which includes an on-going rolling programme of investment in schools, has invested approximately £1.2 million in Welsh medium primary schools.

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

- Data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of learners who could attend English and Welsh medium primary schools during the forthcoming five academic years.

- The projected surplus capacity in Welsh medium primary schools is likely to increase to 28.1% during the forthcoming five academic years.
- Based on November 2020 provisional forecasts, the number of reception / five year old learners who will receive their education through the medium of Welsh during the first five academic years of this WESP is projected to fall.

In order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively to divert this projection.

In order to gain a detailed understanding of where surplus capacity exists, a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium primary schools will be undertaken. These findings will be analysed, and a gap analysis produced along with areas for improvement identified with proposed strategies for achieving improvements. Such areas for improvement could include, but are not limited to, the development and implementation of targeted marketing and promotion strategies to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers.

There are a few Welsh medium primary schools where demand is high and as such growth in capacity is needed. In these primary schools, action has or is currently being taken to address these issues. The Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects totalling £160 million, with the inclusion of a number of projects that propose to increase the capacity of Welsh medium primary schools. During the first five years of this WESP, the Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme will have been completed. This, alongside funding directly from the Council, will:

- Amend the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language primary school to a Welsh medium primary school (following the opening of Hirwaun Primary School). The catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended.
- Deliver an extension to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar.
- Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn.
- Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school on the current Heol y Celyn Primary School site, to accommodate pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium pupils attending the dual language Heol y Celyn Primary School.
- Deliver a new dual language primary school, in the first instance, as an extension to the dual language primary school Dolau Primary School, as part an extensive housing development.

These projects will create additional learner places, increasing the capacity of Welsh medium primary schools.

We must also demonstrate to parents / carers that it is never too late to be educated through the medium of Welsh with the use of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers to Welsh medium education. The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish

to transition from English to Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. Although the Council has no Welsh language immersion classes for late comers in any of our schools at present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for learners who are late comers are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises. As such, Welsh medium schools are provided with funding directly to ensure that any late comers to Welsh medium education are provided with the necessary support and skills to enable them to thrive within their school.

This is considered to be working effectively, however, given that many LAs are implementing varying models of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers to Welsh medium education, work with the WG, CSC JES and other regional education consortia could be beneficial in understanding what opportunities for joint working could be had to ensure children and young people who are late comers to Welsh medium education are sufficiently supported. The Council will consider creating a Welsh language immersion class for late comers alongside the development of its 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

Investment made across a number of Welsh medium primary schools over the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020 through the Council's Capital Programme has provided additional Welsh medium primary school learner places and along with the Council's Planned Minor Capital Works Programme, created improved accommodation for learners. At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, this investment will have increased further. In addition, the Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, alongside funding directly from the Council, will have been completed, delivering a four classroom extension to an existing primary school and two new Welsh medium primary schools. These projects will have created additional learner places, increasing the capacity of Welsh medium primary schools.

During the lifespan of this WESP, it is anticipated that additional funding will be available to further invest in Welsh medium primary schools. When additional funding is made available, the Council will be ambitious with its proposals to invest in Welsh medium primary schools in order to meet the target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032.

Alongside this, the Council will have gained a detailed understanding of where surplus capacity exists, through the completion of a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium primary schools. The analysis of these findings will have identified areas for improvement and implemented strategies for achieving improvements.

In addition, proposed work with the WG, CSC JES and other regional education consortia to understand what opportunities for joint working could be had to ensure children and young people who are late comers to Welsh medium education are sufficiently supported would have been completed. The Council will have created a Welsh language immersion class for later comers alongside the development of its Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

KEY DATA

The data in the table that follows outlines the projected number and percentage of reception / five year old learners who could receive their education through the medium of Welsh and is based on November 2020 provisional forecasts, compared to the project number and percentage of reception / five year old learners who should receive their education through the medium of Welsh if the Council is to achieve its target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP.

Projected Number and Percentage of Reception / Five Year Old Learners Receiving their Education Through the Medium of Welsh During the Lifespan of this WESP				
Academic Year	Projected Number and Percentage of Reception / Five Year Old Learners Who Could Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh (Based on November 2020 Provisional Forecasts)		Projected Number and Percentage of Reception / Five Year Old Learners Who Should Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh if the Council is to Achieve its Target of 720 Year One Learners in Welsh Medium Education by 2032	
	Number	%	Number	%
2022 / 2023	513	21.5%	513	21.5%
2023 / 2024	489	21.5%	533	23.4%
2024 / 2025	468	21.7%	554	25.6%
2025 / 2026	480	21.5%	575	25.8%
2026 / 2027	487	21.6%	598	26.2%
2027 / 2028	488	21.6%	621	27.5%
2028 / 2029	488	20.9%	645	28.6%
2029 / 2030	488	20.6%	671	29.7%
2030 / 2031	488	20.3%	697	30.9%
2031 / 2032	488	21.6%	724	32.0%

OUTCOME 3: MORE CHILDREN CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WHEN TRANSFERRING FROM ONE STAGE OF THEIR STATUTORY EDUCATION TO ANOTHER

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Data demonstrates that during the academic year 2015 / 2016 all children leaving Cylchoedd Meithrin transferred into primary schools, of which 57.3% (284) of children transferred into Welsh medium primary schools. This percentage increased to 67.9% (343) of children transferring into Welsh medium primary schools during the academic year 2019 / 2020.

The transition rates of learners between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools does not appear to be a problem. The growth demonstrated in the percentage of learners transitioning between key stage two to three (primary to secondary school) is due to secondary school aged learners residing outside of the County Borough attending Welsh medium secondary schools in the County Borough.

For example, Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun in the Cynon valley area is the only Welsh medium secondary school option for secondary school aged learners residing in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil, due to there being no Welsh medium secondary school located in their County Borough. As such, secondary school aged learners residing in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil attend Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun. As part of the development of their new Local Development Plan (LDP), Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council has committed to continue to assess the demand for a Welsh medium secondary school located within their County Borough. The Council has and will continue to conduct cross border planning with all our neighbouring LAs in order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032.

Similarly, Ysgol Llanhari in the South Taf area is the nearest Welsh medium secondary school option for some secondary school aged learners residing in the County Borough of Bridgend, due to the only Welsh medium secondary school in the County Borough of Bridgend being located in Maesteg. As such, some secondary school aged learners residing in the County Borough of Bridgend attend Ysgol Llanhari.

Likewise, data demonstrates the retention rates of learners on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools does not appear to be a problem, until the transition between key stage four to five (years ten and eleven to Sixth Form).

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW DO WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

- It is not possible to obtain projection data on the projected transition rates of children leaving Cylchoedd Meithrin who transfer into Welsh medium primary schools. However, data for the previous four academic years demonstrates that the percentage of children leaving Cylchoedd Meithrin who transfer into Welsh medium primary schools is increasing.
- The projected transition rates of learners between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools does not appear to be a problem.
- It is not possible to obtain projection data on the projected retention rates of learners on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools. However, data for the previous three academic years demonstrates that the retention rates of learners on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools does not appear to be a problem.

In order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively.

Although the percentage of children leaving Cylchoedd Meithrin who transfer into Welsh medium primary schools is increasing, there are still a large percentage of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin who do not transfer into Welsh medium primary schools. This may be due to a number of factors, including the location and proximity of the Cylchoedd Meithrin to Welsh medium primary schools, which emphasises that in order to promote wider access to Welsh medium education, there may be a need to

ensure the availability of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites.

The Council recognises the development of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites is vital to contributing towards one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050. By investing in Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites, the Council is supporting parents / carers to seamlessly continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education, ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression for their children. The Council will continue to work in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to support parents / carers of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin to continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education.

Whilst the transition and retention rates of learner's on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools does not appear to be a problem, a mapping exercise of the transition and retention rates of learner's on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools will be undertaken. These findings will be analysed, and areas for improvement will be identified along with the development proposed strategies for achieving improvements.

The Council will continue to monitor the transition and retention rates of learner's transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools.

In addition, the Council will continue to provide initiatives to support the transition and retention rates of learners on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Learners in year six spending time in their new secondary school prior to the start of their first term at secondary school.
- Teachers from secondary schools attending primary schools to provide activity sessions.
- The Urdd Gobaith Cymru (the Urdd) assisting Welsh medium primary schools to organise residential trips to Llangrannog in their secondary school cluster.

Alongside this, the Council will actively work with parents / carers to promote a continuum of linguistic progression for their child to ensure both parents / carers and learners are supported in the transition between each key stage and learners continue the education through the medium of Welsh. The Council will also work to ensure that all staff likely to have contact with parents / carers are aware of the key messages regarding Welsh medium and Welsh language education and a continuum of linguistic progression so they can answer any questions that may arise.

Using the Choice Architecture Model¹⁸, the Council will implement a review of its online school admissions process. The Choice Architecture Model is a simplified version of the Mindspace Model¹⁹ commissioned by the United Kingdom Cabinet Office in 2009

¹⁸ [Welsh Government – Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans – 2021](#)

¹⁹ [United Kingdom Cabinet Office – Mindspace Model – 2009](#)

to understand how behavioural theory could help achieve better outcomes. The Choice Architecture Model can be used to assist in the uptake of Welsh medium education by ensuring that choices on Welsh medium education made available to parents / carers when completing their child's online school admissions application are easy, attractive, sociable and timely (or EAST).

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, investment in the development of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites via the Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme will have been completed. The Council recognises the development of Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites is vital to contributing towards one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050. This investment is supporting parents / carers to seamlessly continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education, ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression for their children. The Council will continue to work in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to support parents / carers of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin to continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education.

Alongside this, the Council will have gained a detailed understanding of the transition and retention rates of learner's on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools, through the completion of a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium primary and secondary schools. The analysis of these findings will have identified areas for improvement and implemented strategies for achieving improvements.

The Council will continue to provide initiatives to support the transition and retention rates of learners on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools. The Council will also continue to actively work with parents / carers to promote a continuum of linguistic progression for their child to ensure both parents / carers and learners are supported in the transition between each key stage and learners continue the education through the medium of Welsh. In addition, the Council will also work to ensure that all staff likely to have contact with parents / carers are aware of the key messages regarding Welsh medium and Welsh language education and a continuum of linguistic progression so they can answer any questions that may arise

At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, the Council will have reviewed and implemented its online school admissions process using the Choice Architecture Model to assist in the uptake of Welsh medium education by ensuring that choices on Welsh medium education made available to parents / carers when completing their child's online school admissions application and that they are EAST.

KEY DATA

The data in the table that follows outlines the projected percentage of learners who could transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary

schools during the lifespan of this WESP and is based on November 2020 provisional forecasts.

Projected Percentage of Learners who Could Transition Between Each Key Stage for Welsh Medium Primary and Secondary Schools				
Academic Year	Transition			
	Foundation Phase to Key Stage Two	Key Stage Two to Key Stage Three	Key Stage Three to Key Stage Four	Key Stage Four to Key Stage Five
	%	%	%	%
2022 / 2023	96.1%	111.3%	98.3%	54.8%
2023 / 2024	97.1%	113.9%	98.3%	55.1%
2024 / 2025	97.4%	116.4%	98.3%	54.5%
2025 / 2026	97.5%	116.9%	98.3%	54.6%
2026 / 2027	97.6%	111.9%	98.3%	54.1%
2027 / 2028	97.2%	111.9%	98.4%	54.0%
2028 / 2029	97.2%	112.0%	98.3%	54.1%
2029 / 2030	97.2%	111.9%	98.4%	54.2%
2030 / 2031	97.2%	111.9%	98.4%	54.2%
2031 / 2032	97.2%	111.9%	98.4%	54.2%

OUTCOME 4: MORE LEARNERS STUDY FOR ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS IN WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND SUBJECTS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

There are four Welsh medium secondary schools located throughout the County Borough. There are two all through schools for 3 to 19 year olds and two secondary schools for 11 to 19 years olds. All learners who attend these schools' study all their education through the medium of Welsh.

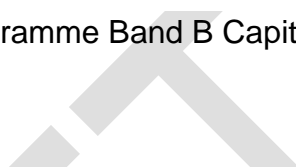
Data demonstrates stability in the ratio split in secondary school aged learners attending English and Welsh medium secondary schools for the previous three academic years, up to and including 2019 / 2020. Over the same timeframe, the number of year ten learners attending Welsh medium secondary schools has increased.

The capacities of all schools are kept under regular, annual review by the Council's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services using data obtained from PLASC, school forecasts, annual admission requests and live birth information from CTMUHB. Any increase in learner populations, particularly within Welsh medium education, is closely monitored and, if the increase is sustained and clear within the catchment area of a particular school, consideration is given to making the required increase in capacity, by whatever means is most appropriate and most suited to that particular school. On an annual basis the Council is required to provide the WG with the Planning of School Places Return, which details the capacity of every school, the number learners on roll and the projected number of learners. Detailed forward planning is undertaken by comparing the capacity of every school against the projected number of learners.

The majority of the Welsh medium secondary schools currently have surplus capacity. Based on 2019 / 2020 PLASC data, there is currently 23.1% surplus capacity in Welsh medium secondary schools. However, there are a few secondary schools where growth in capacity is needed, therefore action is currently being taken to address these issues.

The Council continues to deliver and support its long term strategic investment programme of modernisation to create school environments that meet the needs of our communities and provide the best learning provision and outcomes for children and young people and the wider community. This long term strategic investment programme is supported with Council and WG funding including but not limited to:

- 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme Band B Capital Grant.
- Community Hub Grant.
- Community Infrastructure Levy Grant.
- Welsh Medium Capital Grant.



Band B of the WGs 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme will invest £2.3 billion in school and college infrastructure across Wales. One of the key investment objectives of the WGs Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme is to provide efficient and effective educational infrastructure that will meet current and future demand for learner places by 2024. More specifically, to provide the right number of learner places for the delivery of English and Welsh medium education. The Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects totalling £160 million, with the inclusion of projects that propose to increase Welsh medium secondary school capacity.

Further investment has been made across a number Welsh medium secondary schools over the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020 providing additional Welsh medium secondary school learner places and creating improved accommodation for learners. This has been achieved through the Council's Capital Programme which includes a combination of refurbishments, remodels, demolitions and new builds. Over the same timeframe, the Council Planned Minor Capital Works Programme, which includes an on-going rolling programme of investment in schools, has invested approximately £3.5 million in Welsh medium secondary schools.

The data in the table that follows outlines the number and percentage of secondary school aged learners who were assessed for GCSE Welsh first language and GCSE Welsh Second Language during the academic year 2019 / 2020.

Number and Percentage of Secondary School Aged Learners Assessed for GCSE Welsh First Language and GCSE Welsh Second Language During the Academic Year 2019 / 2020				
Academic Year	GCSE Welsh First Language		GCSE Welsh Second Language	
	Number	%	Number	%
2019 / 2020	482	18.6%	1,641	63.3%

The data in the table that follows outlines the number and percentage of secondary school aged learners who were assessed for AS and A Level Welsh first and second language during the academic year 2019 / 2020.

Number and Percentage Secondary School Aged of Learners Assessed for AS and Advanced Level Welsh First Language and AS and A Level Welsh Second Language During the Academic Year 2019 / 2020				
Academic Year	AS and A Level Welsh First Language		AS and A Level Welsh Second Language	
	Number	%	Number	%
2019 / 2020	15	1.7%	29	3.2%

All Welsh medium secondary schools work collaboratively with one another and other providers, including Coleg Y Cymoed, to provide GCSE, AS and A Level provision. However, collaboration is difficult due to their locations and proximity to one another.

During the summer of 2018, the WG approved funding to pilot the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme in secondary schools. The Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme supports secondary schools to develop a wider range of learning pathways for 14 to 19 year old learners in preparation for the world of work, training and further education and is based around the eight Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks. In January 2019, a Project Manager was appointed by the Council to support each secondary school in understanding the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks. All secondary schools took part in the pilot between January 2019 and December 2021. An evaluation²⁰ of the pilot acknowledged positive impacts and outlined a number of recommendations which were developed into an action plan. The Council as committed to continue the work started by the pilot for a further two years to further develop the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks in all secondary schools.

Building on the positive impacts of the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme, the Council has further developed the Gatsby + Mentoring Model. The Gatsby + Mentoring Model is an extension of the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme which works with secondary schools to support learners who are underachieving or in danger of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW DO WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

- Data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of learners who could attend English and Welsh medium secondary schools for the forthcoming five academic years.
- The projected surplus capacity in Welsh medium secondary schools is likely to increase to 24.1% during the forthcoming five academic years.
- Based on November 2020 provisional forecasts, the number year ten learners who will receive their education through the medium of Welsh during the first five academic years of this WESP is projected to fall.

²⁰ [Gatsby Benchmarking Pilot: Interim Evaluation – January 2021](#)

In order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively to divert this projection.

In order to gain a detailed understanding of where surplus capacity exists, a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium secondary schools will be undertaken. These findings will be analysed, and a gap analysis produced along with areas for improvement identified with proposed strategies for achieving improvements. Such areas for improvement could include, but are not limited to, the development and implementation of targeted marketing and promotion strategies to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers.

There are a few Welsh medium secondary schools where demand is high and as such growth in capacity is needed. In these secondary schools, action has or is currently being taken to address these issues. The Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme comprises a range of projects totalling £160 million, with the inclusion of a number of projects that propose to increase the capacity of Welsh medium secondary schools. During the first five years of this WESP, the Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme will have been completed. This, alongside funding directly from the Council, will deliver:

- Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun – Due for completion in September 2022, this investment will create improved and extended accommodation by adding additional teaching accommodation along with a new sports facility to complement the recently completed 3G sports pitch and will provide an additional 187 Welsh medium secondary school learner places. These additions will provide state of the art facilities for both Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun and the local community, increasing opportunities for participation in the wider community.
- Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda – Due to limitations of the current site, on 9th April 2019 the Council's Cabinet²¹ granted approval to proceed to undertake a feasibility study to invest in either refurbishing the existing Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda or to relocate the school to a new 21st Century standard school to be built in the Rhondda. A further commitment to undertake this feasibility study was made by the Council's Cabinet on 28th January 2021²².

These projects will create additional learner places, increasing the capacity of Welsh medium secondary schools.

All Welsh medium secondary schools work collaboratively with one another and other providers, including Coleg Y Cymoed, to provide GCSE, AS and A Level provision. However, collaboration is difficult due to their locations and proximity to one another. Options to maintain and broaden GCSE, AS and A Level provision need to be further explored. Options to be explored could include the E-sgol project, which was launched by Ceredigion County Council in 2018. The E-sgol project formed part of the WG Rural

²¹ [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council – Cabinet – Planning for Welsh Medium Education Places – 9th April 2019](#)

²² [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council – Cabinet – Welsh in Education Strategic Plan – Annual Update 2020 – 28th January 2021](#)

Education Action Plan – 2018²³, and provides GCSE, AS and A Level learners with the provision of a broader range of GCSE, AS and A Level subjects through virtual pedagogy via the use of Microsoft Teams through Hwb.

Through the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme and Gatsby + Mentoring Model, the Council will support secondary schools to develop a wider range of learning pathways for 14 to 19 year old learners in preparation for the world of work, training and further education. Further work will be undertaken to create a system of support and training for Career Leaders in secondary schools to facilitate the incorporation of Benchmark Four – Linking Curriculum Learning to Carers into the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

Investment made across a number of Welsh secondary schools over the previous three years up to and including the years 2019 / 2020 through the Council's Capital Programme has provided additional Welsh medium secondary school learner places and along with the Council's Planned Minor Capital Works Programme, created improved accommodation for learners. At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, this investment will have increased further. In addition, the Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, alongside funding directly from the Council, will have been completed, delivering an improved and extended Welsh medium secondary school and with another secondary school either refurbished or relocated to a new 21st Century standard school. These projects will have created additional learner places, increasing the capacity of Welsh medium secondary schools.

During the lifespan of this WESP, it is anticipated that additional funding will be available to further invest in Welsh medium secondary schools. When additional funding is made available, the Council will be ambitious with its proposals to invest in Welsh medium secondary schools in order to meet the target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032.

Alongside this, the Council will have gained a detailed understanding of where surplus capacity exists, through the completion of a mapping exercise of all Welsh medium secondary schools. The analysis of these findings will have identified areas for improvement and implemented strategies for achieving improvements.

All Welsh medium secondary schools work collaboratively with one another and other providers, including Coleg Y Cymoed, to provide GCSE, AS and A Level provision. During the lifespan of this WESP, the Council is hopeful that these collaborative working arrangements are continued and expanded with options such as E-sgol further explored to maintain and broaden GCSE, AS and A Level provision.

During the lifespan of this WESP, the Council is hopeful that the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme and Gatsby + Mentoring Model will have developed a wide range of learning pathways for 14 to 19 year old learners in preparation for the world of work, training and further education.

²³ [Welsh Government – Rural Education Action Plan – 2018](#)

KEY DATA

The data in the table that follows outlines the projected number and percentage of year ten learners who could receive their education through the medium of Welsh and is based on November 2020 provisional forecasts, compared to the project number and percentage of year ten learners who should receive their education through the medium of Welsh if the Council is to achieve its target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP. Although it would take ten years for the effect of an increase in year one learners to have an impact upon year ten learners, this data has been included for comparison purposes.

Projected Number and Percentage of Year Ten Learners Receiving their Education Through the Medium of Welsh During the Lifespan of this WESP				
Academic Year	Projected Number and Percentage of Year Ten Learners Who Could Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh (Based on November 2020 Provisional Forecasts)		Projected Number and Percentage of Year Ten Learners Who Should Receive their Education Through the Medium of Welsh if the Council is to Achieve its Target of 720 Year One Learners in Welsh Medium Education by 2032	
	Number	%	Number	%
2022 / 2023	557	19.4%	577	20.1%
2023 / 2024	545	18.6%	595	20.3%
2024 / 2025	517	17.9%	615	21.3%
2025 / 2026	538	17.6%	630	20.6%
2026 / 2027	521	17.8%	640	21.9%
2027 / 2028	519	18.2%	660	23.1%
2028 / 2029	487	17.4%	675	24.1%
2029 / 2030	524	18.7%	690	24.6%
2030 / 2031	502	18.2%	705	25.6%
2031 / 2032	518	20.3%	720	28.2%

OUTCOME 5: MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNERS TO USE WELSH IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS IN SCHOOL

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The school environment provides learners with the opportunity to use the Welsh language within different contexts. A lack of opportunity to use the Welsh language leads to a lack of confidence and the erosion of Welsh language skills. As such, learners, along with parents / carers and the wider community should be supported and encouraged to participate in wide range of cultural, social and sporting activities through the medium of Welsh within their primary and secondary school in order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language.

In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learner's use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts. This has been done through the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith), developed by

Gwynedd Council, and various other projects, in partnership with the CSC JES and the Urdd. These include but are not limited to:

- Implementing the Welsh Language Charter in all Welsh medium primary and secondary schools in order to develop learners' use of the Welsh language.
- Implementing Cymraeg Campus in a number of English medium primary schools and piloting it in two English medium secondary schools.
- Publishing a toolkit for Welsh medium secondary schools to use to embed learner's use of the Welsh language.
- Supporting Welsh medium secondary schools to develop activities to encourage the informal use of the Welsh language.
- Supporting English medium secondary schools to provide informal opportunities to use the Welsh language and intensive Welsh language learning opportunities through the Urdd's Cymraeg Bob Dydd project.

The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within primary and secondary schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language, across the curriculum and in wider contexts in primary and secondary schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learner's in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.

To date, all Welsh medium primary schools have achieved the bronze award for the Welsh Language Charter, whilst eight Welsh medium primary schools have achieved the silver award for the Welsh Language Charter and eighteen English medium primary schools have achieved the bronze award for Cymraeg Campus. To date, all four Welsh medium secondary schools are working towards achieving the bronze award for the Welsh Language Charter, whilst two English medium secondary schools are part of the Cymraeg Campus pilot.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011²⁴ (the 2011 Measure), requires the Council to produce a five year strategy to facilitate and promote Welsh language. The first five year strategy, RCT – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy²⁵, was approved in 2016 and outlined a number of key policy areas to maintain and increase the number of Welsh speakers during its lifecycle. In developing this WESP, the RCT – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy has been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education and the Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with it.

Learners attending English and Welsh medium primary and secondary schools are encouraged to participate in wide range of cultural, social and sporting activities through the medium of Welsh in order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language.

²⁴ [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011 \(the 2011 Measure\)](#)

²⁵ [Rhondda Cynon Taf – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – 2016](#)

The Council's Cultural Services Team employs officers whose skills, expertise and knowledge supports the development of opportunities to use the Welsh language in different contexts. Learners are provided with a range of opportunities to use the Welsh language informally in community settings including:

- Presenting a theatre piece at one of the Council's theatres for key stage one and two learners.
- Participating in a performing arts workshops at Ysgol Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre for key stage two, three and four learners.
- Co-producing and presenting a theatre piece at one of the Council's theatres for key stage three and four learners.

In addition, opportunities are provided for learners to develop their creative industry skills that can be explored practically by shadowing professionals and participating in productions within one of the Council's theatres.

As an Arts Portfolio Wales client, in receipt of revenue funding from the Arts Council of Wales, the Council's Cultural Services Team are required to have their own Welsh Language Plan, which supports the delivery of the RCT – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

The Council's YEPS employ Welsh speaking Youth Engagement Officers, located within each Welsh medium secondary school, whose role is to provide a range of activities for learners through the medium of Welsh in different contexts, therefore, normalising the Welsh language and encouraging its use outside of the classroom. The Youth Engagement Officers provide opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language more informally in community settings, such as:

- Offering 'positive activities' five days per week, after the school day, delivered through the medium of Welsh.
- Offering 'extended provision' two evenings a week through the medium of Welsh. Extended provision covers the following four areas:
 - Education, employment and training.
 - Advice and guidance.
 - Participation and consultation.
 - Leisure, sporting and cultural opportunities.

In addition, the Council's YEPS has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Menter Iaith, to lead on the development of Welsh Language Youth Forums in each secondary school. The Welsh Language Youth Forums are expected to input into the County Youth Forum to ensure there is sufficient Welsh language representation.

The Urdd provide a range of opportunities for young people over the age of seventeen to gain employment, practical experience and professional qualifications, working alongside stakeholders to develop Welsh medium apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are available in within the outdoor activity, sports and youth and community services. Apprentices get the opportunity to learn from experienced staff and lead high quality activities for children and young people whilst gaining accredited qualifications. The Council will work to strengthen links with the Urdd, to provide learners with a wide

range of activities through the medium of Welsh within their primary and secondary school.

Eligible parents / carers and the wider community are supported and encouraged to participate in activities through the medium of Welsh order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language. Communities for Work (CfW), a WG partnership programme between the LA and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), supported by the European Social Fund (ESF), delivers employment support services in all fifty two Communities First Clusters (CFC) in Wales. Dedicated CfW Project Teams are in place to provide support to individuals to access employment. CfW offer pre-employment activities that introduce conversational Welsh to parents / carers and the wider community and a pathway to employment course that includes basic Welsh language skills which can lead onto a Welsh for Adults course.

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW DO WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

In order to further embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools, the Council intends to increase the total number of Welsh and English medium primary and secondary schools being awarded the Welsh Language Charter and Cymraeg Campus during the first five years of this WESP.

It is anticipated that supporting and promoting learners to increase their use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts will assist the Council in contributing towards one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council's Cultural Services Team and YEPS will continue to develop and provide opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language in different contexts.

The Council's Cultural Services Team intend to establish a strategic relationship with primary and secondary schools in the County Borough, supporting their delivery for Welsh medium and Welsh language education through a cultural provision.

The Council's YEPS will continue to offer a language choice of English or Welsh to learners. There will continue to be a Welsh speaking Youth Engagement Officer located within each Welsh medium secondary school, as well as a Welsh speaking Youth Engagement Officer in some English medium secondary schools. In addition, the Council's Youth Engagement Officers will continue to offer additional activities to learners, with a Welsh language provider being sourced for learners attending Welsh medium secondary school wherever possible, with the aim of increasing the number of external providers who can deliver activities through the medium of Welsh. In addition, the Council's YEPS, Menter Iaith and the Urdd will continue to meet regularly to co-produce a range of opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language in different contexts.

In recent years, the County Borough is honoured to have been confirmed as the host for the 2024 National Eisteddfod of Wales, an indication of the Council's commitment to contributing towards one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.

Through this, there will be opportunities to promote the Welsh language and for learners to use Welsh in different contexts at school and beyond.

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

One of the aims within the Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme is to embed positive Welsh language use, supported by formal and informal opportunities to use the Welsh language socially. In order to achieve the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, it is necessary to increase the number of opportunities for learners to use Welsh different contexts. Learners should be supported and encouraged to participate in wide range of cultural, social and sporting activities through the medium of Welsh within their primary and secondary schools in order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language.

By the end of the lifespan of this WESP, the Council expects all primary and secondary schools to have achieved the Welsh Language Charter and Cymraeg Campus and an increase in the opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school via the Council's Cultural Services Team and YEPS by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP.

KEY DATA

In order to further embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools, the Council intends to increase the number of opportunities for learners to use Welsh different contexts by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP.

OUTCOME 6: AN INCREASE IN THE PROVISION OF WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS WITH ALN (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DUTIES IMPOSED BY THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Considerable changes are underway in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of learners with ALN. The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018²⁶ (the ALNET Act 2018) was introduced in January 2018 and will be implemented in September 2021. The ALNET Act 2018 requires LAs to keep the arrangements for supporting learners between the ages of 0 to 25 with ALN under review and consider whether these arrangements are sufficient. It includes a statutory requirement to take reasonable steps to create a Welsh medium and bilingual system of support for learners with ALN. The ALNET Act 2018 is supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory ALN Code (The New Code²⁷).

²⁶ [The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act](#)

²⁷ [The Additional Learning Needs Code For Wales 2021](#)

For learners with significant ALN, who experience difficulties in coping in mainstream primary and secondary schools, specialist provisions are required. There are a range of specialist provisions located throughout the County Borough which include:

- 44 Learning Support Classes (LSCs).
- 2 PRUs.
- 4 Special Schools.

Placements within these specialist provisions are agreed by the Council's Access and Inclusion Service Panels.

In addition, approximately £3.4 million Additional Needs Funding (ANF) is available to mainstream primary and secondary schools to ensure robust, inclusive provision for learners who attend mainstream primary and secondary schools with severe and persistent ALN.

Welsh medium learners with ALN, who experience difficulties within mainstream primary and secondary schools and require more specialist support, are supported by a specialist peripatetic team – The WCNT. The WCNT, which includes a Welsh medium specialist teacher and two Learning Support Assistants, provide support through an inclusive delivery model, whereby learners are provided with specialist support within their mainstream primary and secondary schools. During the academic year 2019 / 2020, The WCNT supported a number of learners. Analysis suggests that learners accessing support from The WCNT were making progress that was comparable to that of their peers in equivalent English medium primary and secondary school settings. Further analysis suggests that this inclusive model adopted in Welsh medium primary and secondary schools has been very positive.

The Council provides an excellent range of LSC provisions. However, in light of the requirements of the ALNET Act 2018, concerns regarding rising exclusions and an increase in requests for SEBD placements it was recently considered necessary to enhance the LSC provision. Data analysis found that there was:

- Insufficient SEBD provision in the secondary sector.
- No discreet specialist provision for Welsh medium learners with ALN.

As such, a report, approved by the Council's Cabinet on 17th December 2019²⁸, outlined proposals for change that sought to:

- Enhance the continuum of linguistic progression of provision that effectively addressed the need for specialist SEBD provision within key stage three and four.
- Create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium key stage three and four learners with significant ALN.

²⁸ [Cabinet Report – 17th December 2019 – Review of Learning Support Class Provision for Learners with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties \(SEBD\) Significant Additional Learning Needs \(ALN\)](#)

- Commence a consultation on proposals to enhance LSC provision for Welsh medium key stage three and four learners with SEBD by establishing a LSC at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the proposals to enhance LSC provision for Welsh medium key stage three and four learners with SEBD by establishing a LSC at Ysgol Garth Olwg were lapsed and, as such, on 25th June 2020, the Council's Cabinet²⁹ agreed to progress with an amended proposal to extend an earlier pilot to fund mainstream secondary schools to establish their own alternative curriculum for learners with SEBD. As a result, in September 2020, funding was provided to establish an in house, Welsh medium secondary school based alternative provision to meet the needs of learners presenting with SEBD within their local Welsh medium mainstream secondary school.

The development of Welsh medium ALN provision formed part of the 2020 / 2021 Regional ALN Transformation Plan. For the years 2020 / 2021, the work stream fell under Priority One, to:

- Ensure that all LAs develop consistent practices and collaborate effectively with key partners to prepare for the new ways of working.

The focus of Priority One was on three main areas:

- Delivery of a Welsh medium ALN Regional Delivery Plan.
- Development of Welsh medium resources.
- Development of a standardised Welsh medium reading test.

Actions in the 2020 / 2021 Regional ALN Transformation Plan were concerned with continuing to develop a regional approach to support Welsh medium provision and increase the consistency and sharing of best practice. As such, in March 2019 the Council's Access and Inclusion Service undertook an audit of the learning resources that were available across the LAs that comprise the CSC JES. The outcome of this audit informed actions for the 2020 / 2021 Regional ALN Transformation Plan.

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW DO WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

The ALNET Act 2018 requires all LAs to keep ALN provision under review. As such, LAs must:

1. Keep under review the arrangements in its locality for learners who have ALN.
2. Consider the extent to which the arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the learners ALN.
3. Consider the sufficiency of ALN provision through the medium of Welsh.
4. Consider the size and capability of the workforce available.
5. Take all reasonable steps to remedy any insufficient arrangements.
6. At fitting times, consult such persons considered appropriate.

²⁹ [Cabinet Report – 25th June 2020 – Review of Learning Support Class Provision for Learners with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties \(SEBD\) Significant Additional Learning Needs \(ALN\)](#)

In developing this WESP, The ALNET Act 2018 has been taken into consideration. The Council will endeavour to provide sufficient ALN provision for learners, who request it, through the medium of Welsh along with a workforce of sufficient size and capability.

The ALNET Act 2018, requires all LAs to use a wide range of quantitative data and qualitative information in order to keep ALN provision under review. Such data and information to be utilised includes but is not limited to:

- The number of Welsh medium learners with ALN.
- The different types and severity of ALN of Welsh medium learners.
- The outcomes of Welsh medium learners with ALN.
- Specialist workforce audits in relation to capacity in delivering support for Welsh medium learners with ALN.
- Specialist placement capacity.
- Any local, regional and national performance indicators relating to ALN.
- Any agreed data sets with CTMUHB and FEI.

The Council has and will continue to work collaboratively with the CSC JES to ensure a shared understanding of high quality, universal and effective ALN provision for learners and will use agreed quality assurance processes to monitor the quality of Welsh medium provision in both mainstream primary and secondary schools and special schools and specialist provisions.

The requirements of The ALNET Act 2018 for LAs to take all reasonable steps to implement a Welsh medium and bilingual ALN system will ensure that the ongoing monitoring and review of Welsh medium ALN provision will form an integral part of the Council's Access and Inclusion Service's action planning, monitoring, evaluation and reviewing. Where possible, the Council will align with The ALNET Act 2018.

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, the Council will have robust processes in place to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to secure Welsh medium and bilingual ALN provision and will endeavour to provide sufficient ALN provision for learners, who request it, through the medium of Welsh along with a workforce of sufficient size and capability.

OUTCOME 7: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEACHING STAFF ABLE TO TEACH WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND TEACH THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, it is vital to ensure a childcare and early years setting and school based workforce of sufficient size and capability. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our childcare and early years settings and education system is dependent on its workforce and we must work locally, regionally and nationally to ensure we create a childcare and early years setting and school based workforce with robust linguistic

skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

The childcare and early years settings in the County Borough benefit from highly skilled, qualified staff. Work has been ongoing over several years to up skill the childcare and early years workforce. Changes to qualification requirements in the National Minimum Standards has also placed more emphasis on ensuring a suitably qualified workforce.

In the year 2020, the Council employed 12,457 people, 42.4% (5,290) of which made up the school based workforce. Data demonstrates that 17.3% (917) of the school based workforce had fluent or fairly fluent Welsh language skills (Welsh Language Skills Levels Three, Four and Five).

The WG recently introduced the School Workforce Annual Census³⁰ (SWAC) as a new data collection tool. The CSC JES Welsh in Education Officer (WiEO) supports schools to accurately complete the Welsh language element of the PLASC and SWAC. The SWAC has been introduced to provide comprehensive data on the:

- Size of the workforce.
- Staff demographics.
- Staff recruitment and retention.
- Use of supply cover.
- Absences.
- Capacity for Welsh medium teaching and subject specific teaching.
- Cost of teachers pay.

Data from the SWAC will be used to inform future WG policy. The data will enable schools, LAs, regional education consortia and the WG to have a better understanding of the Welsh language skills of the school based workforce. The data demonstrates that 39.0% (805) of the school based workforce (including headteachers, school teachers and school learning support workers) employed by the Council for the academic year 2019 / 2020 had intermediate, advance or proficient Welsh language skills levels.

The data also demonstrates that 21.7% (448) of the school based workforce employed by the Council were teaching / working through the medium of Welsh for the academic year 2019 / 2020. In addition, during the same timeframe, 6.9% (143) of the school based workforce employed by the Council were able to teach / work through the medium of Welsh but were not doing so in their current post.

In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, we must work to ensure we create a childcare and early years setting and school based workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. This work will be driven at a national level, by the WG, who are currently implementing numerous strategies including, but not limited to:

³⁰ [School Workforce Annual Census – 2019 / 2020](#)

- A programme of activities aimed at increasing the number of secondary school aged learners who were assessed for AS and A Level Welsh first and second language.
- Promoting a pathway into teaching Welsh as a subject.
- The continuation of Iaith Athrawon Yfory.
- The development of alternative routes into teaching.
- The distribution of specific funding to regional education consortia.
- The implementation of a digital marketing campaign, marketing to specific groups of potential teachers.
- The piloting of transition courses for teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to teach in primary schools to receive additional training and support to teach in secondary schools.
- The Welsh Language Sabbatical Scheme (WLSS).
- Working closely with Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships to deliver ITE accredited ITE programmes.
- Working closely with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) and ITE providers to complement and support recruitment across Wales.

The WLSS offers Welsh language courses to the primary and secondary school based workforce. The aim of the WLSS, which is funded by the WG, is to increase the number of the school based workforce who can teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. The WLSS offers opportunities for specialised, continuing professional development and is offered at various language proficiency levels in various locations across Wales. The courses for the school based workforce employed by the Council are offered at Cardiff University and include sabbatical courses at foundation and higher levels, as well as the new groundbreaking course, Welsh in a Year. The courses are available free of charge and the WG provides a grant to pay supply costs, as well as travelling expenses.

The data in the table that follows outlines the number the school based workforce who are employed by the Council and have participated in and completed a WLSS over the previous four academic years up to and including 2020 / 2021.

Number of the School Based Workforce who are Employed by the Council and have Participated in and Completed a WLSS Course Over the Previous Four Academic Years	
Academic Year	Number
2017 / 2018	1
2018 / 2019	3
2019 / 2020	5
2020 / 2021	3*

*A further two school teachers and school learning support assistants were offered place but decided to defer until 2021 / 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The CSC JES provides the school based workforce who have completed WLSS with continued professional learning, networking and opportunities to share best practice within and across the schools located in the County Boroughs that comprise the CSC JES.

Two Welsh medium secondary schools in the County Borough, Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun have formed an alliance with Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, in partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University to run an ITE programme. The secondary schools that form part of the alliance are required to provide training days for all secondary school PGCE learners who study the PGCE course through the medium of Welsh. Every PGCE learner must be placed in one of the secondary schools who form part of the alliance for one of their placements. To assist and support the PGCE learners, each secondary school that forms part of the alliance provides a Research Champion, Welsh Language Coordinator, Subject Mentor and Senior Mentor. During the academic year 2020 / 2021, there are 15 PGCE learners across the alliance.

To supplement the ITE programme, support has also been continuing support has been provided to the current school based workforce in completing their ITE programme.

The Urdd provide a range of opportunities for young people over the age of seventeen to gain employment, practical experience and professional qualifications, working alongside stakeholders to develop Welsh medium apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are available in within the outdoor activity, sports and youth and community services. Apprentices get the opportunity to learn from experienced staff and lead high quality activities for children and young people whilst gaining accredited qualifications. The Council will work to strengthen links with the Urdd, creating alternative, additional pathways for learners.

The Council and the CSC JES provides numerous professional learning opportunities to take account of the language progression of the school based workforce employed by the Council. The Council and the CSC JES records attendance at courses organised.

WHERE DO WE AIM TO BE WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF THIS WESP AND HOW DO WE PROPOSE TO GET THERE?

In order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively.

In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, it is vital to ensure a childcare and early years setting and school based workforce of sufficient size and capability. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our childcare and early years settings and education system is dependent on its workforce and we must work locally, regionally and nationally to ensure we create a school based workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

If the Council is to achieve its target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP, it could result in the requirement for an increased childcare and early years setting and school based workforce. Early immersion in the Welsh language and support for parents / carers to seamlessly continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education is

important in ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression. We need to ensure that there is an adequate childcare and early years settings workforce to support parents / carers to attend Ti a Fi and Cymraeg i Blant parent and toddler sessions, followed by Cylch Meithrin nursery groups. At present, projections showing adequate surplus capacity across Welsh medium primary and secondary schools to meet our target. However, we need to ensure that childcare and early years and school based staff have robust linguistic skills and are able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

The Council will work collaboratively with Mudiad Meithrin to ensure that there is an adequate childcare and early years workforce to provide early immersion in the Welsh language and support for parents / carers to seamlessly continue their child's statutory education journey into Welsh medium education is important in ensuring a continuum of linguistic progression.

The Council and the CSC JES will analyse data from the PLASC and SWAC to monitor linguistic competency and identify the professional learning needs of the school based workforce. Utilising local, regional and national training programmes, that take account of the language progression of the school based workforce employed by the Council, including the WLSS, the school based workforce will be supported with continued professional learning, networking and opportunities to share best practice within and across the schools that comprise the CSC JES.

In addition, the Council will work collaboratively with the CSC JES to increase the capacity of the school based workforce in English medium primary and secondary schools to teach through the medium of Welsh. Whilst also continuing to develop and support secondary school teachers who are not subject specialists to teach through the medium of Welsh.

The Council and the CSC JES will work collaboratively to increase leadership capacity at all levels in the Welsh medium sector with progression into headship. The CSC JES provides clear leadership progression opportunities for the Welsh medium sector through leadership development programmes at various levels, including the Aspiring Headteacher Programme (AHP), which is a one year development programme for experienced school leaders who wish to become headteachers in the near future and the subsequent National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) Programme which is the national professional qualification for headteachers. There are currently eighteen Welsh medium primary or secondary school teachers employed by the Council participating in AHP or the NPQH programme.

Notwithstanding the work that will be driven at a national level, by the WG, there are numerous strategies that could be implemented at a regional and national level. These include but are not limited to:

- Exploring how the Council's Apprenticeship Programme could be utilised to provide school based workforce apprenticeship opportunities within Welsh medium primary and secondary schools.
- Working in partnership with the Urdd, the Council will work to strengthen links to create alternative, additional pathways for learners through the development of Welsh medium apprenticeships.

- Utilising the Gatsby Good Career Benchmarks programme, which supports secondary schools to develop a wider range of learning pathways for 14 to 19 year old learners in preparation for the world of work, ensuring the early promotion of the professional learning pathway.
- Investigating alternative professional learning pathways with the Council's Adult Education Team.
- Continuing to support the delivery of the ITE programme in alliance with the secondary schools that have formed a partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University.
- Continuing to support the progression of the current school based workforce in completing their ITE programme.

WHERE DO WE EXPECT TO BE AT THE END OF OUR WESP?

In order to meet our target of 720 year one learners in Welsh medium education by 2032, the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively.

In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, it is vital to ensure a school based workforce of sufficient size and capability. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our education system is dependent on its school based workforce and we must work locally, regionally and nationally to ensure we create a school based workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

This work will be driven at a national level, by the WG, who are currently implementing numerous strategies alongside the numerous strategies that could be implemented at a regional and national level by the CSC JES and Council.

MARKETING

The use of marketing and promotion strategies to promote Welsh medium and Welsh language education will become integral in the contribution to one million people being Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council will utilise both national and regional marketing and promotion strategies, developed and provided by the WG and CSC JES, as well as local marketing and promotion strategies developed by the Council along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group.

Through the various mapping exercises that will be conducted through many of the outcomes within this WESP, the Council will have gained an understanding of Welsh medium and Welsh language education at a school by school level and from this understanding, where required, will be able to develop bespoke marketing and promotion strategies to assist in the promotion of Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

In addition to this, the Council will continue to raise awareness of the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education through the use of existing marketing materials, created as a result of existing marketing and promotion strategies, whilst also developing new marketing materials.

To support this, a Marketing and Promotion Sub Group comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations will be established. This Marketing and Promotion Sub Group will be guided by a Terms of Reference.

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

In accordance with the 2019 Regulations, the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards the success of this WESP. These groups and organisations include, but are not limited to:

- CSC JES.
- Coleg y Cymoedd.
- CTMUHB.
- Menter Iaith.
- Mudiad Meithrin.
- RhaG.
- The Urdd.
- University of South Wales.
- WG.

Of particular importance in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of this WESP will be our WESP Strategic Group. The WESP Strategic Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.

Alongside, the WESP Strategic Group and of upmost importance to the success of this WESP is the Marketing and Promotion Sub Group. The Marketing and Promotion Sub Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.

In Addition to the WESP Strategic Group and Marketing and Promotion Sub Group, where and when necessary, the Council will establish 'task and finish' Sub Groups comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations. Each Sub Group will be tasked with the achievement of specified objectives and guided by Terms of Reference.

From 2023 onwards, the Council will implement two main methods of reporting on the progress of this WESP:

1. Annual Work Plan (AWP).
2. Annual Progress Report (APR).

The AWP is intended to be a practical working document to help keep track of progress in the short term and will be utilised by the WESP Strategic Group to track progress of this WESP.

The 2019 Regulations require LAs to review their WESP and submit an APR, based on that review, to the WG by 31st July each year. The APR is intended to capture the key achievements in relation to the WESP.

Whilst the statutory responsibility for the WESP sits with the Council, a range of external groups and organisations have a key role in formulating, implementing and evaluating its progress regularly throughout its lifespan.

DRAFT

ANNEX ONE: METHODOLOGY FOR TARGET SETTING

Cymraeg 2050 sets out the overall long term target of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050. In order to achieve this target, Cymraeg 2050 sets out a long term trajectory which includes milestone targets set out in ten year increments. Targets have been set for each LA and have been calculated by the WG in order to establish a clear path to reach the national target.

The methodology implemented by the WG involves using baseline data from the 2019 / 2020 PLASC, more specifically, the number of year one children being taught through the medium of Welsh. The data from each LA has been compared and LAs have been grouped together based on this and other factors including the models of Welsh medium education provision adopted by the LA and the linguistic nature of the LA. This methodology is regarded to be fair, as it acknowledges the different challenges faced by each LA.

Each group of LAs has a set target to increase the percentage of year one learners taught through the medium of Welsh by a fixed range of percentage points. The Council is in Group Three. This is demonstrated in the table that follows:

LA Group Three Targets						
LA	2019 / 2020 Baseline (PLASC 2019 / 2020)		2032 Target			
	Number	%	Lower Range		Upper Range	
			Number	%	Number	%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	359	17.9%	520	26.0%	600	30.0%
Cardiff City Council	702	16.9%	1,035	25.0%	1,200	29.0%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	100	14.0%	155	22.0%	185	26.0%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	506	19.1%	720	27.0%	825	31.0%
Swansea Council	390	15.4%	590	23.0%	695	27.0%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	221	14.3%	345	22.0%	405	26.0%
Wrexham County Borough Council	235	15.0%	360	23.0%	425	27.0%

According to data from the 2019 / 2020 PLASC, between 14.0% and 19.1% of year one learners in these LAs were taught through the medium of Welsh.

It is proposed that each group of LAs calculates a target to increase the percentage of year one learners being taught through the medium of Welsh by a fixed range of percentage points, based on existing provision in each LA. In Group Three, the percentage point ranges are between 8.0% and 12.0%. The lower range as been set for each group of LAs so that the national target of 30.0% of year one learners being taught through the medium of Welsh is achieved by during the lifespan of this WESP.

DRAFT

ANNEX TWO: LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH

Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census, a count of all people and households. The Census is a key source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh.

The 2011 Census³¹ indicated that of the 225,555 residents living in the County Borough, 12.3% (27,779) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 87.7% (197,776) were not able to speak Welsh. This can be compared to the all Wales figures that showed of the 2,955,841 residents living Wales, 19.0% (562,016) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 81.0% (2,393,825) were not able to speak Welsh.

The Annual Population Survey³² collects information about respondents' Welsh speaking ability and includes a question on how often people speak Welsh. It is updated quarterly, so is a more up-to-date source than the Census. The Annual Population Survey for the quarter ending September 2020, reported that 19.3% of respondents living in the County Borough said they could speak Welsh, this is compared to the all Wales percentage of 28.8% of respondents. This can be further broken down to the data contained in the table that follows.

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)		
	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales
Can Read Welsh	18.2%	25.8%
Can Write Welsh	16.7%	23.5%
Can Understand Spoken Welsh	23.5%	33.0%

The data demonstrates that in each Welsh language skill area, the 'all Wales' percentages are notably higher than the County Borough percentages. However, the current data shows a significant increase in the number of residents that can read, write, and understand spoken Welsh since the last Census in 2011.

When asked about their frequency of speaking Welsh, the table that follows shows a breakdown of responses of respondents living in the County Borough compared to the all Wales responses.

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)		
	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales
Speak Welsh Daily	6.9%	16.2%
Speak Welsh Weekly	5.0%	4.8%
Use it Less Often	5.7%	6.2%

The data demonstrates that the percentage of respondents that speak Welsh daily is far lower for the County Borough than the all Wales percentage.

³¹ [2011 Census](#)

³² [Annual Population Survey](#)

The Welsh Language Use Survey³³ for the years 2013 to 2015, contains detailed information about Welsh speaker's fluency and their use of the Welsh language in a range of settings. When looking where respondents living in Wales learned to speak Welsh, the majority, 45.0%, learned to speak Welsh at home, followed by 26.0% who learned to speak Welsh at nursery and primary school between the ages of 2 to 10 and 14.0% who learned to speak Welsh at secondary school at the age of 11 plus. The remaining 2.0% learned to speak Welsh in other settings, including at 'Welsh for Adults' courses.

DRAFT

³³ [Welsh Language Use Survey 2013 to 2015](#)

ANNEX THREE: BASELINE DATA

OUTCOME 1: MORE NURSERY / THREE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

The data in the table that follows is derived from the Council's CSA for the period between 2017 and 2022. It demonstrates the total number of registered and unregistered English and Welsh medium childcare and early years settings alongside the number of places available across the County Borough.

Total Number of English and Welsh Medium Childcare and Early Years Settings Available Across the County Borough					
Childcare Type		Total Number of Registered Childcare Settings	Total Number of Places	Total Number of Unregistered Settings	Total Number of Places
Childminder		117	564	0	0
Day Care	Full Day Care	35	142	0	0
	Sessional Day Care	29	47	5	6
	Crèches	0	0	0	0
	Out of School Care	9	15	6	6
	Open Access Play Provision	5	7	4	4
	Nanny	0	0	0	0
Total		195	775	15	16

The data in the table that follows, again derived from the Council's CSA for the period between 2017 and 2022, demonstrates the total number of registered and unregistered Welsh medium childcare and early years settings (both Welsh medium and bilingual) alongside the number of places available across the County Borough.

Total Number of Welsh Medium Childcare and Early Years Settings Available					
Childcare Type		Total Number of Registered Settings	Total Number of Places	Total Number of Unregistered Settings	Total Number of Places
Childminder		1	9	0	0
Day Care	Full Day Care	7	282	0	0
	Sessional Day Care	16	416	0	0
	Crèches	0	0	0	0

	Out of School Care	2	64	5	80
Total		26	771	5	80

The data in the table that follows is provided by the Council's FSP Team and outlines the FSP childcare places that were commissioned from childcare and early years settings by the Council in order to provide the FSP offer to all eligible children. It contains information since the last FSP tender exercise which took place in 2018.

FSP Childcare Places Commissioned from Childcare Settings			
FSP Childcare Places	Number of Commissioned Childcare and early years settings	Number of Commissioned Places	%
Total FSP Childcare English Medium Places Commissioned	23	530	77.3%
Total FSP Childcare Welsh Medium Places Commissioned	9	156	22.7%
Total	32	686	100.0%

The data in the table that follows is provided by the Council's FSP Team and demonstrates that as at November 2020 across the County Borough, an additional thirty four Welsh medium FSP childcare places had been purchased via approved childcare settings, whilst an additional twelve English medium FSP childcare places had been purchased via approved childcare and early years settings taking the total number of childcare places purchased to 732. This is due to parent / carer choice or insufficient space available in local childcare settings.

Additional FSP Childcare Places Commissioned from Childcare and early years settings – As at November 2020		
FSP Childcare Places	Additional Number of Commissioned Places Purchased	New Total Number of Commissioned Places
Total FSP Childcare English Medium Places Commissioned	12	542
Total FSP Childcare Welsh Medium Places Commissioned	34	190
Total	46	732

The data in the table that follows is provided by the WG outlines the total number of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin over the previous five academic years.

Total Number of Children Attending Cylchoedd Meithrin Over the Previous Five Academic Years					
Settings	Academic Year				
	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Number of Settings	22	24	25	23	19
Number of Cylchoedd Meithrin	25	27	25	25	20
Number of Children Attending Cylchoedd Meithrin	716	813	804	860	669

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the number of pre nursery, pre nursery part time, nursery and nursery part time learners attending Welsh medium primary schools for the previous three academic years.

Total Number of Pre Nursery, Pre Nursery Part Time, Nursery and Nursery Part Time Learners Attending Welsh Medium Primary Schools Over the Previous Three Academic Years			
Year Group	Academic Year		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Pre Nursery	73	24	27
Pre Nursery Part Time	0	19	29
Nursery	519	421	406
Nursery Part Time	0	140	130
Total	592	604	592

OUTCOME 2: MORE RECEPTION / FIVE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the total number of primary school aged learners attending primary schools across the County Borough, split by English and Welsh medium for the previous three academic years.

Total Number of Primary School Aged Learners Attending Primary Schools Split by English and Welsh Medium Over the Previous Three Academic Years						
Category	Academic Year					
	2017 / 2018		2018 / 2019		2019 / 2020	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Number of Learners Attending English Medium Primary Schools	18,241	81.0%	18,153	81.0%	18,078	81.0%
Total Number of Learners Attending Welsh Medium Primary Schools	4,291	19.0%	4,269	19.0%	4,220	19.0%

Total Number of Learners Attending Primary Schools	22,532	22,422	22,298
---	---------------	---------------	---------------

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the total number of reception / five year old learners attending Welsh medium primary schools for the previous three academic years.

Total Number of Reception / Five Year Old Learners Attending Welsh Medium Primary Schools Over the Previous Three Academic Years			
Year Group	Academic Year		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Reception	554	517	565
Reception Part Time	0	1	0
Total	554	518	565

OUTCOME 3: MORE CHILDREN CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WHEN TRANSFERRING FROM ONE STAGE OF THEIR STATUTORY EDUCATION TO ANOTHER

The data in the table that follows is provided by the WG outlines the transition rates of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin in to English and Welsh medium primary schools for the previous five academic years.

Transition Rates of Children Attending Cylchoedd Meithrin into English and Welsh Medium Primary Schools for the Previous Five Academic Years						
Settings		Academic Year				
		2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Number of Children Attending Cylchoedd Meithrin		716	813	804	860	669
Number of Children Leaving Cylchoedd Meithrin		495	492	550	602	505
Number of Children Transferring to Primary School		495	492	550	602	505
Welsh Medium	Number	284	288	319	359	343
	%	57.3%	58.5%	58.0%	59.6%	67.9%
English Medium	Number	148	130	150	150	133
	%	52.1%	45.1%	47.0%	41.7%	38.7%
Other	Number	63	74	81	93	29

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the transition rates of learners between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools for the previous three academic years.

Transition Rates of Learners Between Each Key Stage for Welsh Medium Primary and Secondary Schools for the Previous Three Academic Years

Transition	Academic Year		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Foundation Phase to Key Stage Two	97.7%	98.2%	98.3%
Key Stage Two to Key Stage Three	111.7%	113.9%	110.1%
Key Stage Three to Key Stage Four	95.5%	98.4%	97.3%
Key Stag Four to Key Stage Five	62.2%	55.5%	59.6%

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the retention rates of learners on transition between each key stage for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools for the previous three academic years.

Retention Rates of Learners on Transition Between Each Key Stage for Welsh Medium Primary and Secondary Schools for the Previous Three Academic Years

Transition	Academic Year		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Foundation Phase to Key Stage Two	97.1%	97.6%	97.5%
Key Stage Two to Key Stage Three	93.7%	97.3%	94.0%
Key Stage Three to Key Stage Four	95.3%	98.8%	97.9%
Key Stag Four to Key Stage Five	60.8%	56.6%	56.0%

OUTCOME 4: MORE LEARNERS STUDY FOR ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS IN WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND SUBJECTS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the total number of secondary school aged learners attending secondary schools, split by English and Welsh medium for the previous three academic years.

Total Number of Secondary School Aged Learners Attending Secondary Schools Split by English Medium and Welsh Medium Over the Previous Three Academic Years

Category	Academic Year					
	2017 / 2018		2018 / 2019		2019 / 2020	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Number of Learners Attending English Medium Secondary Schools	12,550	80.7%	12,685	80.6%	12,868	80.4%

Total Number of Learners Attending Welsh Medium Secondary Schools	3,010	19.3%	3,058	19.4%	3,141	19.6%
Total Number of Learners Attending Secondary Schools	15,560		15,743		16,009	

The data in the table that follows is derived from PLASC and outlines the total number of year ten learners attending Welsh medium secondary schools for the previous three academic years.

Total Number of Year Ten Learners Attending Welsh Secondary Schools Over the Previous Three Academic Years			
Year Group	Academic Year		
	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020
Year Ten	491	496	513

OUTCOME 5: MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNERS TO USE WELSH IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS IN SCHOOL

The data in the table that follows is provided by the CSC JES and outlines the total number of Welsh and English medium primary and secondary schools that have achieved the Welsh Language Charter and Cymraeg Campus to date.

Total Number of Welsh and English Medium Primary and Secondary Schools that have achieved the Welsh Language Charter and Cymraeg Campus				
Level	Welsh Language Charter		Cymraeg Campus	
	Welsh Medium Primary School	Welsh Medium Secondary School	English Medium Primary School	English Medium Secondary School
Achieved Bronze Award	17	All 4 Welsh medium secondary schools working towards achieving the bronze award.	N/A	N/A
Achieved Silver Award	8	N/A	18	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	Two English medium secondary schools are part

OUTCOME 6: AN INCREASE IN THE PROVISION OF WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS WITH ALN (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DUTIES IMPOSED BY THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018

N/A.

OUTCOME 7: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEACHING STAFF ABLE TO TEACH WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND TEACH THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

The data in the table that follows is provided by the Councils Welsh Language Unit and outlines the total number and percentage of staff who identified themselves as fluent or fairly fluent in the Welsh language and was correct as at 17th August 2020:

Total Number of Staff who Identified Themselves as Fluent or Fairly Fluent in Welsh							
Number of Staff with Welsh Language Skills		Fluent (Welsh Language Level Four and Five)		Fairly Fluent (Welsh Language Level Three)		Total (Welsh Language Level Three, Four and Five)	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Category	Total Number of Staff						
School Based Staff	5,290	742	14.0%	175	3.3%	917	17.3%
Non-School Based Staff	7,167	575	8.0%	143	1.9%	718	10.0%
Total	12,457	1,317	10.5%	318	2.5%	1,635	13.1%

The data in the table that follows is derived from SWAC and outlines the Welsh language ability of the Council's school based workforce for the academic year 2019 / 2020.

Welsh Language Ability of Total Teachers (Including Headteachers, School Teachers and School Learning Support Workers) Employed by the Council		
Skill Level	Academic Year	
	2019 / 2020	
	Number	%
No Skills (NS)	457	22.1%
Entry Level (EL)	456	22.1%
Foundation Level (FL)	325	15.7%
Intermediate Level (IL)	166	8.0%
Advanced Level (AL)	128	6.2%

Proficient Level (PL)	511	24.8%
Information Not Obtained (INO)	21	1.0%
Total	2,064	100.0%

The data in the table that follows is derived from SWAC and outlines the total number of the school based workforce (including headteachers, school teachers and school learning support workers) employed by the Council teaching / working through the medium of Welsh for the academic year 2019 / 2020.

Total Teachers Employed by the Council Teaching / Working Through the Medium of Welsh		
Category	Academic Year	
	2019 / 2020	
	Number	%
Teaching/Working Through the Medium of Welsh in Current Post	448	21.7%
Able to Teach/Work Through the Medium of Welsh but not doing so in Current Post	143	6.9%
Unable to Teach/Work Through the Medium of Welsh	838	40.6%
Teaching Welsh as a Subject Only	635	30.7%
Total	2,064	100.0%

GLOSSARY	
AHP	Aspiring Headteacher Programme
AL	Advanced Level
ALN	Additional Learning Need
ANF	Additional Needs Funding
APR	Annual Progress Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CFC	Communities First Clusters
CfW	Communities for Work
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales
CSA	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
CSC JES	Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
CTMUHB	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EAST	Easy, Attractive, Sociable and Timely
EL	Entry Level
ESF	European Social Fund
EWC	Education Workforce Council
FEI	Further Education Institutions
FIS	Family Information Service
FL	Foundation Level
FPN	Foundation Phase Nursery
FSP	Flying Start Programme
IL	Intermediate Level
INO	Information Not Obtained
ISP	Information Sharing Protocol
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LA	Local Authority
LDP	Local Development Plan
LSCs	Learning Support Classes
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NQTs	Newly Qualified Teacher
NS	No Skills
PL	Proficient Level
PRUs	Pupil Referral Units
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
REPs	Registered Education Provider
SEBD	Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SWAC	School Workforce Annual Census
The 2002 Code	SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002
The 2006 Act	The Childcare Act 2006
The 2011 Measure	Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
The 2013 Act	The School Standards and Organisation Act 2013
The 2016 Regulations	The Childcare Act 2006 (Local Authority Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2016

The 2019 Regulations	The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) Regulations 2019
The 2020 Regulations	The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020
The ALNET Act 2018	The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
The Draft Code	The Draft ALN Code for Wales – December 2018
The Measure	Section 13 of The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008
The New Code	The New Statutory ALN Code
The Urdd	Urdd Gobaith Cymru
WCNT	The Welsh Complex Needs Team
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WG	Welsh Government
WiEO	Welsh in Education Officers
WLSS	Welsh Language Sabbatical Scheme
YEPS	Youth Engagement and Participation Service
RHP	Resilience Health Programme
RFS	Resilient Families Service
SOGs	Schedule of Growing Skills

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Equality & Socio-Economic Impact Assessment



DRAFT

July 2021



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO ECONOMIC DUTY

(REVISED MARCH 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment must be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The 'A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties' guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Grace Zecca-Hanagan

Service Director: Andrea Richards

Service Area: 21st Century Schools and Transformation

Date: 21st June 2021

1. a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy / Plan	Service Re-Model / Discontinuation of Service	Policy / Procedure	Practice	Information / Position Statement
X				

1. b) What is the name of the proposal?

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

1. c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires LAs to prepare a WESP. The WESP must contain proposals and targets to improve the:

1. Planning and standards of Welsh medium education and teaching; and
2. Report on progress made to meet the targets of the previous WESP.

Since our first WESP was submitted to the Welsh Government (WG) in 2016, there have been significant changes in the Welsh medium education sector at local and national levels. These changes have been mainly influenced by WG legislation, in particular the new Welsh in Education Action Plan and further implementation of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme .

The WG has also updated the regulations regarding WESPs, with the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019 and the WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 focusing on four proposals. The principal two being:

1. Extending the duration of the WESP from its current three year implementation cycle to a ten year implementation cycle; and
2. The removal of the current duty on Local Authorities (LAs) to plan their provision of Welsh medium education based on demand, with the requirement that LAs achieve targets set by the WG which aim to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the WESP.

Our target, during the ten year lifespan of this WESP, that has been set by the WG, is to:

Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.

This target is based on contributing to the overall long term target, set out in Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.

As well as the target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education, the WESP includes seven outcomes or areas setting out how LAs are expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality. The priorities are:

1. Outcome 1: More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
2. Outcome 2: More reception / five year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
3. Outcome 3: More learners continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
4. Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
5. Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
6. Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with additional learning needs.
7. Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh.

The main strategies and policies that are linked with the WESP are:

National:

- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- Prosperity for All: The National Strategy – 2017.
- The Programme for Government: Taking Wales Forward – 2016 to 2021.
- Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers.
- The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
- The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing the Demand (Wales) Regulations 2013.
- Professor Donaldson’s Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales – 2015.
- Curriculum for Wales – 2022.
- Cymraeg 2050 Action Plan – 2019.
- Education in Wales – Our National Vision – 2017 to 2021.
- Welsh in Education Action Plan – 2017 to 2021.
- Welsh Medium Capital Grant.
- Childcare Act 2006.
- WG Childcare Offer.
- Reducing Infant Class Sizes.
- The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales.

Regional:

- CSC JES: Business Plan – 2021 to 2022.
- Cwm Taf Public Services Board: Wellbeing Plan – 2018 to 2023.

Local:

- RCTCBC Corporate Plan – 2020 to 2024: Making a Difference.
- RCTCBC Local Development Plan – 2006 to 2021.
- RCTCBC Education and Inclusion Services’ Directorate’s Strategic Business Plan: Every School a Great School.
- RCTCBC Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – 2016 to 2021.
- RCTCBC WESP – 2017 to 2020.
- RCTCBC Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – 2017 to 2022.

More specifically:

- Prosperity for All: The National Strategy and The Programme for Government: Taking Wales Forward aim to drive forward improvements to the Welsh economy and public services. One of the priorities is to enable all learners to be able to use the Welsh language when they leave school.
- Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers, sets out the WGs ambition for reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and encouraging more people to use and speak Welsh in their everyday lives.
- Education in Wales – Our National Mission, sets out how the education sector will move forward to ensure that the new curriculum is implemented effectively. The intention is for learners to become increasingly bilingual with a strong grasp for other languages. To support this, the Welsh in Education Action Plan and Cymraeg 2050 Action Plan sets the direction for the development of Welsh medium education.

There are links to the Council’s Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper:
 - Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

Likewise, the Council’s Five Year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for the period between 2016 to 2021 facilitates and promotes the Welsh language in the County Borough.

1. d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

- Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
- The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019.
- The WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

1. e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users: X
- Employees: X
- Wider community: X

SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact upon a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Age (<i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i>)	Positive	The proposal will have a positive impact on children and young people of all ages. As a result of the WESP, the Council is expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education and increase the number of learners in Welsh medium education.	<p>The Council has the highest percentage of statutory school aged learners who access their learning through Welsh medium primary, middle and secondary schools across each of the five LA areas that comprise the CSC JES for the previous three academic years.</p> <p>There are seventeen Welsh medium primary schools located throughout the County Borough. There are two all through schools for 3 to 19 year olds, three dual language primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds and twelve primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds. The total number of primary school aged learners attending schools in the County Borough, split by English</p>

			<p>and Welsh medium for the previous three academic years has remained stable.</p> <p>There are four Welsh medium secondary schools located throughout the County Borough. There are two all through schools for 3 to 19 year olds and two secondary schools for 11 to 19 years olds. The total number of secondary school aged learners attending schools in the County Borough, split by English and Welsh medium for the previous three academic years has remained stable.</p> <p>The Council's target, during the ten year lifespan of this WESP, is to:</p> <p><i>Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.</i></p>
--	--	--	---

DRAFT

As well as the target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education, the WESP includes seven outcomes or areas setting out how LAs are expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality. The priorities linked to this characteristic are:

1. Outcome 1: More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
2. Outcome 2: More reception / five year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
3. Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.

At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, the Council will have delivered a number of projects funded via the WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme. These projects support capital works that facilitate growth in Welsh

			<p>medium education, with funding specifically aimed at developing or expanding Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites. The projects comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dolau Primary School (including Welsh unit).• Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Abercynon.• Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar.• Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James.• Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen.• Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Gymraeg Llantrisant.• Ysgol Llanhari. <p>In addition, The Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, alongside funding directly from the Council, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amend the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language primary school to a Welsh medium primary school
--	--	--	--

			<p>(following the opening of Hirwaun Primary School). The catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver an extension to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar.• Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn.• Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school on the current Heol y Celyn Primary School site, to accommodate pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium pupils attending the dual language Heol y Celyn Primary School.• Deliver a new dual language primary school, in the first instance, as an extension to the dual language primary school Dolau Primary School, as part an extensive housing development.• Undertake a feasibility study to invest in either refurbishing the existing Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda or to relocate the
--	--	--	---

			<p>school to a new 21st Century standard school to be built in the Rhondda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and extended accommodation with a new sports facility for Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun. <p>One of the aims within the Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme is to embed positive Welsh language use, supported by formal and informal opportunities to use the Welsh language socially. In order to achieve the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, it is necessary to increase the number of opportunities for learners to use Welsh different contexts. Learners should be supported and encouraged to participate in wide range of cultural, social and sporting activities through the medium of Welsh within their primary and secondary schools in order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language.</p>
<p>Disability (<i>People with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions</i>)</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The proposal will have a positive impact on children and young people of all ages. As a result of the</p>	<p>Considerable changes are underway in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the</p>

		<p>WESP, the Council is expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education and increase the number of learners in Welsh medium education.</p>	<p>needs of learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (the ALNET Act 2018) was introduced in January 2018 and will be implemented in September 2021. The ALNET Act 2018 requires LAs to keep the arrangements for supporting learners with ALN under review and consider whether these arrangements are sufficient. It includes a statutory requirement to take reasonable steps to create a Welsh medium and bilingual system of support for learners with ALN. The ALNET Act 2018 is supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory ALN Code (The New Code).</p> <p>For learners with significant ALN, who experience difficulties in coping in mainstream primary and secondary schools, specialist provisions are required. There are a range of specialist provisions located throughout the County Borough which include:</p>
--	--	--	---

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 44 Learning Support Classes (LSCs).• 2 PRUs.• 4 Special Schools. <p>Placements within these specialist provisions are agreed by the Council's Access and Inclusion Service Panels.</p> <p>In addition, approximately £3.4 million Additional Needs Funding (ANF) is available to mainstream primary and secondary schools to ensure robust, inclusive provision for learners who attend mainstream primary and secondary schools with severe and persistent ALN.</p> <p>Welsh medium learners with ALN, who experience difficulties within mainstream primary and secondary schools and require more specialist support, are supported by a specialist peripatetic team – The Welsh Complex Needs Team (WCNT). The WCNT, which includes a Welsh medium specialist teacher and two Learning Support Assistants, provide support through an inclusive delivery model, whereby learners are provided with</p>
--	--	--	--

			<p>specialist support within their mainstream primary and secondary schools. During the academic year 2019 / 2020, The WCNT supported a number of learners. Analysis suggests that learners accessing support from The WCNT were making progress that was comparable to that of their peers in equivalent English medium primary and secondary school settings. Further analysis suggests that this inclusive model adopted in Welsh medium primary and secondary schools has been very positive.</p> <p>At the end of the lifespan of this WESP, the Council will have robust processes in place to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to secure Welsh medium and bilingual ALN provision and will endeavour to provide sufficient ALN provision for learners, who request it, through the medium of Welsh along with a workforce of sufficient size and capability.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment (<i>Anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities</i>)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.</p>

Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(People who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Pregnancy or Maternity <i>(Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Race <i>(Ethnic and racial groups i.e. Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Neutral	Based on 2020 data, there are four authorised and two unauthorised sites in the County Borough where Gypsy, Roma and Travellers reside. Based on 2019 data, there are fifteen primary and secondary school aged learners attending primary and secondary schools across the County Borough.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Religion or Belief <i>(People with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Sex <i>(Women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Sexual Orientation <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Armed Forces Community <i>(Anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Carers <i>(Anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.

Page 171

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts, then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) must be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant please provide an adequate explanation below:

No negative impacts have been identified. Therefore, the Council will continue to implement the draft WESP. The evidence to support these conclusions is fully outlined in the draft WESP and the Cabinet report date 20th July 2021. This is Equality and Socio-economic Impact Assessment is a live document and as such it will be reviewed by the Council's 21st Century Schools Team at key points, subject to securing Cabinet approval to engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders on the draft WESP.

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision? Yes: X No:

Name: Grace Zecca-Hanagan

Position: 21st Century Schools

Date: 21st June 2021

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals. Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature of when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a ‘strategic nature’ is available on page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

Page 172

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single parents and vulnerable families • Pensioners • Looked after children • Homeless people • Students • Single adult households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living in the most deprived areas in Wales • People with low literacy and numeracy • People who have experienced the asylum system • People misusing substances • People of all ages leaving a care setting • People involved in the criminal justice system
---	--

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Low income / income poverty <i>(Cannot afford to maintain payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	Neutral	The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 (the Measure) places a statutory duty on all LA's to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe walking	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.

		<p>distance to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area for English and Welsh medium, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream primary, secondary, special school / class or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) as appropriate. The law relating to safe walking distance is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.</p> <p>The Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the Measure to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles.• Free transport to the nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to learners who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start	
--	--	---	--

		<p>of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles.• Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education (the last Friday in June of the school year in which a learner reaches the age of 16). This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner's home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.• Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in	
--	--	---	--

		<p>accordance with their preferred religious denomination.</p> <p>The Council's Learner Travel Policy, Information and Arrangements contains information and advice to parents / carers and learners on how the policy is practically implemented and ensures that it is applied consistently and equitably.</p> <p>The Council's current policy is that learners attending the nearest Welsh medium or dual language school receive free transport in accordance with its agreed policy on walking distance and safe routes.</p> <p>The discretionary elements of the Council's policy are not currently subject to review, but there is an appreciation that if they were to be reviewed in the future, any changes to discretionary provision could have an adverse effect on Welsh medium education. Any proposed changes would be subject to a consultation with parents / carers and learners and, if agreed, would usually apply from the start of a</p>	
--	--	---	--

		school year and would have regard to the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014.	
Low and / or no wealth (<i>Enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with an unexpected spends and no provisions for the future</i>)	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Material deprivation (<i>Unable to access basic goods i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair / replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.</i>)	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Area deprivation (<i>Where you live (rural areas) where you work (accessibility of public transport)</i>)	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Socio-economic background (<i>Social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income</i>)	Neutral	N/A.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.
Socio-economic disadvantage (<i>What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged</i>)	Neutral	The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas, also known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Wales, identifying LSOAs with the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. There are 1,909 LSOAs in Wales with an average population of 1,600 people	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic.

		<p>each and they are ranking them from one (most deprived) to 1,909 (least deprived).</p> <p>The WIMD is currently made up of eight separate domains, compiled from a range of indicators. The domains are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Income.2. Employment.3. Health.4. Education.5. Access to Services.6. Housing.7. Community Safety.8. Physical Environment. <p>WIMD provides insight into area-based deprivation by measuring concentrations of deprivation. However, many non-deprived people live in deprived areas, and many deprived people live in non-deprived areas. The WIMD is a way of identifying areas in the order of most to least deprived. It does not provide a measure of the level of deprivation in an area, but rather whether an area is more or less deprived relative to all other areas in Wales.</p>	
--	--	--	--

		Based on 2019 data, 18.0% of LSOAs in the County Borough are in the most deprived 10.0% of LSOA in Wales.	
--	--	---	--

SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative / adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

4. a) In terms of disproportionate / negative / adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate for each group identified. Attached a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group.

4. b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group.

4. c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users / staff.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group.

4. d) Give details of how you engaged with services users / staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group.

4. e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?

Yes: X No:

SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

5. a) Please outline how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

In accordance with the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019, the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards the success of this WESP. Of particular importance in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of this WESP will be our WESP Strategic Group. The WESP Strategic Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.

Alongside, the WESP Strategic Group and of upmost importance to the success of this WESP is the Marketing and Promotion Sub Group. The Marketing and Promotion Sub Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.

In Addition to the WESP Strategic Group and Marketing and Promotion Sub Group, where and when necessary, the Council will establish 'task and finish' Sub Groups comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations. Each Sub Group will be tasked with the achievement of specified objectives and guided by Terms of Reference.

5. b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

From 2023 onwards, the Council will implement two main methods of reporting on the progress of this WESP:

1. Annual Work Plan (AWP).
2. Annual Progress Report (APR).

The AWP is intended to be a practical working document to help keep track of progress in the short term and will be utilised by the WESP Strategic Group to track progress of this WESP.

The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019 require LAs to review their WESP and submit an APR, based on that review, to the WG by 31st July each year. The APR is intended to capture the key achievements in relation to the WESP.

Whilst the statutory responsibility for the WESP sits with the Council, a range of external groups and organisations have a key role in formulating, implementing and evaluating its progress regularly throughout its lifespan.

5. c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

21st Century Schools Team.

5. d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

The Councils target, during the ten year lifespan of the WESP, that has been set by the WG, contributes to the overall long term target, set out in Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers, of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050. In order to achieve this long term target, the WG has set out a series of targets, in ten yearly increments. The Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards the success of this WESP.

SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the determination of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT / Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a ‘Key Decisions’ please forward your impact assessment to Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqIA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below:

Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations

Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

SECTION 7 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

As the Council looks to the future, it wants to build on what it has achieved to date and make sure that every town and community in the County Borough is a great place to live, work and play. The Council’s ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all priority areas.

Integral to achieving this ambition is the vision that:

There are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good English and Welsh medium education.

The Council will deliver this vision by supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years’ system, supporting families through the childcare offer and by investing in new and significantly improved school and community facilities through the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

The Council will show clear leadership and commitment in its vision for Welsh medium education and, as such, our target is to:

Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.

The achievement of this target will require a multifaceted approach. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further

education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.

Recognising the importance of Cymraeg 2050, and how essential the education system is to achieve its vision, the WESP sets out the Council's ten year plan for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education. It builds on the work of the previous WESP for the period between 2017 to 2022 and sets out a workplan which demonstrates how the Council intends to achieve its ten year vision.

In developing this WESP, all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans have been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. The Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans that impact upon Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

SECTION 8 – AUTORISATIONS

Lead Officer:

Name:

Positon:

Date:

I recommend that the proposal:

Is implemented with no ammendments:

Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined:

Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups of socio-economic disadvantage:

Head of Service / Director Approval:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT / Cabinet reports.

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welsh Language Impact Assessment



DRAFT

July 2021



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) enables the Council to consider the principles and requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015¹ to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011².

It is to be read alongside the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment, as the information in all documents is related and the themes within them are cross-cutting.

Stage One – Information Gathering	
Proposal Name	Draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).
Directorate / Department	Education and Inclusion Services – 21 st Century Schools Team
Service Director	Andrea Richards
Officer Completing the WLIA	Grace Zecca-Hanagan
Email	Grace.C.Zecca-Hanagan@rctcbc.gov.uk
Brief Description	<p>Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013³ requires LAs to prepare a WESP. The WESP must contain proposals and targets to improve the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning and standards of Welsh medium education and teaching; and 2. Report on progress made to meet the targets of the previous WESP. <p>Since our first WESP was submitted to the Welsh Government (WG) in 2016, there have been significant changes in the Welsh medium education sector at local and national levels. These changes have been mainly influenced by WG legislation, in particular the new Welsh in Education Action Plan⁴ and further implementation of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme⁵.</p> <p>The WG has also updated the regulations regarding WESPs, with the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019⁶ and the WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020⁷ focusing on four proposals. The principal two being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extending the duration of the WESP from its current three year implementation cycle to a ten year implementation cycle; and

¹ [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#)

² [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)

³ [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

⁴ [Welsh in Education Action Plan](#)

⁵ [21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme](#)

⁶ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

⁷ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

	<p>2. The removal of the current duty on Local Authorities (LAs) to plan their provision of Welsh medium education based on demand, with the requirement that LAs achieve targets set by the WG which aim to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the WESP.</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>21st June 2021.</p>
<p>Outline who this Proposed Strategy / Plan Affects?</p>	<p>The WESP is a County Borough wide plan. As such all children, learners, parents / carers and the wider community residing in the County Borough could benefit from it.</p> <p>In addition, several external groups and organisations could benefit from the WESP. These include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSC JES). • Coleg y Cymoedd. • Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB). • Menter Iaith. • Mudiad Meithrin. • RhaG. • The Urdd. • University of South Wales. • WG.
<p>Aims of the Proposed Strategy / Plan? How do these Relate to the Welsh language?</p>	<p>Our target, during the ten year lifespan of this WESP, that has been set by the WG, is to:</p> <p><i>Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.</i></p> <p>This target is based on contributing to the overall long term target, set out in Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.</p> <p>As well as the target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education, the WESP includes seven outcomes or areas setting out how LAs are expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality. The priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outcome 1: More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh. 2. Outcome 2: More reception / five year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh. 3. Outcome 3: More learners continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another. 4. Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.

	<p>5. Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.</p> <p>6. Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with additional learning needs.</p> <p>7. Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh.</p>																
<p>Current Linguist Profile of Geographical Area(s) Concerned</p>	<p>Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census. It is a source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh.</p> <p>The 2011 Census⁸ indicated that of the 225,555 residents living in the County Borough, 12.3% (27,779) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 87.7% (197,776) were not able to speak Welsh. This can be compared to the all Wales figures that showed of the 2,955,841 residents living Wales, 19.0% (562,016) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 81.0% (2,393,825) were not able to speak Welsh.</p> <p>The Annual Population Survey⁹ collects information about respondents' Welsh speaking ability and includes a question on how often people speak Welsh. It is updated quarterly, so is a more up-to-date source than the Census. The Annual Population Survey for the quarter ending September 2020, reported that 19.3% of respondents living in the County Borough said they could speak Welsh, this is compared to the all Wales percentage of 28.8% of respondents. This can be further broken down to the data contained in the table that follows.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf</th> <th>All Wales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Can Read Welsh</td> <td>18.2%</td> <td>25.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Write Welsh</td> <td>16.7%</td> <td>23.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Understand Spoken Welsh</td> <td>23.5%</td> <td>33.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The data demonstrates that in each Welsh language skill area, the 'all Wales' percentages are notably higher than the County Borough percentages. However, the current data shows a significant increase in the number of residents that can read, write, and understand spoken Welsh since the 2011 Census.</p> <p>When asked about their frequency of speaking Welsh, the table that follows shows a breakdown of responses of respondents living in the County Borough compared to the all Wales responses.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)</th> </tr> </thead> </table>	Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)				County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	All Wales	Can Read Welsh	18.2%	25.8%	Can Write Welsh	16.7%	23.5%	Can Understand Spoken Welsh	23.5%	33.0%	Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)
Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)																	
	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	All Wales															
Can Read Welsh	18.2%	25.8%															
Can Write Welsh	16.7%	23.5%															
Can Understand Spoken Welsh	23.5%	33.0%															
Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)																	

⁸ [2011 Census](#)

⁹ [Annual Population Survey](#)

	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	All Wales
Speak Welsh Daily	6.9%	16.2%
Speak Welsh Weekly	5.0%	4.8%
Use it Less Often	5.7%	6.2%

The data demonstrates that the percentage of respondents that speak Welsh daily is far lower for the County Borough than the all Wales percentage.

The Welsh Language Use Survey¹⁰ for the years 2013 to 2015, contains detailed information about Welsh speaker's fluency and their use of the Welsh language in a range of settings. When looking where respondents living in Wales learned to speak Welsh, the majority, 45.0%, learned to speak Welsh at home, followed by 26.0% who learned to speak Welsh at nursery and primary school between the ages of 2 and 10 and 14.0% who learned to speak Welsh at secondary school at the age of 11 plus. The remaining 2.0% learned to speak Welsh in other settings, including at 'Welsh for Adults' courses.

The table that follows outlines the total percentage of statutory school aged learners (aged 5 to 15) who access their learning through Welsh medium primary, middle and secondary schools across each of the five LA areas that comprise the CSC JES for the previous three academic years and is derived from the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC):

Total Percentage of Statutory School Aged Learners Who Access their Learning Through Welsh Medium Primary, Middle and Secondary Schools			
LA	Academic Year		
	2018	2019	2020
Bridgend	7.8%	7.5%	7.4%
Cardiff	14.8%	15.0%	15.3%
Merthyr Tydfil	7.3%	7.6%	7.72%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	18.8%	18.0%	18.8%
Vale of Glamorgan	12.4%	12.7%	12.8%
CSC JES	13.9%	14.0%	14.2%

The Council has the highest percentage of statutory school aged learners who access their learning through Welsh medium primary, middle and secondary schools across each of the five LA areas that comprise the CSC JES for the previous three academic years.

¹⁰ [Welsh Language Use Survey 2013 to 2015](#)

There are seventeen Welsh medium primary schools located throughout the County Borough. There are two all through schools for 3 to 19 year olds, three dual language primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds and twelve primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds. The table that follows outlines the total number of primary school aged learners attending schools in the County Borough, split by English and Welsh medium for the previous three academic years and is derived from the PLASC:

Total Number of Primary School Aged Learners Attending Schools in the County Borough Split by English and Welsh Medium						
Category	Academic Year					
	2017		2018		2019	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Number of Learners Attending English Medium Primary Schools	18,241	80.9%	18,153	80.9%	18,078	81.0%
Total Number of Learners Attending Welsh Medium Primary Schools	4,291	19.0%	4,269	19.0%	4,220	18.9%
Total Number of Learners Attending Primary Schools	22,532		22,422		22,298	

The data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of primary school aged learners attending English and Welsh medium primary schools for the previous three academic years.

There are four Welsh medium secondary schools located throughout the County Borough. There are two all through schools for 3 to 19 year olds and two secondary schools for 11 to 19 years olds. All learners who attend these schools' study all of their education through the medium of Welsh. The table that follows outlines the total number of secondary

school aged learners attending schools in the County Borough, split by English and Welsh medium for the previous three academic years and is derived from the PLASC:

Total Number of Secondary School Aged Learners Attending Schools in the County Borough Split by English and Welsh Medium						
Category	Academic Year					
	2017		2018		2019	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Number of Learners Attending English Medium Secondary Schools	12,550	80.7%	12,685	80.6%	12,868	80.4%
Total Number of Learners Attending Welsh Medium Secondary Schools	3,010	19.3%	3,058	19.4%	3,141	19.6%
Total Number of Learners Attending Secondary Schools	15,560		15,743		16,009	

The data demonstrates stability in the ratio split of secondary school aged learners attending English and Welsh medium secondary schools for the previous three academic years.

The table that follows shows the transition rates from each Key Stage for the previous three years academic years in the County Borough and is derived from the PLASC:

Transition from Each Key Stage for the Previous Three Years in the County Borough			
Transition	Academic Year		
	2017	2018	2019
Foundation Phase to Key Stage Two	97.7%	98.2%	98.3%

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Key Stage Two to Key Stage Three</td> <td>111.7%</td> <td>113.9%</td> <td>110.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Key Stage Three to Key Stage Four</td> <td>95.5%</td> <td>98.4%</td> <td>97.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Key Stage Four to Key Stage Five</td> <td>62.2%</td> <td>55.5%</td> <td>59.6%</td> </tr> </table> <p>The transition data indicates that transition of learners between Key Stages does not appear to be a significant problem.</p>	Key Stage Two to Key Stage Three	111.7%	113.9%	110.1%	Key Stage Three to Key Stage Four	95.5%	98.4%	97.3%	Key Stage Four to Key Stage Five	62.2%	55.5%	59.6%
Key Stage Two to Key Stage Three	111.7%	113.9%	110.1%										
Key Stage Three to Key Stage Four	95.5%	98.4%	97.3%										
Key Stage Four to Key Stage Five	62.2%	55.5%	59.6%										
Other Relevant Data / Research	<p>The main strategies and policies that are linked with the WESP are:</p> <p>National:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. • Prosperity for All: The National Strategy – 2017. • The Programme for Government: Taking Wales Forward – 2016 to 2021. • Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers. • The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. • The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing the Demand (Wales) Regulations 2013. • Professor Donaldson’s Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales – 2015. • Curriculum for Wales – 2022. • Cymraeg 2050 Action Plan – 2019. • Education in Wales – Our National Vision – 2017 to 2021. • Welsh in Education Action Plan – 2017 to 2021. • Welsh Medium Capital Grant. • Childcare Act 2006. • WG Childcare Offer. • Reducing Infant Class Sizes. • The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. • Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales. <p>Regional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSC JES: Business Plan – 2021 to 2022. • Cwm Taf Public Services Board: Wellbeing Plan – 2018 to 2023. <p>Local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCTCBC Corporate Plan – 2020 to 2024: Making a Difference. • RCTCBC Local Development Plan – 2006 to 2021. • RCTCBC Education and Inclusion Services’ Directorate’s Strategic Business Plan: Every School a Great School. 												

- RCTCBC Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – 2016 to 2021.
- RCTCBC WESP – 2017 to 2020.
- RCTCBC Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – 2017 to 2022.

More specifically:

- Prosperity for All: The National Strategy and The Programme for Government: Taking Wales Forward aim to drive forward improvements to the Welsh economy and public services. One of the priorities is to enable all learners to be able to use the Welsh language when they leave school.
- Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers, sets out the WGs ambition for reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and encouraging more people to use and speak Welsh in their everyday lives.
- Education in Wales – Our National Mission, sets out how the education sector will move forward to ensure that the new curriculum is implemented effectively. The intention is for learners to become increasingly bilingual with a strong grasp for other languages. To support this, the Welsh in Education Action Plan and Cymraeg 2050 Action Plan sets the direction for the development of Welsh medium education.

There are links to the Council's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper:
 - Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

Likewise, the Council's Five Year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for the period between 2016 to 2021 facilitates and promotes the Welsh language in the County Borough.

Stage Two – Impact Assessment						
Will the Proposed Strategy / Plan Affect Any / All of the Following?						
	Yes	No	No Impact / Negligible	Why it will have a + VE + / - VE - Impact on the Welsh Language?	Evidence	Action(s) to Mitigate – VE – Impacts / Better Contribute to + VE + Impacts?
1. Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language.	X			<p>Our target, during the ten year lifespan of this WESP, is to:</p> <p><i>Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.</i></p> <p>As well as the target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education, the WESP includes seven outcomes or areas setting out how LAs are expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality. The priorities are:</p> <p>1. Outcome 1: More nursery / three year old learners receive</p>	<p>An Annual Work Plan, intended to be a practical working document, will be developed to keep track of progress.</p> <p>The target of increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education is based on contributing to the overall long term target of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, as set out in Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers.</p> <p>The delivery of the WESP will contribute to all seven well-being goals within the Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A More Prosperous Wales, by developing a skilled and well-educated population. • A More Equal Wales, by creating a society that 	<p>The Council is required to review the WESP and submit an Annual Progress Report, based on that annual review, to the WG each year. The Annual Progress Report is intended to capture the achievements in relation to the WESP and will be used to identify both positive and negative (if any) impacts of it.</p> <p>The target of increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education will require a multifaceted approach and the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can</p>

				<p>their education through the medium of Welsh.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Outcome 2: More reception / five year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh. 3. Outcome 3: More learners continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another. 4. Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh. 5. Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school. 6. Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with additional learning needs. 7. Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh. 	<p>enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language, by creating a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation. 	<p>contribute towards it. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.</p> <p>Alongside the WESP, the Council has developed a Five Year Work Plan which sets out actions for each of the seven outcomes or areas with the aim of contributing towards improving Welsh medium and Welsh language education and achieving our target increasing the percentage of year one</p>
--	--	--	--	---	---	---

						learners in Welsh medium education.
2. Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers.	X			<p>The Welsh Language Use Survey¹¹ for the years 2013 to 2015, contains detailed information about Welsh speaker's fluency and their use of the Welsh language in a range of settings. When looking where respondents living in Wales learned to speak Welsh, the majority, 45.0%, learned to speak Welsh at home, followed by 26.0% who learned to speak Welsh at nursery and primary school between the ages of 2 and 10 and 14.0% who learned to speak Welsh at secondary school at the age of 11 plus. The remaining 2.0% learned to speak Welsh in other settings, including at 'Welsh for Adults' courses.</p> <p>The target of increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education will require a multifaceted approach. The Council will work to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are</p>	<p>The development and implementation of targeted marketing and promotion strategies to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need is fundamental to increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education.</p> <p>In addition, Welsh language immersion classes will be used to support learners who are late comers.</p> <p>Eligible parents / carers and the wider community will also be supported and encouraged to participate in activities through the medium of Welsh in order to</p>	<p>The Council will develop and implement targeted marketing and promotion strategies to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers.</p> <p>Where there is demand, the Council will consider creating a Welsh language immersion class for late comers alongside the development of its Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.</p> <p>Eligible parents / carers and the wider community will be supported and encouraged to participate in activities through the medium of Welsh order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in</p>

¹¹ [Welsh Language Use Survey 2013 to 2015](#)

			<p>promoted to parents / carers and demonstrate that it is never too late be educated through the medium of Welsh with the use of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers.</p> <p>Although the Council has no Welsh language immersion classes for late comers in any of our schools at present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for learners who are late comers are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises. As such, Welsh medium schools are provided with funding directly to ensure that any late comers to Welsh medium education are provided with the necessary support and skills to enable them to thrive within their school.</p> <p>This is considered to be working effectively, however, given that many LAs are implementing varying models of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers to</p>	<p>improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language through CfW pre-employment activities that introduce conversational Welsh to parents / carers and the wider community and a pathway to employment course that includes basic Welsh language skills which can lead on to a Welsh for Adults course.</p>	<p>the Welsh language through CfW pre-employment activities.</p>
--	--	--	--	---	--

			<p>Welsh medium education, work with the WG, CSC JES and other regional education consortia could be beneficial in understanding what opportunities for joint working could be had to ensure children and young people who are late comers to Welsh medium education are sufficiently supported.</p> <p>In addition, eligible parents / carers and the wider community are supported and encouraged to participate in activities through the medium of Welsh order to improve their confidence and retain their fluency in the Welsh language. Communities for Work (CfW), a WG partnership programme between the LA and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), supported by the European Social Fund (ESF), delivers employment support services in all fifty two Communities First Clusters (CFC) in Wales. Dedicated CfW Project Teams are in place to provide support to individuals to access employment. CfW offer pre-employment activities that introduce conversational Welsh to</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

				parents / carers and the wider community and a pathway to employment course that includes basic Welsh language skills which can lead on to a Welsh for Adults course.		
3. Opportunities to promote the Welsh language.	X			<p>The Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards the success of this WESP. Of particular importance in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the WESP will be our WESP Strategic Group. The WESP Strategic Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Alongside, the WESP Strategic Group and of upmost importance to the success of the WESP is the Marketing and Promotion Sub Group. The Marketing and Promotion Sub Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and</p>	<p>An Annual Work Plan, intended to be a practical working document, will be developed to keep track of progress.</p> <p>The development and implementation of targeted marketing and promotion strategies to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need is fundamental to increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. The Council will utilise both national and regional marketing and promotion strategies, developed and provided by the</p>	<p>The Council is required to review the WESP and submit an Annual Progress Report, based on that annual review, to the WG each year. The Annual Progress Report is intended to capture the achievements in relation to the WESP and will be used to identify both positive and negative (if any) impacts of it.</p> <p>A Marketing and Promotion Sub Group, comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations will be established and guided by a Terms of Reference.</p>

				organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.	WG and CSC JES, as well as local marketing and promotion strategies developed by the Council along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group.	
4. Compliance with the Councils statutory Welsh language standards.	X			<p>The WESP will comply with the Council's statutory Welsh language standards.</p> <p>In developing this WESP, all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans have been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. The Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans that impact upon Welsh medium and Welsh language education.</p>	An Annual Work Plan, intended to be a practical working document, will be developed to keep track of progress.	<p>The Council is required to review the WESP and submit an Annual Progress Report, based on that annual review, to the WG each year. The Annual Progress Report is intended to capture the achievements in relation to the WESP and will be used to identify both positive and negative (if any) impacts of it.</p> <p>The target of increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education will require a multifaceted approach and the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and</p>

					<p>organisations who can contribute towards it.</p> <p>Of particular importance in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the WESP will be our WESP Strategic Group. The WESP Strategic Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.</p> <p>In the formulation of the WESP, a WESP Virtual Planning Day took place. In attendance were officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who each have a role in contributing to formulating, implementing and evaluating the WESP. They include:</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

DRAFT

- CSC JES.
- Coleg y Cymoedd.
- CTMUHB.
- Menter Iaith.
- Mudiad Meithrin.
- RhaG.
- The Urdd.
- University of South Wales.
- WG.

In order to ensure the formulation of a robust WESP, the Council has also developed an online questionnaire as a pre-statutory consultation phase. This is be distributed to officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations.

All communication, including the WESP Virtual Planning Day, email correspondence and documentation as well as the statutory consultation process has

						<p>and will continue to be shared bilingually with all external groups and organisations.</p> <p>Feedback will be encouraged to be in the medium of Welsh to provide opportunities for the use of the Welsh language. Where required and requested, simultaneous translation has and will continue to be provided.</p>
5. Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language.	X			<p>As the Council looks to the future, it wants to build on what it has achieved to date and make sure that every town and community in the County Borough is a great place to live, work and play. The Council's ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all priority areas.</p> <p>Integral to achieving this ambition is the vision that:</p>	<p>An Annual Work Plan, intended to be a practical working document, will be developed to keep track of progress.</p>	<p>The Council is required to review the WESP and submit an Annual Progress Report, based on that annual review, to the WG each year. The Annual Progress Report is intended to capture the achievements in relation to the WESP and will be used to identify both positive and negative (if any) impacts of it.</p> <p>The Council will continue to progress and deliver the remaining projects</p>

				<p>There are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good English and Welsh medium education.</p> <p>The Council will deliver this vision by supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years' system, supporting families through the childcare offer and by investing in new and significantly improved school and community facilities through the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.</p>		<p>funded via the WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Scheme and Welsh Medium Capital Grant Scheme. These projects support capital works that facilitate growth in Welsh medium education, with funding specifically aimed at developing or expanding Welsh medium childcare and early years settings co-located on Welsh medium primary school sites. The projects recently completed or due for complete during the first five academic years of the WESP comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolau Primary School (including Welsh unit). • Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Abercynon. • Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar. • Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James. • Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen.
--	--	--	--	---	--	--

					<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Gymraeg Llantrisant.• Ysgol Llanhari. <p>The Council's ambitious Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, alongside funding directly from the Council, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amend the language medium of Penderyn Community Primary School from a dual language primary school to a Welsh medium primary school (following the opening of Hirwaun Primary School). The catchment area of Penderyn Community Primary School will also be extended.• Deliver an extension to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Aberdar.• Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school for Ysgol
--	--	--	--	--	--

						<p>Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver a new Welsh medium primary school on the current Heol y Celyn Primary School site, to accommodate pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium pupils attending the dual language Heol y Celyn Primary School.• Deliver a new dual language primary school, in the first instance, as an extension to the dual language primary school Dolau Primary School, as part an extensive housing development.• Undertake a feasibility study to invest in either refurbishing the existing Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda or to relocate the school to
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

						<p>a new 21st Century standard school to be built in the Rhondda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and extended accommodation with a new sports facility for Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun.
--	--	--	--	--	--	---

Stage Three – Strengthening the Proposal		
What?	When?	Who?
<p>Consultation and engagement with stakeholders.</p>	<p>To date, a WESP virtual Planning Day has taken place. In attendance were several external groups and organisations who each have a role in contributing to preparing, implementing and evaluating the WESP. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSC JES. • Coleg y Cymoedd. • CTMUHB. • Menter Iaith. • Mudiad Meithrin. • RhaG. • The Urdd. • University of South Wales. • WG. <p>In addition, the Council has also developed an online questionnaire as a pre-statutory consultation phase in order to ensure the development of a robust WESP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Team.

	<p>All communication, including the WESP virtual Planning Day, email correspondence and documentation as well as the statutory consultation process has and will continue to be shared bilingually with all external groups and organisations.</p> <p>Feedback will be encouraged in the medium of Welsh to provide opportunities for the use of the Welsh language. Where required and requested, simultaneous translation has and will continue to be provided.</p> <p>The draft WESP will be subject to a comprehensive public consultation with a wide range of stakeholders for no less than an eight week period. In addition, it will be scrutinised by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group.</p> <p>Current circumstances will inevitably limit the opportunity for face to face engagement, however, the Council will make best use of a of social media, virtual meetings and digital tools to engage with stakeholders.</p>	
<p>Learners.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges that learners should be involved as active participants in the development, delivery, management and improvement of their educational and learner experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Team.

	<p>Learners have a right to express their views in all matters affecting them and for their views to be heard and given due consideration in accordance with their age and maturity. As such, the Council's 21st Century Schools Team will ensure that suitable arrangements are made to involve learners as active participants throughout this consultation process.</p>	
<p>WESP Strategic Group.</p>	<p>The Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards the success of this WESP. Of particular importance in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the WESP will be our WESP Strategic Group. The WESP Strategic Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Alongside, the WESP Strategic Group and of utmost importance to the success of the WESP, is the Marketing and Promotion Sub Group. The Marketing and Promotion Sub Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.</p> <p>In Addition to the WESP Strategic Group and Marketing and Promotion Sub Group, where and when necessary, the Council will establish 'task</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Team. • WESP Strategic Group.

	<p>and finish' Sub Groups comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations. Each Sub Group will be tasked with the achievement of specified objectives and guided by Terms of Reference.</p>	
<p>Five Year Work Plan.</p>	<p>The Council is required to review the WESP and submit an Annual Progress Report, based on that annual review, to the WG each year. The Annual Progress Report is intended to capture the achievements in relation to the WESP and will be used to identify both positive and negative (if any) impacts of it.</p> <p>The target of increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education will require a multifaceted approach and the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards it. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.</p> <p>Alongside the WESP, the Council has developed a Five Year Work Plan which sets out</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Team. • WESP Strategic Group.

	actions for each of the seven outcomes or areas with the aim of contributing towards improving Welsh medium and Welsh language education and achieving our target increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education.	
--	---	--

Stage Four – Review		
Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief Description
<p>This is a very detailed WLIA which lists many of the intended positive impacts this proposal will have on the Welsh language.</p> <p>Welsh Language Services encourage you to consider further the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To list actions, in section two, that you propose to take to have a positive / increased positive impact on the Welsh language. This, along with the seven outcomes of the WESP, should also consider whole community impact. • To consider the steps you'll take to increase the positive impacts or mitigate any negative impacts. You may wish to consider things such as marketing activities, choice architecture and proposed interventions that will assist the proposal to reach the targeted outcomes. • In Section Three, we encourage you to draw down the mitigation from Section Two that you intend to implement. This is to 	7 th June 2021.	

demonstrate and record the commitment to these changes for officer(s) / SLT / Cabinet to be aware of (as not all intended actions will be possible to implement).		
Officer Review Comments	Brief Description	Date Considered
Consultation Comments	Brief Description	Date Considered

Stage Five – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

In accordance with the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019, the Council will make every effort to build and maintain constructive working relationships with all relevant groups and organisations who can contribute towards the success of this WESP. Of particular importance in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the WESP will be our WESP Strategic Group. The WESP Strategic Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.

Alongside, the WESP Strategic Group and of upmost importance to the success of the WESP, is the Marketing and Promotion Sub Group. The Marketing and Promotion Sub Group is comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations and is guided by a Terms of Reference.

In Addition to the WESP Strategic Group and Marketing and Promotion Sub Group, where and when necessary, the Council will establish 'task and finish' Sub Groups comprised of officers from the Council, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations. Each Sub Group will be tasked with the achievement of specified objectives and guided by Terms of Reference.

From 2023 onwards, the Council will implement two main methods of reporting on the progress of this WESP:

1. Annual Work Plan.
2. Annual Progress Report.

The Annual Work Plan is intended to be a practical working document to help keep track of progress in the short term and will be utilised by the WESP Strategic Group to track progress of this WESP.

The 2019 Regulations require LAs to review their WESP and submit an Annual Progress Report, based on that review, to the WG by 31st July each year. The Annual Progress Report is intended to capture the achievements in relation to the WESP.

Whilst the statutory responsibility for the WESP sits with the Council, a range of external groups and organisations have a role in formulating, implementing and evaluating its progress regularly throughout its lifespan.

Stage Six – Summary of Impacts for the Proposed Strategy / Plan

As the Council looks to the future, it wants to build on what it has achieved to date and make sure that every town and community in the County Borough is a great place to live, work and play. The Council's ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all priority areas.

Integral to achieving this ambition is the vision that:

There are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good English and Welsh medium education.

The Council will deliver this vision by supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years' system, supporting families through the childcare offer and by investing in new and significantly improved school and community facilities through the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

The Council will show clear leadership and commitment in its vision for Welsh medium education and, as such, our target is to:

Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.

The achievement of this target will require a multifaceted approach. Ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education in the right location from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need, is fundamental to contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.

Recognising the importance of Cymraeg 2050, and how essential the education system is to achieve its vision, the WESP sets out the Council's ten year plan for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education. It builds on the work of the

previous WESP for the period between 2017 to 2022¹² and sets out a workplan which demonstrates how the Council intends to achieve its ten year vision.

In developing this WESP, all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans have been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. The Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with all current and relevant local, regional and national legislation, strategies, policies and action plans that impact upon Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

Stage Seven – Sign Off			
Name of Officer Completing WLIA	Grace Zecca-Hanagan	Service Director	Andrea Richards, Service Director for 21 st Century Schools and Transformation
Position	21 st Century Schools	I recommend that the proposed strategy / plan	Is implemented with no amendments.
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined.
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language.
Signature		Signature	
Date	21 st June 2021.	Date	

Page 214

¹² [Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council – Welsh in Education Strategic Plan – 2017 to 2020](#)



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES PROGRAMME – MUTUAL INVESTMENT MODEL (MIM) - UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

Author(s): Andrea Richards, Temporary Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation; Nicola Goodman, Senior 21st Century Schools Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) funding element of Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme in relation to the Council's MIM Pathfinder Project.
- 1.2 To approve the submission of the Outline Business Case for the Council's MIM Pathfinder Project to the Welsh Government.
- 1.3 To request approval to progress to Stage 2 of the MIM process with Welsh Government and the private sector partner.
- 1.4 To note that submitting the Outline Business Case and progressing to Stage 2 of the MIM process does not commit the Council to enter into contractual arrangements in relation to any projects.
- 1.5 To inform members of the provisional programme leading to delivery of the MIM pathfinder schemes (subject to the requisite approvals being sought and provided at key milestones).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the report.

- 2.2 Note the costs incurred to date and indicative costs going forward.
- 2.3 Approve the submission of an Outline Business Case to Welsh Government for consideration in July / August 2021.
- 2.4 Approve progression to Stage 2 of the MIM process with Welsh Government and the private sector partner.
- 2.5 Note that formal approval to proceed to deliver the Pathfinder Project, and to enter into associated legal documentation to facilitate the same including a Project Agreement, would require further approval of the Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To progress the MIM pathfinder projects to the next stage in accordance with the Approval Process for New Projects as set out in Schedule 5 of the Strategic Partnering Agreement for the delivery of new school buildings and to keep on track with the timescales outlined in the indicative programme.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24th September 2020, approval was given to enter into the Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA) with Welsh Education Partnership Co (WEPCo). WEPCo are Welsh Government's private sector partner and have been appointed to assist with the delivery of education and community facilities in Wales, under the MIM 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.
- 4.2 The Mutual Investment Model (MIM) is the revenue funding route which enables investment up to a capital value of £500 million across the whole of Wales.
- 4.3 MIM is a design, build, fund and operate (DBFO) contract where the Public Sector transfers risk to the Special Purpose Vehicle (MIM SPV). Under the MIM, the private sector partners will build and maintain public assets, and in return the Council supported by funding from the Welsh Government will pay a fee to the private partner, which will cover the cost of construction, maintenance and financing the project. At the end of the 25-year period of the contract, the asset reverts to the Council.
- 4.4 The MIM Project Agreement (contractual) document uses a Welsh Government standard form template and as mentioned earlier, any agreement to enter into this formal legally binding contract with the private sector will be brought back to Cabinet for approval at the relevant time.

- 4.5 Following Cabinet's agreement to begin the Approval Process for New Projects as set out in Schedule 5 of the Strategic Partnering Agreement for the delivery of new school buildings and for a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOC) for the initial Pathfinder Project to be submitted to the Welsh Government, a SOC was duly submitted on 30th October 2020 and approved on 18th December 2020.
- 4.6 The schools contained within the Council's MIM Pathfinder Project are Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School, Pontyclun Primary School and Penygawsi Primary School. They are all in areas of rapid housing development and are all in need of investment in order to become fully accessible and brought up to a 21st Century Schools' standard. All three have CLASP buildings on site, have issues with access and have come to the end of their useful life.
- 4.7 Rhondda Cynon Taf Council has experience of DBFO contracts and are one of two Local Authorities selected by Welsh Government to progress with a MIM Schools Pathfinder Project. Welsh Government's MIM funding criteria requires a minimum capital value of £15million per project and hence the three abovementioned primary schools were selected as a bundle to form the pathfinder project. These schools all meet Welsh Government's criteria for pathfinder project status, namely:
- they are being constructed on existing sites already in Council ownership (therefore no land purchase / land title issues are involved);
 - no School Organisation Code proposals are required as there are no school closures or relocations involved (the schools are all being rebuilt on their current sites);
 - the three schools are all in relatively close proximity to each other and this drives further economies of scale;
 - as a result of the above, the project was able to progress quickly.
- 4.8 In compliance with the abovementioned approval process set out in the Strategic Partnering Agreement and following Welsh Government's approval of the SOC, a New Project Request was duly issued by the Council to WEPCo on 1st February 2021.
- 4.9 In response to the Council's New Project Request, WEPCo confirmed on 3rd March 2021 that they would make a Stage 1 submission and Council technical and education officers have been working with WEPCo to progress the initial design stages of the schools.
- 4.10 WEPCo's Stage 1 report is to be provided to the Council for review on the 2nd of July 2021.

5. PROGRESS TO DATE AND NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 As part of the initial feasibility works, surveys have been undertaken at Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School, Penygawsi Primary School and Pontyclun Primary School, comprising – ground investigation surveys; ecology surveys; and arboricultural surveys.
- 5.2 This Pathfinder Project is being progressed with WEPCo as a Net Zero Carbon pilot (subject to value for money assessments), to future proof the schools in terms of net zero carbon requirements going forward. As the Project is both a Pathfinder Project and a Net Zero Carbon pilot project, Welsh Government are funding 100% of the additional survey costs and the Net Zero Carbon technical work.
- 5.3 Should approval be given to progress to Stage 2 of the MIM process for this Pathfinder Project, during Stage 2 WEPCo will carry out a tender process to establish a supply chain for the Project. WEPCo is obliged to develop the tender and evaluation award criteria on a project specific basis and obtain the approval of the Council to such criteria prior to commencing the tender process. Council officers will be involved in the tender process. WEPCo is also obliged at each stage of the New Project Approval Process to produce a pricing report with robust, transparent, auditable information as to the costs, fees and prices included within WEPCo's proposals to enable the Council to be assured that WEPCo is providing the best value for money solution for this specific project.
- 5.4 An indicative very high-level summary programme is tabulated below. These dates are estimates at present and a more detailed programme will be developed and agreed during the Stage 2 process with associated Cabinet approvals sought throughout the process.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date (indicative)</u>
Stage 1 of the MIM process	March 2021 to July 2021
OBC submitted to and approved by Welsh Government	July-August 2021
Stage 2 of the MIM process	July 2021 to March 2022
Planning approval period	October to December 2021

FBC submitted to and approved by Welsh Government	March to May 2022
Financial Close (Project Agreement / contract signed)	June 2022
Construction period	July 2022 – February 2024
Completion/Opening	Autumn 2023 (new building complete) (demolition works and externals to continue to February 2024)

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and is included at Appendix 1.
- 6.2 In summary, the Equality Impact Assessment screening test identifies only positive and neutral impacts upon the protected characteristics. There are no negative impacts in relation to the protected characteristics and so it was deemed that approval would be sought to continue to implement the proposal. The new buildings and the way they are used will also bring positive socio-economic impacts across all of the vulnerable groups identified under the socio-economic disadvantage headings.
- 6.3 The Equality Impact Assessment will continue to be reviewed throughout the duration of the project.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been prepared and is included at Appendix 2.
- 7.2 In summary, the outcome of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment is that the proposal will assist with delivering the targets outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), support the aim of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, and positively promote Welsh medium education and endeavour to provide additional opportunities to learn Welsh and/or develop skills and learning through the medium of Welsh.

8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 Headteachers of the three schools have been involved in the initial design phases and local elected members and chairs of governing bodies have been informed of surveys being undertaken on the school sites. As the project progresses into Stage 2 and the design develops, there will be full engagement with the schools, governing bodies and local elected members and relevant consultations with the wider community will be undertaken as part of the planning application process.
- 8.2 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be meeting on the [16th July](#), to undertake pre-scrutiny of the report, providing scrutiny Members with the opportunity to comment on the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) funding element of Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme in relation to the Council's MIM Pathfinder Project. Feedback from this meeting will be presented verbally to the Cabinet at its meeting.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 If the proposals proceed they will be funded by the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, through its MIM model of funding. This is a revenue model of investment which includes a contribution of up to 81% from Welsh Government. The remaining 19% will be funded by the Council.
- 9.2 This funding is subject to approval by Cabinet and by the Welsh Government following the submission of the relevant Business Cases and the receipt of finalised detailed costs.
- 9.3 Indicative costs for the MIM Pathfinder Project are currently advised to be:
- Annual Service Charge (base costs if Net Zero Carbon approach not included) = £2.402m, based on a capex figure of £21.901m
 - Annual Service Charge (if Net Zero Carbon approach included) = £2.512m, based on a capex figure of £23.001m

This element will be funded by an 81% contribution from Welsh Government, with the Council funding 19%.

- 9.4 There are also some capital elements payable in relation to the MIM schemes and these will be funded 65% by Welsh Government and 35% by the Council, including:-
- loose furniture (FF&E) and ICT:
Welsh Government's FF&E and ICT rates are currently £1221 per pupil and £555 per pupil respectively, which, based on 1165

pupils, totals £2,069,040, of which Welsh Government will fund 65% (£1,344,876) and the Council will fund 35% (£724,164).

- WEPCo's Stage 1 development fee:
Costs accrued to date are WEPCo's Stage 1 development fee costs for developing a concept design to RIBA Stage 2. These costs are within the Stage 1 fee cap detailed within the Strategic Partnering Agreement and are estimated at £464,726. These fees are funded 65% (£302,072) by Welsh Government and 35% (£162,654) by the Council. The element of Stage 1 costs payable by the Council are being met from within the existing Education Capital Programme.

- 9.5 WEPCo's Stage 2 development fee costs are capped at 7.84% of the capital value and are payable as part of the Annual Service Charge and are therefore funded 81% by Welsh Government and 19% by the Council.
- 9.6 A report detailing the financial implications and the payment schedule will be presented to Cabinet for approval once final project costs become available.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Part 1 of the Education Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act") imposes a number of general duties on all local authorities in Wales. The general duty in section 13 of the 1996 Act is to contribute (so far as the Council's powers enable them to do so) towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by ensuring that efficient primary education and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population of their area.
- 10.2 Section 13A(3) of the 1996 Act states that a local authority in Wales must ensure that their relevant education and training functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards, and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom the subsection applies, including those who are of compulsory school age or are below school age and are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority.
- 10.3 Section 14 of the 1996 Act requires the Council to secure sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education in the Council's area. Schools available for an area shall not be regarded as sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide all pupils with an appropriate education.
- 10.4 Appropriate education means education which offers such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of (a) the pupils' different ages, abilities and aptitudes; and (b) the different periods for

which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their different needs.

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

11.1 There are links to RCTCBC's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

- Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper
- Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

11.2 Due regard has been made to all seven well-being goals and the Five Ways of Working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of decisions, on communities to prevent consistent issues such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

This proposal would contribute to achieving the wellbeing goals by:

- Improving sustainability of school buildings in the Council portfolio through a commitment to achieving zero-carbon buildings and constructing to BREEAM excellent.
- Providing additional school places
- Opening new community facilities that would create opportunities for local people to utilise.

This proposal would achieve the five ways of working by:

- Creating a new school environment that can deliver the new Curriculum for Wales.
- Providing first class learning facilities for pupils and the wider community and contributing towards a healthier Wales by providing additional outdoor sport facilities for pupils.
- Contributing towards a prosperous Wales by committing to opportunities for local tradespeople and to use local resources, wherever possible to build the new schools.
- Engaging with the community on a thorough consultation with opportunities for all stakeholders in the communities to engage throughout the process.

11.3 The Equality Impact Assessment includes further detail on the contribution of the proposal to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act

12. CONCLUSION

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

12.2 To continue to build upon the success of the significant improvements delivered to the Council's education assets through the Band A 21st Century Schools investment, Members are asked to:

- Approve the submission of an Outline Business Case to Welsh Government for consideration in July / August 2021.
- Approve progression to Stage 2 of the MIM process with Welsh Government and the private sector partner.
- Note the costs incurred to date and indicative costs going forward.
- Note that formal approval to proceed to deliver the Pathfinder Project, and to enter into associated legal documentation to facilitate the same including a Project Agreement, would require further approval of the Cabinet.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES PROGRAMME – MUTUAL INVESTMENT MODEL (MIM) - UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

Author(s): Andrea Richards, Temporary Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation; Nicola Goodman, Senior 21st Century Schools Officer

Other Information / Background Papers

The background papers included as appendices to the report are:

- **Equality Impact Assessment**
- **Welsh Language Impact Assessment**

Contact Officer

**Nicola Goodman, Senior 21st Century Schools Officer
01443 744252**

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The [‘A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties’](#) guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Nicola Goodman

Service Director: Andrea Richards

Service Area: Education and Inclusion Services, 21st Century Schools

Date: 24/06/21

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

MIM pathfinder schools

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The Project is to create brand new learning environments at Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School (LFPS), Penygawsi Primary School (PePS) and Pontyclun Primary School (PPS). To facilitate this, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) proposes to replace existing buildings of poor condition with brand new school accommodation fit for the 21st Century. The standardised design will include bright, open, flexible learning spaces to maximise the potential for learning. The Council, in partnership with Welsh Government (WG), will invest (using the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) revenue funding) in constructing the new schools in the southern Taf area of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Previous report to Cabinet dated 24th September 2020 regarding the signing of a Strategic Partnering Agreement associated with the MIM process.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

Must comply with Building Bulletin 99.

Must comply with planning legislation.

Must successfully progress through Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and business case approvals process to secure Welsh Government funding.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Age (<i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i>)	Positive	<p>The replacement of old, dilapidated school accommodation will offer state of the art facilities fit for 21st century learning and teaching in schools in Llantwit Fardre, Llantrisant and Pontyclun.</p> <p>The construction of three new schools, with modern classrooms and the removal of mobile accommodation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver comfortable and attractive learning environments for children previously taught in poor condition accommodation. • Provide 21st century facilities to enable all pupils in the local communities to access learning and activities which can help develop relationships within communities. • Allow easy access to services to improve the lives of children and their families. <p>The potential disruptions to learning and teaching caused by on-site building works will be minimised by the new schools (construction areas) being segregated from the existing</p>	Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on the school and wider communities.

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>school buildings. The contractors that will be undertaking the works will be experienced in working on live school sites.</p> <p>There will also be opportunity for community use of the schools from which all members of the wider community (young and old) will have the opportunity to benefit.</p> <p>Community engagement and consultation will also be undertaken with all ages.</p>	
<p>Disability <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p>	Positive	<p>As the schools will be new, they will comply with the current requirements of planning and building control legislation and will also fully comply with the Equality Act 2010 and be accessible to all.</p> <p>Flexible learning spaces and heartspaces at each of the schools will provide quieter spaces which will benefit all learners, particularly those with ALN.</p>	<p>Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their accessibility to all building users.</p> <p>Design development to date already incorporates total accessibility at the heart of the design.</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Gender Reassignment <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i>	Positive	Toilet facilities will be shared / available to all - not designated male/female.	Delivery of new school buildings and the inclusion of toilets which are non-designated with full height cubicles for privacy and shared hand wash facilities have been welcomed for the numerous advantages they bring
Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Neutral	N/A	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic
Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Positive	As the schools will be new, they will comply with the current requirements of planning and building control legislation and will also fully comply with the Equality Act 2010 and be accessible to all. They will have level access and will have lifts installed as required. They will also be more thermally comfortable with ease of internal temperature regulation. There will also be more comfortable staffing arrangements/facilities for PPA and rest facilities if required.	Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on the staff, parents and the wider communities

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Race <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Neutral	N/A	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic
Religion or Belief <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Neutral	N/A	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic
Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Positive	As the schools will be new, they will be more thermally comfortable with ease of internal temperature regulation which will be of benefit to staff with menopausal symptoms by providing a more comfortable environment to work in.	Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on the staff, parents and the wider communities
Sexual Orientation <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Neutral	N/A	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have an impact on people that share this characteristic

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Armed Forces Community <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Positive	The increase in capacity at two of the schools will give parents and carers who may move into an area mid-academic year (due to a change in circumstances) greater choice of education provision.	Increased numbers of school places will result in the ability to accommodate more children.
Carers <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Positive	The provision of the new schools will give parents and carers greater choice of education and may encourage more parents / carers to choose their catchment school as opposed to schools outside of their catchment area.	Increased numbers of school places will result in the ability to accommodate more children.

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant please provide an adequate explanation below:

No negative impacts have been identified for protected groups. All impacts on protected groups will be either neutral or positive.

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision? Yes No

Name: Nicola Goodman

Position: Senior 21st Century Schools Officer

Date: 24/06/21

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals.

Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a ‘strategic nature’ is available on page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty](#) Welsh Government Guidance.

SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales
- People with low literacy and numeracy
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People misusing substances
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People involved in the criminal justice system

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p>Low Income/Income Poverty <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	Positive	<p>The areas that the new schools are being built are in differing areas of deprivation, as can be evidenced by the Free School Meals entitlement (eFSM) which is 35.9% at Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School; 10.2% at Penygawsi Primary School and 9.3% at Pontyclun Primary School (compared to the RCT average of 25.5% as at May 2021).</p> <p>The new buildings will have modern, flexible spaces offering opportunities for additional after-school provision, including homework clubs to offer further support in reducing the attainment gap evidenced with eFSM learners.</p> <p>The new buildings will be accessible to the whole of the local community (regardless of income level) which could involve groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc. The three schools are at the heart of their communities and therefore there would be no travel costs incurred getting to the facilities, thus making accessing the facilities</p>	<p>Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on the school and wider communities.</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		available to all at no additional cost and bridging the gap between more and less affluent individuals / families. Each of the new schools will have a dedicated community facility and the design of the schools will be such that access to the community facility and the school hall and toilet provision is safely available without the need to access the rest of the school building. Subject to the local requirements / needs, the school could be made available for adult education classes; community groups; community meetings etc.	
<p>Low and / or No Wealth <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p>	Positive	<p>The larger school buildings at Llanilltud Faerdref and Penygawsi will have larger main halls which will create additional capacity for breakfast clubs which are utilised by many families on low income / families just above the poverty threshold.</p> <p>The new school buildings will also have additional storage facilities which will assist with storage of</p>	<p>Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on availability of breakfast club places.</p> <p>Successful implementation in many schools throughout the county borough.</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		school uniforms for uniform recycling schemes whereby parents / carers on lower incomes will be able to benefit from good quality uniforms.	
<p><u>Material Deprivation</u> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>	Positive	The new buildings will offer improved facilities for all users. The FSM uptake is currently 78.7% for Llanilltud Faerdref Primary; 85.1% for Penygawsi Primary; and 60.17% for Pontyclun Primary. New dining facilities may have a positive impact upon FSM uptake as more modern dining environments will be provided. Marketing and working with the school councils can also be undertaken to further increase FSM uptake.	Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on FSM uptake.

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><u>Area Deprivation</u> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i></p>	Positive	<p>The three schools are being rebuilt on their existing sites in the hearts of their communities therefore are accessible to their local communities on foot for most who need to visit the sites. Accessible parking will also be provided on each site. The new schools will mean that the opportunities to access 21st Century facilities for educational and wider purposes will be at the heart of the community and the increase in size at two of the schools will enable more learners to benefit from these brand new facilities.</p> <p>The private sector involved in the creation of the new school buildings will be delivering community benefits by means of apprenticeships, training and job opportunities, bringing local jobs for local people and opportunities for the long-term unemployed. They will also engage in community volunteering and in-kind donations to the benefit of the local community. They will also be</p>	<p>Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and the increase in pupil numbers.</p> <p>Community benefits realised by previous 21st Century Schools projects.</p>

		engaging with the school community giving learners the opportunity to engage with the contractor in STEM activities.	
Socio-economic background <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	Positive	<p>The new schools will all have additional facilities (e.g. multi-use games areas) which can be used by the schools and the wider communities thereby offering many more opportunities for after school clubs / community group use etc. improving the health and wellbeing of individuals.</p> <p>The new schools will also have state of the art ICT facilities which will benefit the learners and the wider community in terms of opportunities to enhance computer literacy.</p>	Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on the school and wider communities.
Socio-economic disadvantage <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	Positive	The new schools will positively impact upon individuals of any age and all staff, pupils, parents/carers with any access requirements. Being at the heart of the communities that they serve, the schools will bring advantages overall to any individual who may be financially or materially disadvantaged, as the new schools will afford more opportunities for more children and older learners /	Delivery of new school buildings previously throughout the county borough and their positive impact on the school and wider communities.

		community members to access fantastic new facilities 'on their doorstep'.	
--	--	---	--

SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group.

- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group

- 4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group

- 4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a disproportionate / negative / adverse impact on a protected group

- 4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?

Yes

No

SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

As these proposals are for new schools on existing sites with a total increase in capacities of less than 20%, no formal consultation is required.

However, headteachers have already been involved in initial design discussions and scoping requirements and the governors, pupils, staff, and parents/carers of LPFS, PePS and PPS will be afforded the opportunity for their input on the projects in order to ensure they have a voice in how their schools will look following completion.

Interested parties are also welcomed to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon
CF45 4UQ
or e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

Officers from the Council's 21st Century Schools Team within Education and Inclusion Services and the Council's Corporate Estates Team will monitor the proposal throughout the design development period, construction period and operational period by engaging in meetings with the private sector, Welsh Government and key stakeholders.

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

Reports will be presented to Cabinet at regular intervals as the project develops and the Welsh Government's business case approvals process and associated timescales will be adhered to. Business cases will review and evaluate the proposal at each step to secure funding and Cabinet approval will be sought prior to any construction works starting.

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

Officers from the Council's 21st Century Schools Team within Education and Inclusion Services and the Council's Corporate Estates Team will monitor the proposal throughout the design development period, construction period and operational period.

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

Each 21st Century Schools project undergoes a 'Lessons Learnt' review at the end of the construction phase and this feeds into future projects so that each project improves and benefits from lessons learnt (positive and negative) during previous projects.

SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqIA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
Additional elements for inclusion / consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Learners with ALN - strengthened support due to opportunities provided by new facilities.- Impact on staff with menopausal symptoms.- Increasing the uptake of FSM.- After-school/homework clubs to assist with closing the attainment gap.- Community engagement.	24 th June 2021	Document updated to include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Benefit of flexible learning spaces in new buildings to learners with ALN.- Thermal comfort aspect of new buildings.- Benefits of a new school building on FSM uptake and opportunities to further increase uptake.- Opportunities offered by the new buildings for additional after school provision/extra curricular support.- Opportunities for community use emphasised and community consultation.

Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

In summary, the Equality Impact Assessment identifies positive and neutral impacts, and no negative impacts upon the protected characteristics.

- The impact on age (particularly the younger generation) is extremely positive as they will have the full benefit of being educated in fantastic facilities fit for the 21st Century and the new Curriculum for Wales.
- The buildings will be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 thereby ensuring that no pupil, staff member, parent/carer or member of the wider community is prevented from fully accessing the whole extent of the new facilities.
- There will be positive impacts on the Welsh language as, despite the new schools being English medium schools, they will provide improved facilities to assist with the delivery of Welsh as a key element of the curriculum and in line with Cymraeg 2050 and RCTCBC's WESP, as we aim for the teaching of Welsh as a second language in English medium schools, to be of the highest quality.
- The increase in capacity at two of the schools and the provision of brand new buildings will give parents and carers a greater choice of education provision and may encourage more parents/ carers to choose their catchment school. It also affords greater educational choice which may assist armed forces personnel who may move to an area mid-academic year.
- The new buildings and the way they are used will bring positive socio-economic impacts across all of the vulnerable groups identified under the socio-economic disadvantage headings.

SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS

Lead Officer:

Name: Nicola Goodman

Position: Senior 21st Century Schools Officer

Date: 30/06/21

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

Head of Service/Director Approval:

Name: Gaynor Davies

Position: Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Date: 30/06/21

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Proposal to Construct Three New Primary Schools in the Southern Taf Area of Rhondda
Cynon Taf**

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) tool enables the Council to consider the principles and requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Measure 2011.

It is to be read alongside the Equality Impact Assessment, as the information in both documents is related and the themes within them are cross-cutting.

<u>STAGE 1 – Information Gathering</u>	
NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see guidance document for more information on data sources.	
Proposal Name	MIM Schools Pathfinder Project
Directorate/ Department	Education and Inclusion Services – 21 st Century Schools Team
Service Director	Andrea Richards
Officer Completing the WLIA	Nicola Goodman
Email	nicola.goodman@rctcbc.gov.uk
Brief Description	<p>In summary, the proposal is to construct three new English medium primary schools on the sites of the existing schools, namely Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools in the southern Taf area of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), which will provide schools with 21st Century facilities and improve and enhance learning environments. It is important to note, these proposals will not involve any significant change to the provision being made to the communities the schools currently serve and the catchment areas of the schools are not proposed to be altered.</p> <p>The new facilities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern, flexible learning environments for all learners, a large hall/dining area, a multi-purpose learning resource area and fully accessible facilities. • Internal and external areas for use by the local community. • Enhanced outdoor spaces to support the full range of curriculum activities, including an outdoor classroom and a ‘forest schools’ area. • Improved on site staff and visitor car parking. <p>The proposal will also include a review of safe routes to school, and if required an investment in improvements to walkways, road crossings and traffic calming measures, to ensure the required safety standards are met. This is the approach we have implemented within other communities through the delivery of the 21st Century Schools Programme, which has seen significant improvements being made.</p>

	The new schools will be built in accordance with Building Bulletin 99 and will be fully accessible and compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
Date	24 th June 2021
Outline who this proposal affects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils and staff of Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools. • Parents / carers of pupils attending Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools. • Residents and communities in the vicinity of Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools.
What are the aims of the policy/ project, and how do these relate to the Welsh language?	<p>The aim of proposed project is to relocate Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools to brand new buildings on their current sites in order to replace their current buildings that are in very poor condition overall. Although these are English medium primary schools, Welsh is taught as part of the curriculum and all pupils will benefit from having the opportunity to be taught in brand new facilities fit for the 21st Century.</p> <p>The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside school. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts in schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages, offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.</p> <p>If implemented, the proposal will also allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the schools' facilities which can be used to hold classes through the medium of Welsh. The schools will be designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area is being designed within each school so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school, which could involve Welsh language groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc.</p>
Who will benefit? Could the policy/ project affect Welsh language groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils of Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools. • Parents/carers of pupils attending Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools. • Academic and support staff at Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools. • The local community in the southern Taf area of the County Borough. <p>Any impact on Welsh language groups should only be positive as the new buildings will be accessible to the local community which could involve Welsh language groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc.</p>
Current linguist profile of the geographical area(s) concerned	<p>Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census – a count of all people and households. The Census is a key source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh.</p> <p>The 2011 Census¹ indicated that of the 225,555 residents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf, 12.3% (27,779) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 87.6% (197,776) were not able to speak Welsh. This can be compared to the all Wales figures that showed of the 2,955,841 residents living Wales, 19.0% (562,016) were able to speak Welsh, whilst the remaining 81.0% (2,393,825) were not able to speak Welsh.</p>

¹ [2011 Census](#)

The table that follows illustrates the Welsh language skills of residents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf alongside the main electoral divisions that comprise the catchment areas of Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools and is obtained from the 2011 Census.

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)					
	Church Village	Llantrisant	Pontyclun	Rhondda Cynon Taf	All Wales
Can Speak, Read and Write Welsh	15.6%	13.4%	12.4%	9.7%	14.6%
Can Speak and Read but Cannot Write Welsh	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	0.9%	1.5%
Can Speak but Cannot Read or Write Welsh	2.2%	1.9%	2.1%	1.6%	2.7%
Can Understand Spoken Welsh Only	4.4%	4.9%	5.2%	4.2%	5.3%
Other Combination of Skills	3.2%	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%	2.5%
No Skills	73.2%	75.1%	75.7%	80.4%	73.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The data demonstrates that in each electoral division that comprise the catchment areas of Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools, the Welsh language skills of residents are mostly above the total County Borough level, but mostly below the All Wales Welsh language skills level.

The Annual Population Survey² collects information about respondents' Welsh speaking ability and includes a question on how often people speak Welsh. It is updated quarterly, so is a more up-to-date source than the Census. The most recent Annual Population Survey, for the quarter ending September 2020, reported that 19.3% of respondents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf said they could speak Welsh, this is compared to the all Wales percentage of 28.8% of respondents. This can be further broken down to the data contained in the table that follows.

² [Annual Population Survey](#)

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)		
	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales
Can Read Welsh	18.2%	25.8%
Can Write Welsh	16.7%	23.5%
Can Understand Spoken Welsh	23.5%	33.0%

The data demonstrates that in each Welsh language skill area, the ‘all Wales’ percentages are notably higher than the County Borough percentages. However, the current data shows a significant increase in the number of residents that can read, write, and understand spoken Welsh since the last census in 2011.

When asked about their frequency of speaking Welsh, the table that follows shows a breakdown of responses of respondents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf compared to the all Wales responses.

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)		
	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales
Speak Welsh Daily	6.9%	16.2%
Speak Welsh Weekly	5.0%	4.8%
Use it Less Often	5.7%	6.2%

The data demonstrates that the percentage of respondents that speak Welsh daily is far lower for the County Borough than the all Wales percentage.

The Welsh Language Use Survey³ for the years 2013 to 2015, contains detailed information about Welsh speaker’s fluency and their use of the Welsh language in a range of settings. When looking where respondents living in Wales learned to speak Welsh, the majority, 45.0%, learned to speak Welsh at home, followed by 26.0% who learned to speak Welsh at nursery school and primary school between the ages of 2 to 10 and 14.0% who learned to speak Welsh at secondary school at the age of 11 plus. The remaining 2.0% learned to speak Welsh in other settings, including at ‘Welsh for Adults’ courses.

The proposed new school buildings for Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools will allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the school’s facilities. The schools are being designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area will be designed within the school itself so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the schools.

The data above clearly shows that there is a gap in the Welsh language skills of residents of RCT when compared to the whole of Wales. Proposals such as this significantly improve the learning environment and the opportunities available for our learners. The headteachers of Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools will be encouraged and supported to consider using these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities

³ [Welsh Language Use Survey 2013 to 2015](#)

	<p>for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in the Council's current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) WESP.</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English to Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. Although the Council has no Welsh language immersion classes for late comers in any of our schools at present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for learners who are late comers are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises. As such, Welsh medium schools are provided with funding directly to ensure that any late comers to Welsh medium education are provided with the necessary support and skills to enable them to thrive within their school.</p> <p>This is considered to be working effectively, however, given that many LAs are implementing varying models of Welsh language immersion classes to support learners who are late comers to Welsh medium education, work with the WG, CSC JES and other regional education consortia could be beneficial in understanding what opportunities for joint working could be had to ensure children and young people who are late comers to Welsh medium education are sufficiently supported. Where there is demand, the Council will consider creating a Welsh language immersion class for late comers alongside the development of its Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.</p>
<p>Other relevant data or research</p>	<p>The language category and standards of alternative / neighbouring schools</p> <p>RCTCBC has seventeen Welsh medium primary school provisions located throughout the County Borough to ease access. There are two all-through schools for 3 to 19 year olds, namely Ysgol Garth Olwg and Ysgol Llanhari, three dual language primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds, namely Dolau Primary, Heol y Celyn Primary and Perthcelyn Primary schools and 12 Welsh medium primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds. All learners who attend these schools' study through the medium of Welsh. In the Taf area of Rhondda Cynon Taf there are nine schools offering Welsh medium education for pupils aged 3 to 11 years of age, comprising of: all-through schools from the ages of 3 to 19 years old, dual language primary schools and primary schools catering for 3 to 11 year olds.</p> <p>In very close proximity to Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School, there is a well-established Welsh medium all-through school, namely Ysgol Garth Olwg (formerly a primary and secondary school). Ysgol Garth Olwg is 15 years old and was built as part of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. It is in very good condition with excellent facilities on site, internally and externally, for the school and the wider community. It has 25.9% surplus capacity in the primary stream and 25.0% surplus capacity in the secondary stream (PLASC April 2021). When Ysgol Garth Olwg was a separate primary and secondary school, the primary school was at 5.5% surplus capacity (PLASC January 2018). As it was nearing capacity, the Local Authority created additional capacity by utilising rooms within the secondary school and subsequently created the all-through school on the site. A recent investment in the school in the sum of £350,000 has created fully refurbished accommodation for years 5 and 6, which will ensure sufficient Welsh medium spaces at primary and secondary levels in this part of the County Borough, allowing for opportunities for further growth of the Welsh language. There is also a Meithrin and a Lifelong Learning Centre on</p>

the current Ysgol Garth Olwg site thereby offering a continuum of Welsh medium provision for learners from the birth to eighteen years and beyond within one school site.

In line with the County Borough's current WESP and in order to achieve the targets of the new WESP, the County Borough will continue to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents / carers from the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education for all learners, whatever their learning need is fundamental to increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. In addition, the headteachers of the three schools will promote and signpost Welsh medium provision available at the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre.

Penygawsi Primary is approximately two miles from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gymunedol Llantrisant, which is a Welsh medium primary school at 21.9% surplus capacity (PLASC April 2021). YGGG Llantrisant is also a relatively new build school having been built in 2005.

Pontyclun Primary is approximately 3 miles from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gymunedol Llantrisant. The school currently offers wraparound care for nursery aged children and are looking to provide meithrin facilities for 2 to 3 year olds in the mornings from September. This provision will maximise opportunities for educating through the medium of Welsh in this area for early years children.

As part of a wider development to build approximately 1,850 new houses near the current Dolau Primary school, a new building will be constructed with 480 places plus 60 nursery places. Dolau Primary is currently a dual language school, with 441 places plus nursery. The construction of the new building will increase the total available capacity to 921 places plus 124 part-time nursery places, thus considerably increasing opportunities for Welsh medium education in a brand new 21st Century building. Although initial proposals are for this new building to be part of the dual language Dolau Primary School, subject to further statutory consultation, the new building is likely to become a Welsh medium primary school and will offer Welsh medium education in a brand new, state of the art, 21st Century standard school building. Dolau Primary is 4 miles from Pontyclun Primary school.

As can be seen from the data above, there are plentiful opportunities for full Welsh medium education in very good facilities in close proximity to each of the schools forming part of this proposal.

The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. Although the Council has no Welsh language immersion classes in any of our schools at present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for their learners are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises.

Pupil Numbers in neighbouring Welsh medium schools

The majority of neighbouring Welsh medium schools have surplus capacity to facilitate growth of Welsh medium education provision going forward. As referred to above,

Dolau Primary is scheduled to be greatly expanded in the very near future which will provide even more opportunities for Welsh medium education.

School	Capacity	Number on Roll	Surplus Capacity
YGGG Llantrisant	338	264	21.89%
Ysgol Garth Olwg	409 (primary stream)	303	25.91%
Dolau Primary (dual language)	441 (whole school English & Welsh streams)	438	0.68%
Ysgol Llanhari	194 (primary stream)	171	11.86%

These surplus places are evident at Nursery and Reception level also in several of the schools (see table below), therefore enabling early years provision through the medium of Welsh.

Ysgol Llanhari, being an all through school has the flexibility of use of space throughout the site to create further early years accommodation, therefore exceeding the admission number is not an issue as the school has sufficient capacity and accommodation overall.

Demand and projections are regularly monitored across all schools as part of continual school organisation planning, to ensure that all schools have sufficient accommodation to meet in catchment demand and enable growth of the Welsh language.

School	Admission Number	Nursery P/T*	Nursery*	Reception*
YGGG Llantrisant	48	19	12	41
Ysgol Garth Olwg (all-through school)	58 (primary stream)	0	44	51
Dolau Primary (Dual language)	63 (whole school English & Welsh streams)	18	6 (Welsh stream only)	26 (Welsh stream only)
Ysgol Llanhari (all-through school)	27 (primary stream)	13	6	31

* PLASC April 2021 figures

Transition rates from Mudiad Meithrin to Welsh medium primary schools

The position at 2019/2020 in terms of progression from Cylch Meithrin into Welsh medium primary schools is shown in the table that follows:

The Position (2019/2020) in Terms of Progression from Cylch Meithrin into Welsh Medium Primary Schools										
Cylch Meithrin	Cylch Meithrin Capacity	Assoc. Primary School	No. of 2-Year Olds (Age At 31.0 8.19)	No. of 3-Year Olds (Age At 31.08 .19)	No. who attend Cylch Ti a Fi	No. who attend Flying Start	Total Transferring to School			
							Welsh Medium		English Medium	
							No.	%	No.	%
Beddau	18	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castellau	14	24	20	28	26	92.8	2	7.1
Evan James	52	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James	12	43	10	56	56	100	0	0
Llanilltud Faerdref	24	Ysgol Garth Olwg	6	0	9	6	6	100.	0	0
Pentre'r Egwlys	30	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Garth Olwg	38	1	12	36	22	61.1	14	38.8
Rhydyfelin	40	Ysgol Heol Y Celyn	18	2	11	17	5	29.4	12	70.6
Cwm Elai	15	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefai	37	1	21	31	26	83.8	5	16.1
Pontyclun	48	Llanhari	16	0	17	14	13	92.9	1	7.1

(Note: Updated data is awaited from Welsh Government)

Cymraeg 2050 outlines that Welsh medium immersion education is the principal method for ensuring that children can develop their Welsh language skills and for creating new Welsh speakers. Cymraeg 2050 highlights the importance of the early year's sector as a point of early entry into Welsh medium education and as a way to increase demand for Welsh medium education and the Council regularly invests in Welsh-medium pre-school facilities on existing Welsh medium primary school sites.

Funding to promote the creation of immersion classes will aid the continuum of the Welsh language.

What facilities are there for members of the community to learn Welsh or undertake activities through the medium of Welsh

The new school buildings will have capacity that can be utilised by community groups and organisations. Each building is being designed to facilitate safe use of areas by the community whilst maintaining segregation from the rest of the school. The headteachers will be encouraged and fully supported to use these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities

for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCTCBCs) current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

Is it appropriate to provide additional after school facilities at any alternative school to further secure standards in the Welsh language?

In very close proximity to Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School is the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre which is heavily used and offers a variety of courses through the medium of Welsh to children, young people and adult learners.

Also, although the current Covid-19 pandemic has meant that restrictions have limited the number of face-to-face courses available for the community to progress their Welsh language skills, a range of online courses can also be accessed.

How parents/carers and learners' engagement with any alternative schools and any specific language enhancement it offers could be supported

The Council, has developed and updated a Being Bilingual booklet, funded by Cronfa Glyndwr which was first published in March 2016 and is currently being updated. The booklet is designed to give information on the benefits of being bilingual, outline the path to Welsh medium education and answer frequently asked questions on choosing Welsh medium education. The booklet is distributed via Health Visitors, Flying Start provision, nursery nurses and through the community in GP surgeries, libraries, dental surgeries and hospitals.

The Council's 'Starting School' booklet also provides parents/carers with a range of information including advice on choosing a school, provision of home to school transport and a directory of schools.

In addition, the local Cymraeg i Blant Officer runs weekly bilingual baby massage, baby yoga and Welsh rhyme time sessions for parents/carers and young children across the County Borough working alongside the local Midwifery and Health Visiting Teams. This ensures that parents/carers receive key early messages during the ante-natal and post-natal period and are made aware of the bilingual pathway available for their child.

The Council's Youth Engagement and Participation Service work with Menter Iaith and the Urdd to deliver bespoke language awareness sessions for young people highlighting the value of having Welsh language as a skill. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service also deliver social events and activities for young people through the medium of Welsh which include residential opportunities, eisteddfodau, sport and accreditation.

Information on how the proposal fits with the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and any future actions that will be needed in consequence of the change to continue to comply with the scheme or meet targets in the scheme

The Council believes that all learners should have the appropriate opportunities for learning in both the mediums of Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life in order to meet the demands of the 21st Century.

The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 target and how central the education system in Wales is to achieving its vision. The Council's new WESP (2022 to 2032) sets out a ten year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education within the County Borough, in order to maximise its contribution of achieving the target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. It builds on the work of the previous WESP (2017 to 2022) and sets out an action plan which demonstrates how we intend to achieve our ten year vision.

The majority of the Welsh medium primary schools in the County Borough have sufficient surplus places to meet demand. However, there are a number of schools where demand is close to outstripping supply. As such, the Council has or is currently taking action to address these issues through a number of projects and proposals. Furthermore, the Council has also committed to increasing the quality and availability of early years Welsh medium provision by investing significantly in a number of provisions through various funding schemes. This will assist in ensuring a language continuum of Welsh medium provision and ensure that increased demand for Welsh medium education is met.

Also, as mentioned earlier, the Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. Although the Council has no Welsh language immersion classes in any of our schools at present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for their learners are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises.

No changes to these proposals are required in order to comply with the WESP.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language Measure 2011.

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Yes	No	No impact / Negligible	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Numbers and/or percentages of Welsh speakers	X			<p>The headteachers of all three schools will be encouraged and supported to consider using these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in the Council's current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) WESP.</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English into</p>	<p>- Number of parents/carers and other members of the community attending Welsh medium classes offered at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. (During the period October 2019 to March 2020, 120 learners attended various courses through the medium of Welsh at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. A further 152 learners attended 16 Welsh for Adults courses at the centre during the same period. Since September 2021 and as</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of and signposting to Welsh medium classes by the headteachers all three schools. - Promotion of the options available to learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education. - Ensure that schools are supported local and regionally, including by the CSC JES Welsh in Education Officer

			<p>Welsh medium education, so as to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. Although the Council has no Welsh language immersion classes in any of our schools at present, schools requiring Welsh language immersion support for their learners are funded to support the accelerated acquisition of Welsh language skills for learners as and when the need arises.</p> <p>Demand for immersion classes is something that the Council will monitor and will consider moving forward alongside the development of its Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme and is included in the WESP.</p> <p>In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050 and in line with the County Borough's current WESP and in order to achieve the targets of the new WESP, it is vital to ensure a school based workforce of sufficient size and capability. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our education system is dependent on its school based workforce and we must work</p>	<p>a result of the pandemic, the provision has adapted to Welsh language talks on a variety of subjects and these have attracted 580 participants).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take up of Welsh language immersion support. Where there is demand, the Council will consider creating a Welsh language immersion class for late comers alongside the development of its Band B 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme. - The school-based workforce will be supported with continued professional learning, networking and opportunities to share best practice. - To promote and increase learner's use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools with all English medium primary and secondary schools being supported to achieve the 	<p>to share best practice.</p>
--	--	--	--	---	--------------------------------

			<p>locally, regionally and nationally to ensure we create a school based workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.</p> <p>In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learner's use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts. This has been done through the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith), developed by Gwynedd Council, and various other projects, in partnership with the CSC JES and the Urdd. These include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing the Welsh Language Charter in all Welsh medium primary and secondary schools in order to develop learners' use of the Welsh language. • Implementing Cymraeg Campus in a number of English medium primary schools and piloting it in two English medium secondary schools. • Supporting English medium secondary schools to provide informal 	<p>Cymraeg Bronze Award.</p> <p>Campus</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--

			<p>opportunities to use the Welsh language and intensive Welsh language learning opportunities through the Urdd's Cymraeg Bob Dydd project.</p> <p>The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within primary and secondary schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language, across the curriculum and in wider contexts in primary and secondary schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learner's in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.</p> <p>The current position (2019/2020) in terms of progression from Cylch Meithrin into Welsh medium primary schools is fairly high. In the Cylch Meithrin where progression in to Welsh Medium primary education is lower (Rhydyfelin) the</p>		
--	--	--	---	--	--

			<p>main reason is due to its location. However, it is worth noting that there are proposals (under a separate funding bid) to deliver a new Welsh medium primary school on the current Heol y Celyn Primary School site, to accommodate pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh medium pupils attending the dual language Heol y Celyn Primary School. This proposal could also include an on-site Cylch Meithrin which would assist in the continuum of Welsh medium education.</p> <p>It is important to note, these proposals will not involve any significant change to the provision being made to the communities the schools currently serve as such, the schools will continue with their current wrap around arrangements.</p>		
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language	X		If implemented, the proposal will allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the schools' facilities which can be used to hold classes through the medium of Welsh. The schools will be designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area will be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The demand for classes through the medium of Welsh could be evidenced by the popularity of the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. Additional opportunities to attend community classes / 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouragement and support to headteachers to promote community use of their facilities for the purpose of Welsh medium education / use by

			<p>designed within each school so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school.</p> <p>Each of the three schools is located within a residential area hence they are very accessible to the communities that they serve.</p> <p>All signage produced will be bilingual and in adherence to the most recent guidelines available.</p> <p>Whilst no negative feedback has been received from the wider community on these proposals regarding the Welsh language, the Council will continue to adhere to The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011⁴ (the 2011 Measure), which requires the Council to produce a five year strategy to facilitate and promote Welsh language. The first five year strategy, RCT – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy⁵, was approved in 2016 and outlined a number of key policy areas to maintain and increase the number of Welsh speakers during its lifecycle. In developing this proposal, the RCT – Welsh</p>	<p>groups in these new school buildings should further improve accessibility as the buildings will have community rooms and be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and such opportunities will be within the heart of additional communities thereby facilitating access.</p>	<p>Welsh medium groups and promotion of opportunities via marketing tools currently being developed by the Council's WESP Marketing Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council will make efforts to establish Welsh for Adults sessions in the new schools as well as look to establish links with the Urdd and Menter Iaith to assist in the promotion of the Welsh language. - In addition, the schools will work with the Councils Sports Development Team and the Urdd to establish links with local Welsh medium sporting groups and associations who may wish to
--	--	--	---	--	---

⁴ [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011 \(the 2011 Measure\)](#)

⁵ [Rhondda Cynon Taf – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – 2016](#)

				Language Promotion Strategy has been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education and the Council has and will continue to ensure there is a clear alignment with it.		utilise the sports facilities available.
Compliance with the Council's Welsh Language Standards	X			<p>All processes associated with the new building will be in accordance with the Council's Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>Where possible, the schools, the Council and the CSC will support school support staff, school learning support workers and teaching staff to participate in Welsh language skills courses at different levels in order to meet identified needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All contractual arrangements will ensure that all consultations are undertaken bilingually; the construction of the new school will incorporate bilingual signage etc. - Number of support school support staff, school learning support workers and teaching staff participating in Welsh language skills courses at different levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instil contractor awareness of the Welsh Language Standards and ensure compliance. - Encouragement of participation in Welsh language skills courses at different levels.
Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language	X			Although these schools are English medium primary schools, they are part of the Council's 21 st Century Schools and Colleges Band B programme which the Council and Welsh Government jointly fund to ensure that the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21st Century Schools and Colleges - Band B Schools - Strategic Outline Programme contains a wide range of schools (Welsh and English medium) in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of Welsh medium classes for community groups etc. in the fully accessible facilities.

				Council's vision that there are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have equitable access to good English and Welsh medium education is fulfilled.	various parts of the county borough.	- Promotion of the options available to learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education.
--	--	--	--	---	--------------------------------------	--

Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal/project

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

Page 266

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
Ensure that all prospective parents are given the 'Starting Schools' and the 'Being Bilingual' booklets to promote the positive experiences that can be achieved through seeking an education through the medium of Welsh.	Ongoing. This will be a continued collaborative effort between all stakeholders.	RCT / Schools / Partners
Monitor demand to assess the need for an immersion class in southern Taf area of the county borough.	This will form an action of the WESP 2022-32 and will be an ongoing action for officers.	RCT

Link with headteachers to promote the availability of Welsh language classes to their parents/carers/wider community	Ongoing. This will be a continued collaborative effort between the Council and the schools.	RCT / Schools
--	---	---------------

Stage 4 – Review

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your impact assessment to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. [See our guidance document](#) for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

Page 267

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
<p>Welsh Language Services encourage you to consider the possible negative impacts new English medium schools may have on the uptake of Welsh medium education and what ways the Council will mitigate this possible impact. It will likely be through promotion of the benefits of WM education and continued investment.</p> <p>Additional consideration should also be given to the effects on the whole community and not just the educational community. For example - Will the proposal effect community attitudes towards the Welsh language? Will groups other than Welsh learners be encouraged to use the site and its facilities?</p>	24 th June 2021	<p>Document updated to include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of the Welsh language via headteachers. - Opportunities for headteachers to provided with information regarding Welsh language courses available in the community to raise awareness with parents/carers/wider community and signpost them accordingly. - The Council making efforts via the headteachers to encourage after school use of the facilities for all community needs, including Welsh for Adults sessions in the new schools and encouraging links with the Urdd and Menter Iaith to assist in the promotion of the Welsh language. - Encouraging the schools to work with the Council's Sports Development Team and the Urdd to establish links with local

<p>Consideration such as these should help inform these proposals.</p>		<p>Welsh medium sporting groups and associations who may wish to utilise the MUGAs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for staff to learn Welsh - school based workforce supported with continued professional learning, networking and opportunities to share best practice. - Promoting and increasing learners use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools with all English medium primary and secondary schools being supported to achieve the Cymraeg Campus Bronze Award. - Signage being bilingual.
Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
<p>The Review Panel recommended additional consideration be given to parents' accessibility to Welsh Medium classes in order to promote their learning. Also, increased focus on what will be done to mitigate any negative impact on the Welsh language (in the community and in the context of the Council's 10 Year WESP targets) especially in light of the Meithrin transition rates currently quoted, to ensure Welsh Medium Schools investment is promoted and discussed alongside English Medium schools investment - wherever possible - to ensure parents are aware that both sectors are being funded. Further, whether additional training of school staff could benefit English Medium schools - ensuring teachers have the best skills to equip our next generation as they learn through the new curriculum framework.</p> <p>Additional areas for inclusion / consideration:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality and availability of Welsh medium educational facilities in the areas of the new build English medium schools. - Consideration to be given to the impact of new build English medium primary schools on Welsh language 	<p>24th June 2021</p>	<p>Document updated to reflect:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New buildings at Dolau Primary School will provide brand new facilities and increased capacity for educational opportunities through the medium of Welsh; recent further investment in Ysgol Garth Olwg to create a 3-19 Welsh medium all-through

<p>uptake in the particular areas. Making parents aware of investment across the Welsh medium sector also.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-school Welsh medium availability to encourage Welsh language immersion from the very early years. - Engagement with headteachers to promote to parents / carers the availability of Welsh language courses in the community. - Data regarding transition from meirthrin to Welsh Medium Primary School – add a note that updated data is awaited from Welsh Government - 2019/20 is the most current data available to the Council at present. - Data regarding uptake of Welsh language opportunities at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. 		<p>school; future 21st Century Schools Band B proposals include brand new Welsh medium schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many of the Welsh medium schools in the area are relatively new / in good condition or have plans in place for investment /replacement. - The Council regularly invests in Welsh-medium pre-school facilities with more being located on Welsh-medium primary school sites, to ensure continuity of provision from non-statutory to statutory education through the medium of Welsh in one location. - Opportunities for headteachers to provided with information regarding Welsh language courses available in the community to raise awareness with parents/carers/wider community and signpost them accordingly. - Note added to meithrin data. - Data regarding Garth Olwg course participants added.
Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

The project will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by officers within the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate and the Corporate Estates Department on a regular basis throughout the design, build and operational period.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -

The aim of proposed project is to relocate Llanilltud Faerdref, Penygawsi and Pontyclun primary schools to brand new buildings on their current sites in order to replace their current buildings are in very poor condition overall. Although these are English medium primary schools, Welsh is taught as part of the curriculum and all pupils will benefit from having the opportunity to be taught in brand new facilities fit for the 21st Century.

The aim of the Council is to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside school. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts in schools to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.

Page 270
If implemented, the proposal will also allow for the expansion of community and third-party use of the schools' facilities which can be used to hold classes through the medium of Welsh. The schools will be designed to be fully accessible and fully integrated community schools. A dedicated area is being designed within each school so that the local community will be allowed to safely utilise the facilities at the school, which could involve Welsh language groups using the 21st Century facilities for meetings / classes etc. The headteachers will be encouraged and fully supported to use these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh classes and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh.

In summary, the proposal will therefore assist with delivering the targets outlined in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCTCBCs) current (2017 to 2022) and new (2022 to 2032) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and will support the aim of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.

Stage 7 – Sign Off

Name of Officer completing the WLIA	Nicola Goodman	Service Director Name:	Andrea Richards, Service Director for 21 st Century Schools and Transformation
Position	Senior 21 st Century Schools Officer	I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	Is implemented with no amendments
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language
Signature		Service Director Signature	
Date	30/06/21	Date	30/06/21

This page is intentionally left blank



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR THE LLANILID HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

Author: Andrea Richards, Temporary Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on the proposal to establish new primary education provision to serve the new housing development at Llanilid, Llanharan. This will be achieved, in the first instance, by treating the new building that will be provided by the housing developers as an extension to the dual-language provision at the existing Dolau Primary School.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the Report.
- 2.2 Agree to delay the implementation date of the proposal to September 2024.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To progress the proposal as approved by Cabinet in July 2019, in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code) Code 011/2008).

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on April 9th 2019, and following a statutory school organisation consultation,

approval was given to progress with the proposals as consulted upon, with an implementation date of September 2021.

- 4.2 As you are aware the housing developer Persimmon Homes, currently building a significant number of new homes in the Llanharan area, are responsible for constructing the new building as a part of their Planning Obligations for the new housing development. Persimmon Homes have had to overcome a number of significant planning constraints, and since 2019 have been collaboratively working and engaging with statutory planning consultees, including Natural Resources Wales and the Health and Safety Executive, to satisfy all obligations.
- 4.3 Persimmon are now confident that all queries raised to date by the statutory consultees have been addressed, and as such are targeting a planning submission date this summer. Given the time that has lapsed and the impact that this has on the original programme, it is evident that the new building will not be constructed by the original date approved by Cabinet.
- 4.4 As a result of this delay, and to mitigate any additional risks that may arise with this project, we request that Cabinet approve a delay to the implementation date by three years, the maximum delay allowed within the School Organisation Code, which will postpone the implementation date of the proposal until September 2024. To note however, Persimmon are optimistic that this proposal will be delivered prior to this end date.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 Equality and Community Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document at the time of consultation. These documents can be found at Appendices 1 and 2.
- 5.2 In summary, the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment identified positive and neutral impacts, and no negative impacts, upon the protected characteristics and so it was deemed that approval would be sought to continue to implement the proposal. It also confirmed that the Action Plan within the Equality Impact Assessment will continue to be reviewed throughout the duration of the project delivery period.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 In accordance with the School Organisation Code, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment was prepared in respect of this proposal and published on the Council's website together with the Consultation

Document at the time of consultation. This document can be found at Appendix 3.

- 6.2 In summary, the outcome of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment was that the proposal would deliver the targets outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), support the aim of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, and it would positively promote Welsh medium education and provide more opportunities to study through the medium of Welsh.

7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal was undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.

8. THE STATUTORY PROCESS

- 8.1 In accordance with the School Organisation Code, Statutory Notices were published and subsequently approved by Cabinet on April 9th 2019.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 The capital cost of constructing the new school will be met by the housing developers (Persimmon Homes) as part of their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) responsibilities. On completion, the developers will hand the building over to the Council.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Part 1 of the Education Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act") imposes a number of general duties on all local authorities in Wales. The general duty in section 13 of the 1996 Act is to contribute (so far as the Council's powers enable them to do so) towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by ensuring that efficient primary education and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population of their area.
- 10.2 Section 13A (3) of the 1996 Act states that a local authority in Wales must ensure that their relevant education and training functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards, and the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom the subsection applies, including those who are of compulsory school age or are below school age and are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority.

- 10.3 Section 14 of the 1996 Act requires the Council to secure sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education in the Council's area. Schools available for an area shall not be regarded as sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide all pupils with an appropriate education.
- 10.4 Appropriate education means education which offers such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of (a) the pupils' different ages, abilities and aptitudes; and (b) the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their different needs.
- 10.5 Powers for Councils to develop school organisation proposals are governed by the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Code 011/2018. Local authorities must, when exercising functions under Part 3 of the 2013 Act, act in accordance with any relevant requirements contained in the Code and must have regard to any relevant guidelines contained in it. A copy of the most up to date Code is found here:
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/schoolorganisation-code-second-edition.pdf>

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

- 11.1 There are links to RCTCBC's Corporate Plan for the period between 2020 to 2024, specifically the priority:

Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper

- Ensuring we have good schools, so all children have access to a great education.

- 11.2 Due regard has been made to all seven well-being goals and the Five Ways of Working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of decisions, on communities to prevent consistent issues such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

This proposal would contribute to achieving the wellbeing goals by:

- Providing additional school places to meet WG targets and to promote the Welsh language in the Community.
- Opening new community facilities that would create opportunities for local people to utilise.

This proposal would achieve the five ways of working by:

- Creating a new school environment that can deliver the new Curriculum for Wales.
- Provide first class learning facilities for pupils and the wider community and contribute towards a healthier Wales by providing additional outdoor sport facilities for pupils.
- Engaging with the community on a thorough consultation with opportunities for all stakeholders in the Community to engage throughout the process.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The Council is responsible for delivering high educational standards and efficient primary, secondary and sixth form education provision that serves our local communities. This is achieved by ensuring that the right schools, are the right size, are in the right location and are fit for the 21st Century learner.
- 12.2 Following a school reorganisation consultation process in respect of the proposal, Members agreed to progress the proposal in April 2019. Since this time, the Planning challenges and site constraints faced by the developer Persimmon Homes has had an impact upon the delivery programme.
- 12.3 Members are asked to consider the information contained within this report and formally approve a delay to the implementation date which would deliver the proposals no later than September 2024.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

Item:

Background Papers

The background papers included as appendices to the report are:

Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 - Community Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 - Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Officer to contact:

Lisa Howell, Business and School Organisation Manager (Tel: 01443 744062)

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directorate: Education

Service Area: 21st Century Schools

Responsible officer: Julie Hadley

Date: 1st October 2018

1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project: **The establishment of Primary education provision to serve the Llanilid housing development**

The Project is to:

Create new Primary school provision for the Llanilid housing development

2. Policy Aims, you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?

How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

New school provision is required to cater for known and planned housing development at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan. The site is identified as a strategic housing site in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006 – 2021; a new Primary school building to serve the development is detailed in the LDP as a policy requirement for essential infrastructure necessary to support the development.

It is proposed that the new school building will accommodate up to 480 pupils, plus 60 part time Nursery places, for children aged between 3 and 11 years. It will be created and established as an extension to Dolau Primary School in the first instance, and will thus increase the total

available capacity of this dual language school to 921, plus 124 part time Nursery places. The admission number will be 131 per year group and the admissions authority will be Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

The site of the new provision that will form the extension will be located immediately adjacent to the site of the existing Dolau Primary School. The school building will comprise 16 general teaching classrooms, a large Nursery unit capable of accommodating 60 children (on a part time basis) and the general ancillary accommodation associated with a primary school, such as a multi-functional assembly hall, kitchen, staff room, offices, toilets, storage and changing rooms. The external areas will include a tarmac playground, car park, MUGA and a sports pitch that will be operated as a joint use facility with the local community. The sports facilities will also be available for use by the existing Dolau Primary School. As the two buildings are located just a short distance from each other, arrangements will be made to create an access between the two sites to ensure a safe and secure walking route between the two buildings that will comprise the extended Dolau Primary School.

The new building will be fully accessible to all and will meet all the requirements and provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

The building will be constructed by Persimmon Homes under the direction and supervision of the local authority and will be handed over to the Council on completion of construction, which is scheduled to coincide with the construction of the 299th dwelling on the development.

Once the housing development is well established and the pupil numbers at Dolau increase to fill the spare capacity that will be created by the new building, consideration will be given to making the new building a separate school in its own right. The language medium of the new school will also be determined at this point in time.

3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate

Members of the public Staff Both Other Please state: children aged 3-11 years resident in the existing catchment area of Dolau Primary School, and the new housing development at Llanilid

4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:

New

5. Identifying Impacts – Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager’s guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Young – Yes		Old – no impact	<p>Better learning facilities for all and sufficient school capacity to cater for all children who will reside within the catchment area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make the learning environments comfortable and attractive for all children who access them, to 21st Century Schools standards. • access services to improve the lives of children and their families. • Improved facilities will enable the pupils to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities. • The changing curriculum, life long learning opportunities and use of ICT will provide the opportunity to enable all learners to reach their potential. • Facilities at Primary schools, in particular the Infant teaching areas are geared towards the needs of young children and are, as such not suitable for use by older persons.
Disability (remember to	Yes			As this will be a brand new building, it will comply with all of the

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
consider the different types of disability)				requirements of planning and building control legislation and will also fully comply with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, being fully accessible to all.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language	Yes			The school will offer education provision in both English and Welsh Mediums, subject to parental preference and choice.
Carers			Yes	

EVIDENCE

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet - September 2018.
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

None

INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings/ open events are to be held

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Dolau Primary School	Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Thursday, 18 th October 2018, 3.30 – 4.15pm	Dolau Primary School
Dolau Primary School	School Council	Thursday, 18 th October 2018, 2pm	Dolau Primary School
Members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Thursday, 18 th October 2018, 4.30 – 6pm	Dolau Primary School

A consultation questionnaire was also available in the consultation document and on the Council's internet site at www.rctcbc.gov.uk

Interested parties were also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon CF45 4UQ

e-mail schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

MONITORING AND REVIEW

10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?

The Council's school improvement, governor support and HR teams will be fully engaged in supporting the governing body to establish the new provision, and to enable the school to 'grow' in size as new houses are constructed. This support will continue for as long as it is required.

ADDRESSING THE IMPACT

11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.

12. ACTION PLAN

You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
To monitor and supervise the construction of the new school building, which will be constructed by Persimmon Homes and delivered to the Council upon completion of the 299 th house on the development	Colin Atyeo Director of Corporate Estates	By September 2020 (or whichever date the construction of the 299 th dwelling falls on)		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team

The Pavilions

Cambrian Park

Clydach

CF40 2XX

Email: equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies

Date: 1/10/18

Job Title: Director of Education & Inclusion Services

This page is intentionally left blank

Proposal to extend Dolau Primary School (to provide for the Llanilid housing development)

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is to be consulted on between 1st October and 31st December 2018. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have already been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. This document clearly focuses on the reasons for the need for additional Primary education provision in this area, this Impact Assessment is not included in the consultation document as we are mindful that the document needs to be as concise and informative as possible, whilst at the same time being readable and 'user-friendly'. The free availability of this document is however stressed; in addition, it is available for any person to view or download from the Council website.

It has to be emphasised at this point that the community impact of this proposal will be negligible, indeed if any impact is realised at all. Dolau Primary School will remain and no provision whatsoever is being removed. A new school building is to be constructed by housing developers on a site that is immediately adjacent to Dolau, and in the first instance, this provision will be established as an extension to Dolau Primary School. It is therefore considered that the overall impact of these proposals will be neutral on the local community, there will be no change to the level of services and provision that are offered at present at Dolau, but there will instead be opportunities for it to be extended and enhanced.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending Dolau Primary that reside within the catchment area is 76% for the English stream and 64% for the Welsh stream. This is of the total number of pupils on roll in January 2018 (date of the PLASC return), including non-statutory Nursery and pre-Nursery pupils.

Dolau Primary offers a breakfast club to all pupils; this provision will continue should this proposal be agreed. The school also offers after school clubs and sessional care for pupils (run by Menter Iaith) and these too will continue.

The school has several organisations that use their facilities on a regular basis outside of school hours, as detailed below. The provision of a new building will enhance and expand the opportunities for community groups to access the facilities available:

Drop in Centre Activity Club – 1 evening per week
Starfish Swimming Club – 1 evening per week
Welsh for Beginners class – 1 evening per week
RCT Community Dance Group – 1 evening per week

This proposal seeks to enhance the accommodation and facilities of Dolau Primary, to benefit all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will be extended to encompass the Llanilid housing development site). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area. However, as part of the facilities the housing developer is obligated to provide, the new school site will benefit from sports pitches and a Multi use Games Area (MUGA), which will be available to the whole school to use, and the community outside of school hours (under the agreement of the school).

It must also be noted that the site of the new building is located just a short distance away from the current school. A dedicated and safe footpath will be created to physically link the both sites. No additional transportation will be required and walking distances and travel times to the new site will be negligible.

As children are going to attend the same school, albeit with two separate buildings that are located within a short distance of each other, is not considered that there will be any changes to their mode or method or transportation to school and there will be no extra distance involved in respect of this journey.

Proposals to Establish Primary Education Provision for the Llanilid Housing Development, Llanharan

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Annex C of the School Organisation Code.

Outline planning consent for the construction of up to 1,850 homes at the former Llanilid Opencast Site, Llanharan, was granted by the Council's Development Control Committee in January 2016, following over six years of discussion and consideration of the proposals between Council officers and agents representing the landowners. As part of the planning process, the Council will collect a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on each dwelling constructed, which will be utilised to provide the essential infrastructure that is required to support a housing development of this size. It has already been agreed that a new Primary school building, of 540 places in total (including Nursery provision) will form part of the essential infrastructure.

To ensure that the demand for school places can be met in future years, through the preferred language medium of the parents' choice, it is proposed that the new school building be established, in the first instance, as an **extension to the dual language school provision of Dolau Primary School**. As part of the Welsh Government initiative to increase the number of people in Wales who can speak the Welsh Language to at least 1 million by 2050, the Council is aiming to increase capacity in the Welsh Language school sector, to encourage more parents to choose this medium of education for their children. Dolau offers provision in both languages, with parents given the freedom to choose which language they wish for their child to be educated in.

It is proposed that the new school building will accommodate up to 480 pupils, plus 60 part time Nursery places, for children aged between 3 and 11 years. It will be created and established as an extension to Dolau Primary School in the first instance, and will thus increase the total available capacity of this dual language school to 921, plus 124 part time Nursery places. We consider that this capacity will be sufficient to cater for current and forecasted pupil demand and it will also allow for growth in the Welsh Medium sector.

All services provided by Dolau Primary School outside of school hours, such as breakfast clubs, after school clubs and other community facilities will continue in the new, extended school campus. Any links with outside organisations such as the Urdd, Menter Iaith etc will be maintained and hopefully strengthened and expanded. The new and existing school buildings will have spare capacity initially that can be utilised by community groups and organisations and the headteacher will be encouraged to consider using these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh Language. This may include offering opportunities to parents and other community members to learn Welsh, and possibly providing the potential

to invite outside organisations to provide childcare and 'wrap around' care provision on the school site if requested and if there is recognised demand for such facilities .

Information on the standards of provision at Dolau Primary School is again contained within the consultation document. It must be stressed that this proposal is to treat the new school building as an extension to Dolau Primary School; it is not creating a brand new school and as such we have not outlined how an alternative school provision will improve on current standards, which are recognised as being of a high quality.

One of the main targets outlined in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is to increase the number of children receiving education through the medium of Welsh, which will assist the local authority in working towards the Welsh Government target of having 1 million people in Wales able to speak Welsh by 2050. We consider that this proposal will provide extra pupil capacity through the medium of Welsh in a new, state of the art building and will hopefully encourage more parents to choose a Welsh Medium education for their children.



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH JULY 2021

A PROPOSAL TO PILOT A VIRTUAL SCHOOL MODEL TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)

AUTHOR(S): Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an opportunity to consider a joint pilot strategy between Education and Inclusion Services and Children's Services to improve the educational outcomes of children who are looked after (CLA) by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) through the creation of a Virtual School Model (VSM).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- i. Note the content of this report.
 - ii. Determine whether to proceed with the proposal to provide funding to pilot a Virtual School Model to improve the educational outcomes for children who are looked after (CLA) by RCTCBC.
 - iii. If a decision is made to agree to the above proposal, to receive a further report presenting an evaluation of the Virtual School Model pilot to inform future actions.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To progress the proposal to pilot an integrated model of support to promote the educational achievement of CLA who attend both in county and out of county educational settings.
- 3.2 To promote opportunities to develop more inclusive practices in our schools and to support the implementation of wider educational reforms to meet the needs of learners who are CLA.

4. BACKGROUND/WIDER CONTEXT

- 4.1 This report provides an overview of the arrangements currently in place in the Local Authority for supporting the educational outcomes of CLA learners and the rationale for moving towards a Virtual School Model that has the potential to provide a more effective, integrated model of support for CLA.
- 4.2 The report provides a brief overview of the number of RCT CLA accessing statutory education and the challenges faced by this particularly vulnerable cohort of learners.
- 4.3 The report also provides an overview of the additional funding being requested to progress with the proposal to pilot the Virtual School Model.

5. CURRENT CONTEXT

- 5.1 National data detailed on the Welsh Government Statistics Wales website records that 7,170 children in Wales were looked after on 31st March 2020 - an increase of 4.9% on the previous year.
- 5.2 In 2020 there were 715 looked after children and young people within RCT. This was the second highest total number of children and young people who were looked after and the second highest number of school aged children (5–15) within Wales.
- 5.3 On the 31st March 2020, there were a total of 715 children and young people within the Local Authority's care. 450 of these children were of statutory school age. This equates to 1.5% of the overall school population.
- 5.4 In the academic year 2019-2020, 17% of the cohort of CLA pupils in RCT had a statement of special education needs and 57% had identified Special Educational Needs SEN at school action, school action plus and with statements. This is significantly higher than the population of non CLA pupils where around 3% are expected to have a statement and around 20% would have additional needs at school action, school action plus or have a statement of SEN. Approximately 13% of the CLA population attend special school, specialist classes and/or are taught within EOTAS provision.
- 5.5 Due to the removal of LAC/CLA from the PLASC data capture, the above data is no longer available. However, there is consistent and indisputable evidence from PLASC data returns over many years that the number of CLA learners who experience complex additional learning needs and significant social, emotional, behavioural difficulties and mental health issues is disproportionately high in comparison to their peers.

CLA Education Team

- 5.6 Historically Education and Children's Services have jointly funded the CLA Education Team to support educational opportunities for RCT CLA learners placed at educational settings both in and out of county. The team also provides support for CLA learners residing in RCT who belong to other local authorities.
- 5.7 The CLA Education Team is managed by the Deputy Head of Educational Psychology and consists of 1.6 full time equivalent (1.6 fte) specialist CLA Educational Psychologists, a 0.6 fte CLA advisory teacher, a CLA support officer and a CLA Education Co-ordinator.
- 5.8 The team provides support to CLA learners in a number of ways including consultation, advice and guidance to educational settings, the delivery of direct intervention including therapeutic approaches, assessment and observation of individual learners, and support to ensure that CLA learners are able to access appropriate educational placements. The team promotes multi-agency collaboration, working with professionals in health and social services, the third sector and foster carers.
- 5.9 Poor educational outcomes for CLA learners in comparison to their non-care experienced peers are well documented in research. There are many risk factors that can adversely impact upon the educational progress of CLA learners that are often a significant and long-term barrier to achievement. Whilst acknowledging the high-quality support provided by the CLA Education Team, the outcomes for CLA learners in RCT have consistently reflected nation-wide data, indicating less positive outcomes for CLA learners than for the general population of learners.
- 5.10 Due to concerns regarding the educational outcomes of CLA learners in RCT, the Corporate Parenting Board requested that Education and Children's Services undertake a review of their current support systems for CLA learners within the context of up to date research on good practice for supporting the educational attainment of CLA and make recommendations for a strategy to improve the educational outcomes of our CLA learners.
- 5.11 In January 2021, Education Services presented a report to the Corporate Parenting Board outlining a rationale for a proposed cross-directorate improvement strategy and to raise awareness of the Board of the intention to make a formal joint proposal for change.

6. STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 6.1 With a clear ambition to improve the educational achievement of our CLA pupils, Education and Children's Services recognise that there is a need for change. However, any strategy for improvement must be based on effective research-based practice where there is clear evidence of impact.
- 6.2 In May 2020 Sir Alistair Macdonald published a research paper commissioned by Welsh Government - *An integrated approach to improving educational outcomes for looked after children in Wales*. (See Appendix 1). The paper explores good practice within LAs to support learners who are looked after to

enjoy the same life chances as their peers, with a focus upon raising their educational attainment. The report highlights the importance of adopting child centred approaches through collaborative approaches with all stakeholders and, in particular, Sir Macdonald presents a strong evidence base for how the Virtual School Model in England and Scotland could be used as a basis for local authorities in Wales to promote the educational achievement of CLA.

- 6.3 A Virtual School (VS) does not have a physical environment for pupils to attend. It is described by Macdonald as an 'organisational tool' which has been created for the effective co-ordination of support for CLA at both a strategic and operational level, including CLA learners who access out of county placements. In England, under the Children's and Families Act 2014, local authorities have a statutory duty to appoint a Virtual School Head (VSH) whose key role is to promote the educational achievement of CLA which differs from the model in Wales where the key person to undertake this role is the Looked After Children Education (LACE) Co-ordinator.
- 6.4 The LACE Co-ordinator role is a statutory role within each local authority in Wales. However, there is significant variation across Wales regarding the qualifications and professional background of LACE Co-ordinators and in relation to the service area in which they are 'based' – e.g. Children's Services or Education. There is no national job description although they do work to the same guidelines relating to the minimum expectations for the role and the tasks that they are expected to undertake.
- 6.5 Effective leadership and management of the Virtual School by a Virtual School Head is noted by Macdonald to be a major strength of the Virtual School Model. Despite the similarities between the roles and responsibilities of the Virtual School Head and the LACE Co-ordinator, Macdonald notes that the key difference is the decision to have a 'Head' post in England, who is placed within the Education Department. Further, Macdonald notes that the Virtual School Head overwhelmingly has a background in education.
- 6.6 The status of the Virtual School Head and their strong background in education enables them to work at a strategic level to influence practice, make evidence-based decisions regarding the effective use of resources. Their knowledge and experience enhances the level of scrutiny and accountability within the local authority for evaluating systems and processes that are key contributors to educational achievement. Their Headteacher status enables them to intervene and provide professional challenge on an equal level when Headteachers make decisions that are not felt to be in the best interests of individual CLA learners. They are also well placed to provide effective leadership to a diverse virtual school team of professionals.
- 6.7 As with mainstream schools which have Governing Bodies, many virtual schools have a Management Committee to provide an additional layer of scrutiny, accountability and support for the Virtual School and Head.
- 6.8 As a result of his review, Macdonald made a clear recommendation for Welsh Government to consider the development of a Welsh virtual school model.

'Welsh Government should consider requiring all Local Authorities in Wales to appoint a Virtual School Head (VSH) and establish Virtual Schools, for the purpose of discharging the LAs' duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children' (Macdonald, May 2020).

- 6.9 In the context of RCT, the introduction of a Virtual School Head as recommended in the above report would strengthen the strategic approach to supporting CLA learners at senior management level in education. The Virtual School Head would work collaboratively with other Headteachers within the structure of a virtual school system. This would ensure a clear overview of the needs of all CLA pupils, a consistent approach to promoting educational opportunities for all CLA pupils across the local authority and equity of access to all areas of learning experience within the new curriculum, with particular focus upon supporting the emotional and mental health wellbeing development of CLA learners.
- 6.10 Responding to the CLA population of learners as a discrete school would enable identified data sets from across RCT schools to be pulled into one place as the 'virtual school data set'. The Virtual School Head would have continuous access to a range of 'live', up-to-date data regarding CLA pupils, including, attendance, exclusions, progress trackers and wellbeing measures, that would enable them to respond without delay to address individual needs thus facilitating early intervention and preventative approaches.
- 6.11 Robust data analysis would enable the Virtual School Head to undertake effective systemic evaluation of outcomes in order to identify strategic priorities for development on a local authority wide basis, in addition to robust support and challenge where concerns relating to individual schools are identified.
- 6.12 The Virtual School Head would have a clear understanding of effective pedagogical approaches in relation to vulnerable learners, and curriculum development. This would enable them to support the strategic development of the new Curriculum for Wales 2022 to ensure that CLA learners can access to a broad and balanced curriculum that effectively meets their individual needs.
- 6.13 As noted previously, CLA learners are a particularly vulnerable cohort of learners with a much higher incidence of severe and persistent SEN/ALN than non-CLA learners. The implementation of new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018 (ALNET) and the ALN Code (2020) in September 2021 will bring enhanced statutory ALN duties for local authorities in relation to CLA learners, such as the requirement for all CLA learners of statutory school age to have local authority maintained Individual Development Plans (IDP). The Virtual School Model would enhance the local authority's capacity to undertake its new statutory duties and establish effective quality assurance processes alongside Access and Inclusion services to ensure that CLA learners access effective and high quality additional learning provision (ALP) that is tailored to meet their significant and complex ALN.

- 6.14 The Virtual School Head would play a strategic role alongside Central South Consortium School Improvement Partners in identifying areas of good practice in schools and facilitating effective school to school support in line with Welsh Government's approach to developing a sustainable self-improving education system.
- 6.15 The Virtual School Head would work in partnership with CSC in relation to regional funding for CLA and would have responsibility for coordinating and quality assuring the effective use of the PDGLAC within RCT.
- 6.16 The issue of admissions was cited by Macdonald as one of the most difficult issues facing local authorities in Wales. Research of the English Virtual School Model provides evidence that the senior status of the Virtual School Head has facilitated the admission of CLA learners into the most suitable educational placements. The appointment of a Virtual School Head in RCT would strengthen the Local Authority's approach to ensuring the most appropriate placements are accessed by CLA learners in a timely manner.
- 6.17 The Virtual School Head would have a vital safeguarding role in relation to ensuring that CLA learners are healthy and safe. They would have a key role in supporting schools to address the wellbeing needs of CLA learners on both a strategic and an individual pupil level. This would include support and challenge to schools in relation to the attendance and exclusions of CLA learners, the coordination of specific and targeted interventions, including multi-agency involvement from external specialists, and, crucially, would support the strategic implementation of the recently launched Welsh Government *'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'* with RCT.
- 6.18 Macdonald also highlights the importance of the Virtual School Head as the lead officer within the LA for ensuring that robust processes are in place to prepare CLA learners for their transition to adult life. The appointment of a Virtual School Head in RCT would provide enhanced capacity to implement robust multi-agency approaches to support CLA learners through all key transitions.
- 6.19 The Welsh Government strategy *'Education in Wales: Our National Mission'*, recognises the need to take a holistic approach to addressing the needs of learners. It acknowledges that a child's educational progress will be affected by a range of wider issues, such as well-being, health and their care arrangements. It is also a key theme in the Welsh Government strategy *Raising ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after' (2016)*. Evidence presented by Macdonald indicates that the introduction of the Virtual School Model in England has significantly enhanced collaboration between Education Departments and Social Services. It is anticipated that the adoption of a Virtual School Model in RCT would enhance the local authority's capacity to take a more integrated approach to supporting CLA learners, with an emphasis upon purposeful cross-directorate collaborative working.
- 6.20 In his report, Macdonald makes a total of 5 recommendations:

1. The development of a Welsh Virtual School model.
2. The level of resourcing required to enable an integrated approach that improves outcomes.
3. The importance of high-quality data.
4. The implications for training.
5. The need to broaden measures of what constitutes educational outcomes for LAC.

6.21 It is important to highlight that Macdonald's recommendations in relation to resourcing an integrated approach to supporting CLA learners and the importance of high quality data are made within the context of a Virtual School Model, again providing a clear steer for the adoption of such a model. All recommendations will form part of the strategic development of the pilot virtual school model at a local level.

7. PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

7.1 Based on the evidence above, the proposals for change are as follows:

- To undertake a pilot for one academic year or three terms of a Virtual School Model.

7.2 It is proposed to:

- Appoint a Virtual School Head to a fixed term secondment/temporary post of three terms to become the strategic lead in coordinating support for CLA learners, including those RCT CLA learners placed outside the caring authority's boundaries, at both a strategic and operational level, and under the direction of the Head of Inclusion Services and Director of Education and Inclusion Services and in collaboration with the Director of Children Services.
- Re-align line management of the CLA Education Team to the Virtual School Head (currently line management is undertaken by the Deputy Head of Educational Psychology).
- Establish an interim management committee with multi-agency representation/membership to provide enhanced scrutiny, accountability and support for the Virtual School Head and Virtual School.

7.3 The proposed pilot structure for the Virtual School can be found in Appendix 2.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment and a Welsh Language Impact Assessment however will be prepared if approval is granted to progress with the above proposal.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 If approval is granted to progress with the above proposal to implement a pilot of the Virtual School Model, consultation will be undertaken with relevant stakeholders in relation to the immediate priorities for the Virtual School.

Ongoing consultation will be undertaken with stakeholders as part of the evaluation of the pilot and to inform the Council's future planning in relation to support for CLA learners.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 If the above proposal is to proceed, funding will be required to appoint a temporary Virtual School Head on a leadership salary of L12-18 (£55,338-£64,143 per annum, excluding oncosts). It proposed that this is jointly funded from existing resources within Children Services and Education and Inclusion Service budgets.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires Local Authorities to ensure that SEN/ALN provision is kept under review. Sections 1:20 and 1:21 of The SEN Code of Practice also requires local authorities to evaluate the effectiveness of school funding arrangements in supporting and raising the achievements of children and young people with SEN.
- 11.2 The ALNET Act (2018) and the ALN Code (2020) provide a legal framework to ensure that the additional learning needs of all learners are met. Chapter 14 of the Code specifies the enhanced statutory duties of local authorities in relation to supporting children who are looked after who have additional learning needs.
- 11.3 The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 provides a legal framework to deliver a transformational curriculum, Curriculum for Wales 2022, that focuses upon developing strong and inclusive schools for all pupils.

12. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT 2015

- 12.1 The proposals will ensure that two of RCTCBC's three key priorities will be met. These include:
- Economy: Building a strong economy.
 - People: Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.
- 12.2 The proposals will ensure that some of RCTCBC's most vulnerable learners will have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes. The proposals will ensure more efficient and effective use of resources which promotes the development of social inclusion and positive outcomes for learners.
- 12.3 Organising services so that they are focussed on early intervention and prevention is a key statutory requirement of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015¹ and a key element of RCTCBC's Corporate Plan.

13. CONCLUSION

¹ [Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015](#)

- 13.1 In light of both the national focus upon improving educational outcomes for CLA learners and RCT's commitment to removing the barriers to achievement for its CLA learners, Education and Children's Services recognise that we need to adopt a transformational approach to supporting our CLA learners.
- 13.2 A learner's educational needs cannot be addressed in isolation from other significant factors in their life which include their mental wellbeing, physical health and the stability of their care arrangements.
- 13.3 The recently published report (May 2020) commissioned by the Welsh Government '*An integrated approach to improving educational outcomes for looked after children in Wales*', written by Sir Alasdair Macdonald, provides a clear rationale for adopting a Virtual School Model as an effective integrated approach to promoting the educational achievements of CLA learners.
- 13.4 In response to the above report, Welsh Government have commissioned an independent research organisation, IFF Research, to undertake further research and engagement with partners to understand how the recommendations could be implemented and progress made quickly. RCT has taken part in the second stage of this research and we are currently awaiting Welsh Government's response to the research findings.
- 13.5 Securing improved educational outcomes for CLA learners requires strong collaborative approaches between multiple agencies and services. We must consider how to prioritise resources to ensure that collaborative practice is embedded within the systems we work to ensure that all those who support CLA learners are effective in delivering better outcomes for care experienced learners. The Virtual School Model would enhance the local authority's capacity to take an integrated approach to supporting CLA learners, with an emphasis upon purposeful cross-directorate collaborative working.
- 13.6 It is recommended therefore, that approval is given to progress with the above proposal so that Education and Children's Services can begin to transform the Council's model of support for CLA learners and enable them to achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH JULY 2021

**A PROPOSAL TO PILOT A VIRTUAL SCHOOL MODEL TO IMPROVE THE
EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION
SERVICES (COUNCILLOR MRS J ROSSER)**

Item:

Background Papers - none

Officer to contact:

Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services

An integrated approach to improving educational outcomes for looked after children in Wales

Sir Alasdair Macdonald

An integrated approach to improving educational outcomes for looked after children in Wales

Background and Context

In December 2019 I was asked by the Welsh Government to carry out a scoping exercise focused on developing an integrated approach to improving educational outcomes for Looked after Children (LAC). In particular I was asked to look at integrated local authority approaches in Wales and Virtual School Headteachers (VSH), which are statutory in England and currently being developed in some parts of Scotland. The context of this review is as part of the Welsh Government's continuing commitment to the vision that every child in Wales – including those who are looked after – has the right to expect an excellent education regardless of their circumstances. For all pupils, but in particular for LAC there is more to success at age 16 than GCSE performance, but this is still currently a key measure and a gap of 43% at Level 2 between the attainment of LAC and the rest of their cohort is unacceptable. There is no doubt that improvement is needed not only on this, but on virtually every other measure.

The Programme for Government, *Taking Wales Forward*, commits to “*examine ways of ensuring looked after children enjoy the same life chances as other children and if necessary reform the way they are looked after*”. This is reinforced by the national strategy *Prosperity for All*, with social care as one of the five priority areas, and actions to:

- *raise the educational attainment and improve the life chances of children in care, adopting a child centred approach, through the collaboration of education, social services and others.*
- *strengthen edge of care services to provide families with timely support to reduce the numbers needing care provision and provide assistance in the key transitional phase post 16 to access further education, jobs and housing for all those leaving care*

Education in Wales: Our national mission commits to delivering a new, transformational curriculum supported by strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being. This plan pledges to strengthen collaborative working to deliver better outcomes for LAC.

The plan also states that it is essential to look holistically at the support provided for LAC. Their educational needs cannot be considered in isolation and have to be addressed along with wider issues such as their well-being, health and placement stability. This is a key theme in *Raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after* which reaffirms the intrinsic relationship between the social context of the child and their educational attainment. ‘All parts of the system must act in a coordinated and coherent fashion to ensure significant changes in the life of the child are minimised and managed sensitively, always with the child at the centre of decision-making’. This is further supported by Article 39 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child which states that children who have

experienced trauma should receive additional support to promote physical and psychological recovery and social integration.

Over the last 9 Years Welsh Government has provided significant funding through PDG LAC to support this objective. This funding was initially distributed directly to schools but latterly to Regional Education Consortia in order to ensure a more strategic use.

Current Practice in Wales

“You are told that if you don’t get your GCSE results you are not going to have a future, but that is ridiculous”

“It often feels like you are a ghost at the meetings, that you are being raised by a committee. All the professionals talk about you as if you are not there.”

Quotes from Care Experienced young people.

In discharging their duties under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, responsible authorities were required to designate a specialist practitioner, the Looked After Children Education Co-ordinator (LACE), to co-ordinate each child’s education plan and address the education needs of LAC and care leavers in the local authority area. All duties for LAC in Wales are now under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (SSWB) and there is an intention to re-insert a co-ordinator duty, although this might be influenced by any decisions taken as a result of this review. The *Making a Difference* guidance sets out the duties of LAs as corporate parents under the SSWB Act.

The LACEs have a clear remit to establish and enforce joint procedures and protocols, provide information as appropriate to all involved in corporate parenting and to act as an advocate for young people in public care. In addition they act for the responsible authority in ensuring that every child looked after by them has an effective and high quality Personal Education Plan (PEP).

In the current system therefore, the LACE is the key person in each LA with the responsibility for the educational outcomes of children who are looked after and for supporting them in removing the barriers that they face, in particular the lack of a holistic view of their lives and wellbeing.

There is much excellent practice across Wales and the LACEs have established a network, meeting on a regular basis to share this practice. A few examples, ranging from small initiatives in school clusters to structural change across a whole LA, are set out below. There are many more that could have been included, and many of the examples listed here are found in other LAs.

- Carmarthenshire County Council has developed an integrated education and children’s service. This is headed up by a Senior Officer for corporate parenting focussed on strategy, leading a multi-disciplinary team, including: a Children Looked After (CLA) education team comprised of a LACE plus trauma informed teaching assistants; educational psychologists linking in with

social care team; theraplay practitioner; a counsellor; and school nurses trained as CLA nurses. As a result they are now reporting significant improvements in the attainment of children who are looked after whilst at school and beyond.

- In the Chepstow cluster a LAC family officer is employed to support LAC pupils across the cluster. In a recent questionnaire 90% of LAC pupils said that they valued the support from the family liaison officer
- The LACEs in ERW, in addition to the national network, meet regularly within their region to discuss areas for development and areas for improvement.
- Neath Port Talbot has ensured that trauma and attachment is understood across their LA and a comprehensive training programme has been put in place to cover school leaders, teaching staff and support staff with an emphasis on accurate tracking data.
- The integrated practice in Rhondda Cynon Taf focuses on a trauma informed approach to all their work, including their support to foster parents. There is a strong programme for the development of the Designated Person and CLA-friendly schools.
- In Denbighshire, Education and Children Social Services are integrated with one officer heading the joint department. There is a major commitment across the whole LA, both Councillors and officers, to prioritise their Corporate Parenting role and a particular interest in broadening the outcomes that are used to measure success.
- In Anglesey there is an initiative to try and bring as many of the LAC children back into the community rather than have them placed a long way from 'home' frequently at considerable cost.
- In West Monmouthshire one cluster part funds LAC mentors/leads to be based in each school (where there are significant numbers of LAC) and in one school a Level 3 LSA has been identified who works with all (11) LAC pupils weekly on interventions such as Nurture ABC and Teen Wellbeing Toolkit.

Much of this practice is not dissimilar to what is found in the English Virtual School system. However, there is considerable variation in practice from LA to LA and significantly much of this variation is derived from the different structures within which the LACEs operate.

In some LAs, Social Services and Education are separate departments whilst in others the two services have been joined with one person heading up both such as Denbighshire and Carmarthenshire. This diversity impacts on where the LACEs are 'based' with 18% of them in Children Services Departments, 68% in Education Departments, and the remaining 14% jointly located across both departments. This is also reflected in the backgrounds of the LACEs some of whom have an Education background (68% have Qualified Teacher status) while others come from Social Services or a different background altogether. There is no national job description and although all LACE Co-ordinators work to the same guidelines, which outline a set of tasks that are the minimum expectations (see Appendix A), different practices

have evolved across Wales as the exact roles and responsibilities have been influenced locally by the differing approaches and structures in each authority.

This list of the minimum expected tasks is very broad and this breadth has contributed to the variations in practice, as have the different contexts, not just in terms of size, geography and the number of looked after children (ranging from approximately 75 in Ceredigion to more than 1000 in Cardiff), but also in the level of funding allocated. For each LA there are also children in 3 different situations; those for whom the LA is the corporate parent and who are placed in the 'home' LA; those for whom the LA is the corporate parent but who are placed in a different LA or even a different country; and those who are placed in their LA but are the corporate parental responsibility of a different LA or country.

Differences that have emerged between LAs might not be an issue in managing schools more generally or in social services where the LAs are responding to the different needs of their varying contexts, but with regard to LAC they may well impact adversely on their educational achievements. Many, if not most, looked-after children experience multiple placements and multiple changes of school, frequently across LA or even national boundaries. This often requires swift action to ensure that a young person is not out of school for any length of time. The evidence from LACEs and others indicates that navigating the different systems has not always worked well for LAC - there are examples of pupils being without a school for several months - and has created another unnecessary barrier to meeting the needs of these vulnerable young people, particularly as moving to a new placement is already a time of significant stress.

Advocating for the integration of Education and Children's Social Services might appear to be an appropriate strategy with potential benefits for LAC, in that the children might be more likely to be cared for holistically, and there is certainly excellent practice, with improving outcomes, in some of our integrated LAs. However it is not the purpose of this review to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different models of LA structure but to find strategies that will ensure that however an LA is structured the support for looked after children is integrated to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Issues raised by LACEs and others in the course of the review that could contribute to improving outcomes

Irrespective of the structure in which the LACEs are working, there is much commonality in the issues that emerged from discussions with them, and others in Education and Social Services Departments working with LAC, that need to be addressed if educational outcomes are to be improved.

Staff Training

There is a very strong view that one of the most significant steps that could be taken would be to ensure that all staff in schools undertake Trauma and Attachment Informed training. This would benefit all pupils but it is particularly important in understanding the behaviour and needs of LAC. Many parts of the country are already successfully implementing such programmes much of it funded by PDG LAC and frequently allied with the designation of CLA/LAC Friendly Schools. In addition there is a need for a minimum professional offer for the Designated Person with responsibility for LAC in each school that would not just provide the theoretical background but specifically assist them in better delivering their role.

Data

At present all LACEs have to access to two separate systems, and there is a strongly held view that having access to data, in particular 'live' or at least very recent data is crucial. There are two main aspects of this.

In the first instance up to date information about each child is essential to monitor progress and provide support quickly to where it is needed. Traditionally data has focused on attendance and exclusions but the quality of data on pupil progress has been very variable. Frequently other issues in a child's life can displace the focus on their progress in school but this should be temporary and there is a definite need to allow those with responsibility for LAC access both to a broad range of information about educational outcomes and to the training necessary to ensure that the data is used effectively to support learning.

Secondly in the current situation when LAC move placement frequently there is an issue regarding the transfer of data from one school to another. This can work well but there are many cases when it does not. The use of different IT management systems should not prevent or hinder this from happening.

On an administrative point additional problems have been created by the removal of LAC as a marker on PLASC. There were GDPR reasons for doing this but many LACEs commented on the fact that this has added of another layer of difficulty to tracking the progress of LAC.

Admissions

One of the most difficult issues confronting those working with LAC is the question of school admissions. Schools have to admit LAC who move into their area, and except where there are significant additional learning needs schools should not refuse admission on the grounds that they cannot meet a child's needs - even if this means going over their pupil admissions number. Many schools are genuinely inclusive, but, particularly in the secondary sector, the incentives are perverse, as taking in a pupil who might not achieve highly and might have other needs could have a detrimental effect on the school's performance data. The Care Experienced young people who were interviewed are well aware that they are not always welcomed in schools for this reason.

Measuring Success

As highlighted in the quote from a Care Experienced young person, the single-minded focus on GCSEs is not helpful or positive for LAC. That is not to say in any way that aspirations for LAC should be lowered. Quite the reverse. However measuring success only by whatever the current GCSE benchmark is, will almost inevitably lead to a sense of failure for many LAC, their foster parents, their school and all those working with them. A broader range of measures need to be found particularly looking at what happens to LAC beyond the age of 16.

Access to Health Services and CAMHS

This is a specific issue but in fact an illustration of a generic one – the level of funding that the state is prepared to commit to the Corporate Parenting role. At present this varies considerably across the country and is reflected particularly in the ability of the LACEs to access services such as Educational Psychology and CAMHS. In some LAs this can be done quickly but in others there is at best a time lag and at worst extreme difficulty in gaining access to these services. Recent Mental Health data in England has found that 45% of LAC have a mental illness diagnosis making early intervention support crucial if LAC are to achieve in school.

Avoiding Exclusions

There is an understanding that on occasions schools are faced with very challenging behaviour and they wish to be seen treating all pupils in the same way. However *Guidance on the Education of Children Looked After by Local Authorities states that* schools should be especially sensitive to exclusion issues where looked-after children are concerned. Schools should try every practicable means to maintain the learner in school and should seek LA and other professional advice as appropriate. At present it would appear that this guidance is not always being followed with too many LAC still excluded from school.

Current Practice in England

Whereas in Wales the key person is the LACE Co-ordinator, the Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities in England to appoint a Virtual School Head (VSH), for the purpose of discharging the local authority's duty to promote the educational achievement of its LAC. That person must be an officer employed by the local authority or, where local authorities agree to collaborate or share the role, another local authority in England.

The use of the word 'virtual' can be confusing as it conjures up the idea that the pupils will be working remotely on their computers. This is not the case. The school is virtual in that it does not exist as a physical institution. Children do not attend it - they attend mainstream schools and remain the responsibility of the school at which

they are enrolled but all aspects of their welfare and progress are monitored and supported by the VSH.

A Virtual School (VS) is therefore an organisational tool which has been created for the effective co-ordination of support for looked after children, including those placed outside the caring authority's boundaries, at both a strategic and operational level. The VSH is the lead officer responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place to enable this, by focusing relentlessly, as would any headteacher, on improving attendance and raising educational outcomes for 'their pupils' but additionally and importantly, supporting and preparing them for transition to adult life. Other children's workforce professionals, including social workers and independent reviewing officers working with LAC are bound by additional statutory frameworks.

A comprehensive handbook has been developed in England by the National Virtual School Network (NAVSH). This covers all aspects of the role from the Statutory Framework to measuring impact, from advice on emergency placements to accountability. The key elements in the role of a VSH are;

- to influence policy and develop and improve services for looked after children
- to promote individual achievement, health, and wellbeing.
- to provide advice, support and training to professionals, schools and carers
- to improve access to specialist services, including health assessments, mental health assessments and treatment.
- to provide access to professional advice and guidance on education, training and employment.
- to promote additional opportunities for out of school learning and leisure

These overarching aims of the role are expressed in more operational terms in the handbook as six spheres that should guide a VSH's activity. The VSH must:

- know who is on the roll of their virtual school;
- know where they live and where they go to school;
- know, at any time, how they are doing;
- determine what actions to take if they are not doing well enough;
- evaluate the impact of actions taken to improve attainment and progress;
- understand their accountabilities and how their virtual school will be inspected.

There is clearly great similarity between the roles and responsibilities of the Virtual Head in England and the LACE in Wales but there are differences in practice, many of which arise from the decision to make this key post a 'Head' and to place them in Education Departments. The VSHs in England overwhelmingly have a background in education but QTS is not a requirement.

The education of LAC highlights the dilemmas of interprofessional working which has not always facilitated the delivery of the best outcomes for LAC - the problem of recognising educational issues in a social work environment and conversely the lack of understanding of the specific needs of looked after children in schools. Even at an apparently mundane level, the Care Experienced young people who were

interviewed were annoyed that meetings frequently took place at times that suited the professionals but might be at the time of an important or favoured lesson.

The creation of Virtual Schools places the responsibility for educational outcomes of LAC clearly in the Education sector. Experience in England has supported this decision but has also shown that the person appointed needs to understand, or be prepared to learn more about, social work cultures and the pressures and constraints under which social workers and carers operate.

This is the statutory context and a brief outline of the aims of the legislation, but as already noted, and as with LACEs in Wales, there is great variety in the way that the role of VSH has evolved and developed across England and how Virtual Schools now operate. The reasons for these differences are similar to the experience in Wales including geographical context, numbers of LAC and crucially the priority given to this by each Council, which is reflected in the resources allocated to the VS, there being considerable variation in England as in Wales.

While there may, therefore, be inherent benefits in adopting a Virtual School model, it is clear that for significant improvement in outcomes this needs to be allied to a commitment from LAs to a higher level of resource being allocated to the VS.

However, even within the context of this difference in the level of funding, the creation of the VSH position has resulted in a greater degree of consistency and common practice and has raised the profile of improving educational and other outcomes for LAC. Given the ambition of this review to improve outcomes, the focus here will be on some of the best practice and what can be achieved by combining a VS model with appropriate funding.

Perhaps what is most obviously apparent is the impact of the VSH's status, and the power to influence that goes with this. While members of their teams focus on the operational aspects of supporting their LAC the VSH can operate strategically, a feature noted in research and recent peer reviews. This view was not confined to those professionals from an education background. Social workers in England generally welcome the senior post as a significant enhancement of the work and in helping guide them through the complex modern world of education, planning children's education alongside their care experience, and, where necessary, helping liaise with or challenge schools.

For example on the issue of admissions, the VSH is able to put pressure on mainstream Headteachers to ensure that they adhere to statutory requirements and that appropriate places are secured for LAC, if necessary taking them to court. As in Wales, securing the best school place is not always easy, but it is clear that having the authority that goes with being a Head adds considerably to their ability to achieve this, particularly when the VSH is a member of the Placement Panel. Where the VSH is unhappy with the support being provided for LAC over more specific issues, such as being placed in a school that is in an OFSTED category or changing school during Key Stage 4, they can and do challenge schools and again if necessary use their statutory power to intervene.

What is also very striking is the strength of the team and the variety of staff that are found in the strongest VS. For example in the London boroughs of Lewisham and Hackney and rural North Yorkshire with approximately 500, 750 and 420 looked after children on their rolls, the Virtual heads have 10-12 professionals in their teams - teams that are directly managed by the VSH - including Deputy and Assistant Headteachers, Social Pedagogues, Educational Psychologists, Data Managers, Family Therapists, Mentors, Advisors for Transition at 16 and 18, Occupational Therapists and importantly Administrative Staff. (Not all of these are full-time and not all of them are found in all 3 LAs.) The number of LAC in most LAs in Wales would not 'generate' the funding of staffing on this scale - although the 4 or 5 largest might - but LAs could combine resources.

Irrespective of the level of funding, in most Virtual Schools the VSH has control of both staffing and the budget thereby enabling them to direct resources to where they are most needed. As a statutory post in England the Virtual Head's salary is paid by the Council but other posts and resourcing are funded in a variety of ways – from High Needs Funding, directly from Social Services and through the Pupil Premium (PDG).

Pupil Premium (PDG) funding for looked after children goes to the Virtual School, a practice similar to the PDG LAC funding in Wales going to Regional Consortia, and mainstream schools can apply for the amount allocated to the pupils in their school. However the VSH has to approve this and ensure that it is being appropriately used. This frequently means rejecting bids that simply allocate a computer to each LAC or use the funds for something that is an LA responsibility such as transport

There is huge pressure across both England and Wales for CAMHS support and therefore those VSHs who have dedicated access to CAMHS and Educational Psychology are at a significant advantage. As an example, when a child had been recently placed out of LA, the VSH from the 'home LA' was able to provide an Educational Psychologist to carry out an urgent assessment. This was excellent for the child but of course it illustrates again the difference between LAs in the level of funding.

One of the key issues, again in both England and Wales, arises from this placement of LAC out of LA. This adds another layer to the difficulty of ensuring that each LAC's educational needs are being met but from conversations with VSHs it is clear that having a Virtual School in every LA and being able to go straight to a fellow VSH can speed up finding a suitable school place and make it much more likely that a positive outcome will be achieved.

As with LACEs an important part of the Virtual School is to ensure that the pupils are attending school. Many of the English Virtual Schools buy in the services of commercial companies to provide attendance data. Through this they are able to have live data on a daily basis so that any issues can be immediately seen and, if required, action can be taken. Situations vary hugely with context but in urban areas children who are not in school and possibly on the streets are at risk of being picked up by County Lines. As in Wales all LACs need a PEP and this is a major part of the VS role but again use of commercial firms to reduce the time spent on admin and report writing has become common.

Similarly with exclusions the Virtual School is informed and can intervene. The policy of avoiding wherever possible the exclusion of LAC from school is not universally accepted in England and this is complicated by the existence of Academies and Free Schools. However in such cases the LAC does, in the VSH, have a powerful advocate.

In addition to these operational and strategic aspects there are three other important points worth noting. As with mainstream schools which have Governing Bodies, many Virtual Schools have a Management Committee. This provides another layer of scrutiny, accountability and support for the VSH and the VS.

Secondly being a Head, the VSH is also a member of all LA headteacher groups and can attend all meetings to represent LAC, to ensure that all schools are aware of their responsibilities and to hold schools to account.

And thirdly VSHs have a National Association of Virtual Heads, already mentioned, which is not only a forum for sharing practice and initiating research but also a body that can advise and lobby government.

At present the Welsh Education System is embarking on an ambitious programme that is very different from what is happening in England and it is not therefore necessarily a strong or appropriate argument to advocate that aligning Wales with England is a good idea. However there are numerous placements of LAC not just across LA boundaries but also across national boundaries particularly in England but also on occasion with Scotland. There would certainly appear to be a case, in the interests of these children, in having systems in all three countries that are aligned.

Current Practice in Scotland

In Scotland Virtual Schools are not statutory but a pilot has been running in the City of Aberdeen and several other LAs are looking at their possible introduction. Directors of Education in Scotland must ensure that their LA promotes the educational achievement of the children they look after regardless of where they are placed. Quoting from the Aberdeen VSH toolkit which is a local not a national document, unlike the English Handbook mentioned above - 'the core purpose of the VS Headteacher is to be relentless in driving up improvements in the educational progress and attainment/achievement of all children looked after by the Authority'. They also have a role in working in partnership with other Authorities to support the progress of children in their schools but looked after by another authority.

The rationale behind the adoption of the VS model in Aberdeen as set out in their handbook is that 'because children who are being looked after are educated across a large number of schools the VSH has a uniquely powerful role in tracking their progress as if they were in a single school, and as a headteacher can collaborate and plan jointly with headteachers and others across the system who share responsibility for the children'.

The five key areas of responsibility are set out below and, of course, are very similar to those of LACEs in Wales and Virtual School Heads in England.

- To make sure that there is a system to rigorously track and monitor the attainment of children who are looked after.
- To ensure that all children who are looked after have a robust and effective plan that supports access to appropriate and timely support and is in keeping with the Children and Young People's Act.
- To champion the educational needs of looked after children across the authority and those placed out-of authority.
- To line manage a team of Education Support Officers supporting Looked After Children.
- To provide support and advice to schools and to the service and advocacy for children and young people who are looked after.

The theory appears to be backed up by excellent practice in Aberdeen, with the Virtual School Head holding a senior post in the authority, sitting at the interface between schools, education and social care departments and in a unique position to monitor the educational progress of looked after children. As in England the recognition of the importance given to the role by the LA is seen in the status given to the VSH.

As in England the VSH is able to operate at a strategic level and manages a team which includes Education Support Officers (ESO) who do much of the face-to-face work with the young people, schools, alternative provision and foster parents. The ESOs have a teaching background, and ideally have an in-depth knowledge of additional learning needs and pastoral care. Experience of working with children and young people, who have experienced trauma and have attachment issues or have required support relating to the distressed behaviours, is also seen as beneficial as they can support schools with strategies and approaches and help teachers and support staff understand why the children are presenting in such a way. They also deliver professional learning and have the credibility with teachers. An ESO post is a promoted post equivalent to a Middle Leader in a school and they are expected to have had a leadership role in their previous posts.

Again, not surprisingly, accurate and up-to-date data about the children's progress, attendance and placements, was considered necessary to enhance the impact of the VSH as were information sharing arrangements between education and social services. Considerable emphasis is placed on the statutory requirement to transfer information when a LAC changes placement.

When circumstances dictate that a young person must be accommodated at short notice in Aberdeen, the role of the Virtual School Head Teacher is to assume immediately the role of corporate parent, and as such, work with schools and services to put in place appropriate provision, even if short term. This immediate response allows all partners the opportunity to effectively plan a longer-term approach whilst being safe in the knowledge that the child's needs are being catered for within an educational setting.

Practice in Europe

There was no opportunity to engage with countries beyond the UK but the VSH in Hackney did highlight one element of practice that is widespread in Europe, but has not been widely adopted here, Social Pedagogy. This plays a high profile role in many European countries, and is concerned with the way a society thinks about their children, how they care for them, how they educate them and how they bring them up. It is a holistic approach grounded in the young people's voice and is concerned with wellbeing, happiness, empowerment and relationships. It sees education as inseparable from other aspects of a child's wellbeing.

On the continent the professionals working in children's homes in, for example, Denmark and Germany are Social Pedagogues, a graduate profession. In addition Social Pedagogy plays a major part in the training provided to many others working with LAC including foster parents. In contrast to the way much practice and thinking has developed in the UK in response to issues of abuse and child protection, Social Pedagogy has at its heart a requirement for adults and carers to form close relationships with the young people they are responsible for. The VSH in Hackney employs 4 Social Pedagogues, all of whom are EU citizens.

There has been interest in Social Pedagogy in Wales particularly in the Fostering Network, but as yet there has been limited engagement from mainstream Education and Social Services.

Recommendations

The recommendations set out below cover these five main areas.

1. The development of a Welsh Virtual School model
2. The level of resourcing required to enable an integrated approach that improves outcomes
3. The importance of high quality data
4. The implications for training
5. The need to broaden measures of what constitutes educational outcomes for LAC

As already noted there is much excellent practice in Wales, but with too many different structures, too much variation in the level of resourcing and an overall lack of consistency in the support that is provided. There is also no doubt that most of the recommendations are already being practised somewhere in Wales, although probably none of them in every LA. However one of the primary objectives of the review is to create not only better outcomes for LAC but also a more uniform system across the country so that we better integrate support for our LAC wherever they live, wherever they are educated and critically whenever they move.

1.The Development of a Welsh Virtual School Model

Recommendation

That Welsh Government should consider requiring all Local Authorities in Wales to appoint a Virtual School Head (VSH) and establish Virtual Schools, for the purpose of discharging the LAs' duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children. The VSH should work directly to a Senior Officer in the LA and be in a position to influence both education and social care strategy. The VSH should be employed by the local authority or, where local authorities agree to collaborate or share the role, another local authority in Wales. Careful consideration should be given to writing statutory guidance to benefit and learn from the best practice in England and Scotland including the creation of Management Committees, the delegation of the budget and giving the VSH the line management responsibility for all the VS staff.

The primary aim of the review was to find ways to improve the educational outcomes of looked after children through implementing an integrated approach across Wales. In so doing the responsibility for high quality Corporate Parenting should take precedence over other local issues such as the LA structure, differential funding and local politics. The current diversity in the way LAs are organised has resulted in too much variation in provision, inefficient use of resources and ultimately inadequate support for LAC. Based on the evidence from England and Scotland, creating Virtual Schools would offer a more coherent, focused, consistent and effective approach.

- The current strategy in Wales has resulted in multiple and, in some cases, complicated approaches and structures. Adopting a Virtual School model would place the primary responsibility clearly in Education Departments and lead to a uniform national model.
- The VSH would, of course, need to understand and be prepared to learn about social work practice and embrace social care outcome targets as well as education ones ensuring that information on children in care was recorded on the same 'system.'
- Crucially, making this a Head post, a more senior position than that of LACEs, would immediately give status to the role. It would give out a very strong message to schools and enable each VSH to better challenge and hold to account Headteachers and all those with responsibilities for supporting LAC, regarding issues such as admissions, exclusions, progress and other educational outcomes. In England when Virtual Schools were introduced, where Heads were appointed with lower levels of experience, they quickly recognised that they were at a disadvantage.
- In a recent report the results from an evaluation of peer reviews showed that the power and influence of the VSH depended considerably on the extent to which they were accepted as peers by other school heads. It seems that those

appointed from a strong educational background are best placed to undertake these responsibilities.

- The VSH would, having this equal status with other Headteachers, attend their meetings and conferences and be a member of the Corporate Parenting Panel. Practice could be strengthened where the VSH embraced social care outcome targets as well as education ones and when information on children in care is recorded on the same 'system.'
- The concomitant creation of Virtual School Management Committees would add another important local level of scrutiny, support and accountability. A diverse membership including social workers, foster parents and head teacher members representing primary, secondary and special schools would be a great asset.
- The VSH supported by the Management Committee would have control of the VS budget and could respond quickly and commission the resource that might best meet the identified need.
- Having line management responsibility for a VSH staff team would result in more efficient use of resources and enable the VS to respond quickly and appropriately to need.
- Collectively the VSHs could become a powerful group nationally in developing the best possible support for LAC as NAVSH has in England
- In securing a more integrated approach across Wales, having the same model in all LAs would facilitate the support to LAC particularly those who are placed in another LA or in England or Scotland.

ICF Consulting's independent evaluation of the Pupil Development Grant for looked after children (PDG-LAC) suggests that "recruiting a Virtual School Head (VSH) or having a similarly designated member of staff at LA level who is a senior, experienced educational professional and whose sole remit is to support LAC through strategic planning, clear monitoring and evaluation and networking with wider stakeholders" would support the effectiveness of managing and delivering grant funding.

In setting up Virtual Schools there is much to be learned from England and increasingly from Scotland and there is an opportunity to develop a model which builds on their experience but which is firmly based in the Welsh context.

2. The level of resourcing required to enable an integrated approach that improves outcomes

Recommendation

As part of the establishment of Virtual Schools a review should be carried out that aims to maximise the impact of current spending and identifies where new resources are required. There will always be differences in levels of funding but in creating the post of Virtual Head, clearly delineating their statutory responsibilities could result in more equitable support for LAC, irrespective of where they are placed. The PDG LAC funding should go to the VS budget.

In Wales and England the best practice shows both a strategy that looks holistically at the funding of support across departments for LAC but also an approach that is prepared to find the additional resources required to meet the LA responsibility for LAC. Pooling existing resources in the budget of the VS would be more efficient but the real gains would come from creating dedicated teams working to the VSH. This could be a team serving one or more LAs.

The decision to allocate PDG LAC funding to the Regional Education Consortia as opposed to individual schools was a more efficient and effective use of the funding. While acknowledging the risks associated with dependence on grant funding, using this to provide part of the VSH budget would currently facilitate better and more strategic support. Rather than trying to specify levels of funding, statutory guidance should establish minimum requirements of the support that has to be provided. This could include dedicated access to Educational Psychology and CAMHS.

One further area for research which is beyond the scope of the review concerns the cost of residential placements. Several LAs reported the cost of residential care – often as much as £250,000 per pupil per year - as a major issue. At least one LA, Anglesey, as already noted, is trying to bring its LAC back into the home LA. Unfortunately the nature of the way in which funding is distributed probably means that this expenditure, if saved, could not be re-directed to the VS budget.

3. The Importance of High Quality Data

Recommendation

Virtual Schools should have access to the live data of all LAC in their LA just as would any other Headteacher. Similarly, just as the data of a mainstream school pupil moving schools would be transferred to their new school, so should the VSH in the 'new' LA have that data. Consideration should be given again to 'flagging' LAC on PLASC.

All staff in any way connected with LAC emphasise the importance of access to up-to-date data for the reasons highlighted above in the feedback from LACEs. Clearly there are technical issues to be addressed, but if support and outcomes for LAC are to be improved, this has to be a priority and solutions need to be found. In so doing it could be an opportunity where learning from experience in England could enable the development of a stronger Welsh model. While understanding the GDPR requirements it would be good to consider again at the possibility of identifying LAC in PLASC.

In addition, a national model could lead the development of IT that facilitated good PEP practice, that tracked live attendance, that enabled access to progress and attainment data and that led the way in measuring emotional well-being.

4. The Implications for Training

Recommendation

All staff involved in working with LAs in schools should receive training in Trauma and Attachment informed practice. This should be a compulsory component in Initial Teacher Education. This would benefit LAC but also all pupils especially other vulnerable children.

A very strong case is made by LACEs and by the many schools in Wales that have been trained, for the impact that an understanding of Trauma and Attachment can make. Whatever support can be provided through LACEs or Virtual Schools, all pupils spend the vast majority of their time in school in 'regular' classrooms with 'regular' teachers. Anything that can be done to provide these teachers with greater understanding of how to support children's wellbeing will have a significant impact. This would also support the aims of the new curriculum with its focus on wellbeing in both understanding behaviour and knowing how to respond.

5. The need to broaden measures of what constitutes educational outcomes for LAC

Recommendation

Without lowering aspirations for LAC, Welsh Government and Qualification Wales should broaden the metrics used to measure outcomes for all pupils but specifically for LAC and in particular at age 16 and 18.

Evaluating the success of different approaches is very difficult as the measures used to make judgments about the attainment of pupils are in many cases inappropriate for LAC. The feedback from Care Experienced young people is that, while they recognise that qualifications are important and they would not want anyone to be denied the opportunity to pursue their studies in higher education, they find the obsession of schools with GCSE at best annoying and at worst damaging. They understand that schools want them to achieve. They can also articulate clearly that this is not entirely altruistic in that they know that schools are judged on their overall performance and pupils with low results can have a negative effect on the school. However they also articulate very clearly that throughout their education and particularly at age 16 there are important and frequently very stressful things going on in their lives.

The Welsh Government is currently reviewing its qualifications and assessment regime and also how they judge schools. If ways of measuring successful outcomes for LAC could be developed there could be benefits for all young people. To continue focusing on GCSEs and on an attainment gap which may narrow but will never close is not helpful.

However as any change may take some time to be developed and implemented use of the current system to reach conclusions about LAC as a 'category' should be done very carefully. Aggregating LAC into local or national percentages is not meaningful.

Approximately 60% of LAC have Additional Learning Needs, many of them quite complex; in most schools and LAs numbers of LAC are small and percentages are statistically unreliable; and many LAC have to cope with changing schools during Key Stage 4. This does not mean that we lower aspirations, rather it is a recognition that it is individual progress and a range of outcomes that matter. The attainment data for those LAC in England who do not have ALN and who have not moved during KS4 is not greatly different from national averages - although this does raise an issue, criticising the robustness of data on some occasions but then on using it when it suits.

It is not the place of this review to go into detail regarding alternatives but suggestions that have been made by those working with LAC include; a greater focus on progress made in subjects as opposed to final results; progression routes at age 16 and 18 including numbers of NEETS; measurement of wellbeing and particularly resilience; and significantly follow-up at age 21 and 25.

Additional Recommendations

In carrying out the research a range of other issues were raised and although some of these are beyond the specific brief of the review they are included as they have the potential, if adopted or at least researched, to make contributions to the outcomes achieved by LAC.

Welsh Language

In making placements consideration must be given to LAC whose first language is Welsh. There are instances of very young children whose first language is Welsh and whose knowledge of English is very limited, being placed in families, schools and locations where only English is spoken.

Supervision

Those working in Social Services have an entitlement to Supervision, focused on their wellbeing, but currently this is not the case for LACEs. If a decision is taken to create Virtual Schools any member of the VS team who is working face to face with young people should have the same entitlement to Supervision.

Adopted Learners

In making any changes to regulations or statutory guidance, formerly looked after children who are now adopted should be given the same level of entitlement and access by Welsh Government to any specific educational support that is allocated to looked after or other vulnerable children. Interestingly the young people who were interviewed for the purpose of the review disliked the term LAC or CLA (Children Looked After) and preferred the term Care Experienced. They felt that any young person who has experienced care for however long should be entitled to support. This would therefore include adopted children who, by virtue of being adopted, have spent time in care and many of whom face similar issues and for whom attachment

and trauma are equally important. This echoes the views of adopted children and young people who often feel their needs are not recognised and supported within educational provision.

Early Intervention

As in all aspects of education the view expressed by the LACEs and others is that every effort should be made to intervene as early as possible whether this is for a CAMHS referral, or any other support, and systems need to be streamlined to enable speedy and effective responses.

Social Pedagogy

Research is needed into the possible use of Social Pedagogy, initially through training programmes for relevant staff, although at a later date by investigating the development of Social Pedagogues as a profession. As described in the section on Current Practice in England there is increasing interest in its suitability as an approach to working with LAC. Its holistic view of children, its belief that education is inseparable from other aspects of a child's life, its focus on wellbeing, its successful practice across much of Europe, and above all its resonance with the new Welsh Curriculum.

Possible Changes of Vocabulary Used

There are two possible changes in the language being used. Firstly the young people themselves dislike the term LAC. Their preference would be for the much more inclusive Care Experienced. And secondly given the misconceptions that arise from the use of 'virtual' it might be better to go for a rather lengthy alternative a combined title of 'Head of the Virtual School and Head of Education for Looked After Children' (or Head of Education for Care Experienced Young People) and use whichever is most suited to the circumstance or the audience in question.

Sir Alasdair Macdonald

May 2020

Appendix A

The guidelines for Looked After Children Education Co-ordinator.

As the designated local authority officer, the LACE Coordinator, as a minimum, is expected

to perform the following roles:

- work towards the Welsh Government's objectives on the education of looked after children
- promote the education of **all** looked after children for whom the local authority is the corporate parent, whether placed in or out of the authority
- liaise with their counterparts across counties to effectively meet the needs of the looked after child when placement changes occur across counties
- monitor attendance, exclusion, progress, well-being and achievement data; collate and analyse performance information on an individual and collective basis. Use the calculation of 'value-added' data and 3 year rolling averages
- establish and maintain a list – through the admissions process - of looked after children who are placed in the authority by other local authorities
- liaise with the relevant lead person of the corporate parent local authority i.e. social worker, virtual headteacher (from English local authorities) or LACE Coordinators on educational provision and transitional arrangement as appropriate
- in conjunction with social workers, ensure that schools know which children are in care
- develop and promote a means of engaging looked after children and obtaining their views on educational provision. The individual needs, requirements and opinions of looked after children should be considered when places for them are made available on interventions and programmes
- act as a conduit between social services, schools and other education professionals on Special Educational Needs (SEN), admission arrangements, policy etc.
- liaise with Careers Wales, Youth Services, the Leaving Care Team and other relevant managers to ensure appropriate and timely support and access to universal entitlements
- provide support and challenge to local authorities relating to school admissions and exclusions
- working with schools, help minimise the impact of disruptive home circumstances on the looked after child's learning by arranging 'catch up' sessions, one-to-one support or other targeted support
- disseminate good practice including training for elected members, foster carers, social workers, school governors and the designated person for looked after children in schools
- ensure high quality PEPs/Individual Development Plans (IDPs)¹⁰ are in place for each child and provide guidance on their implementation
- submit robust budget proposals that enable the purchase and allocation of educational resources for looked after children as appropriate – in the case of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) for looked after children close working with consortia and individual schools is essential

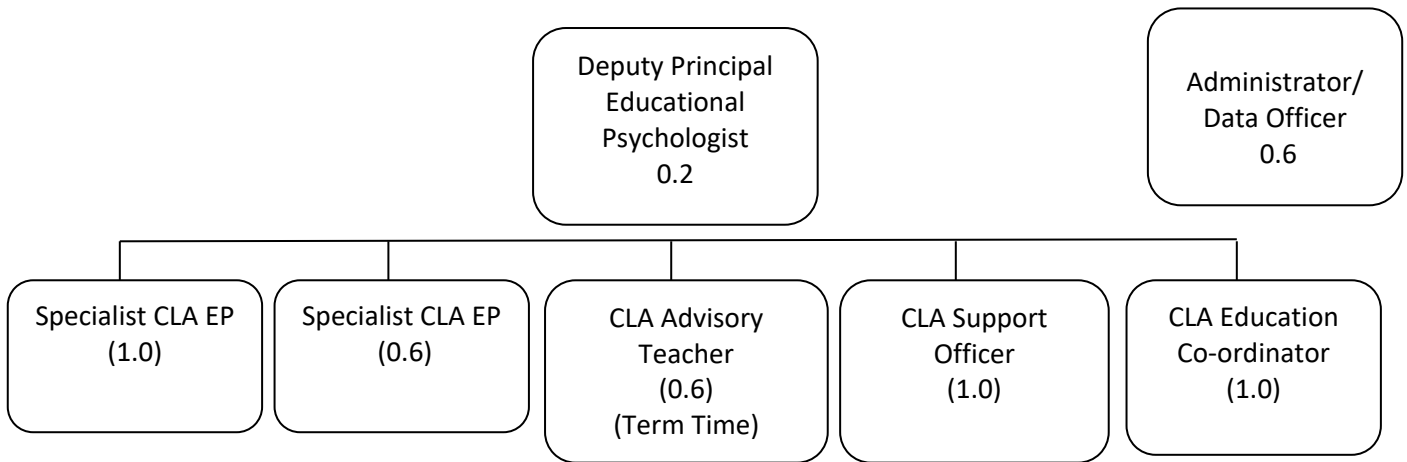
- establish and maintain a list of designated persons for looked after children in each school in their authority and for schools attended by children placed out-of-authority
- attend looked after children reviews as appropriate
- contribute to strategies and operational plans to promote the engagement, attendance and achievement of looked after children and of vulnerable groups
- help deliver the local authority strategy and policy for looked after children in the consortia region
- report to corporate parenting panel / elected members / senior management team on the educational outcomes of looked after children against the local authority strategy
- work closely with the Engagement and Progression Coordinator (EPC) to ensure that looked after children who are at risk of disengagement are supported and have a planned transition to an appropriate post-16 setting.

This page is intentionally left blank

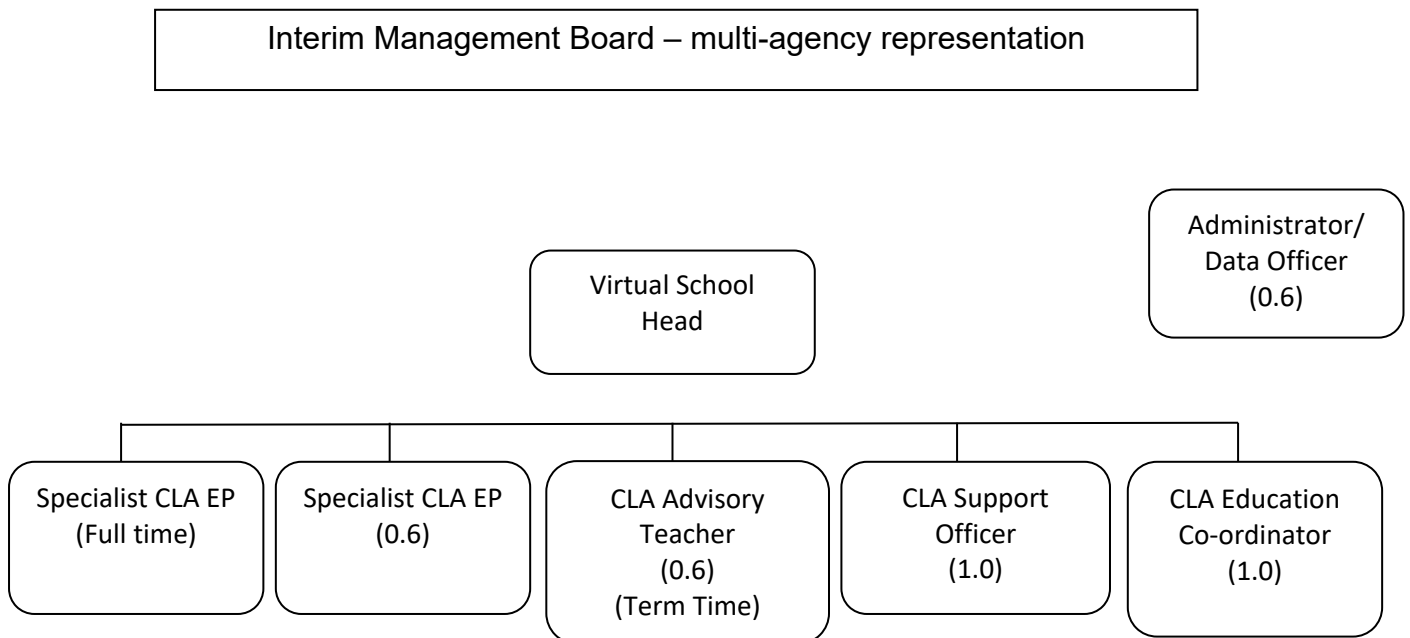
APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL PILOT

Current Structure of the CLA Education Team



Proposed Pilot Structure of the Virtual School Model



This page is intentionally left blank



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th JULY 2021

STANDARD ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

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

AUTHOR(s): Martyn Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer (Tel: 07508472085)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information to Members on the Council's statutory duties to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).
- 1.2 To update Members on the constitution of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE (Appendix A).
- 1.3 To inform Members that the Annual Report of the RCT SACRE for the academic year 2019-2020 is available (Appendix B).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the content of the Annual Report 2019-2020.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that Members are reassured that our statutory obligations are met.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Every local authority (LA) has a statutory duty to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), to advise on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education (RE) and collective worship (Education Reform Act 1988).
- 4.2 Representation on SACRE must include religious and non-religious belief groups within the locality, professional associations representing teachers, and the LA.

It is the duty of the LA to ensure that members of the groups are appointed and that they are representative. The LA also has to provide their own representatives, usually elected members and in some instances school governors. LA officers will also be represented on SACRE. Membership should reflect local circumstances and be developed in collaboration with the organisations and communities represented. Any changes to the SACRE constitution needs to be brought before a full Council meeting for agreement.

4.3 The main function of SACRE is 'to advise the authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the Council or as the Council may see fit'.

4.4 The broad role of a SACRE is to support the effective provision of RE and collective worship in schools. Each LA should work with its SACRE to identify whether any changes need to be made in the agreed syllabus or in the support offered which might be taken to improve provision.

4.5 Each SACRE must publish an annual report on its work.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

6. CONSULTATION/INVOLVMENT

6.1 No consultation exercise has been required.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

There are no financial considerations

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The local authority has statutory duties under Section 11 Education Reform Act 1988.

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

9.1 Educational performance has a clear link to the Council's priority of Building a Strong Economy. Improved educational performance will have a positive impact on this priority.

9.2 SACRE brings together the views and experiences of several groups to enhance the delivery of religion, values, and ethics (RVE) in RCT schools to promote inclusion and understanding of a number of groups. Thus, leading to a more cohesive community.

- 9.3 The effective delivery of RVE helps to reduce extremist views and to promote wellbeing in an individual. In turn, this helps to reduce intervention in the future leading to a healthier and more resilient community that values equality both on a local and global scale.
- 9.4 Embedded in the delivery of RVE is the Welsh culture and language and compliments the delivery in other areas of the new curriculum.
- 9.5 The RCT SACRE works with a number of National bodies to help inform national decisions in the delivery of RVE.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Changes in the way support for schools is organised and delivered have resulted in changes in the provision of traditional subject led advisory service to a more school-to-school self-supporting system. Such changes in working practices has required SACRE to fulfil its role and functions with schools using a consultative model.
- 10.2 Due to the disruption during the academic year communication, some progress has been hampered and promised national frameworks have been delayed.

CONSTITUTION OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF SACRE

Terms of reference

1. To advise the LA on matters connected with collective worship in county schools.
2. To advise the LA on matters connected with religious education, which is given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
3. To decide when, within the five-year statutory time scale, the LA should review its agreed syllabus.
4. To consider with the LA and the Agreed Syllabus Conference any changes required to the agreed syllabus.
5. To consider with the LA the support offered to religious education in its schools, with particular regard to methods of teaching, the choice of teaching materials and the provision of training for teachers.
6. To offer advice on any other matters related to its function as it sees fit.
7. To publish an annual report on its work, which must:
 - specify any matters on which it has advised the LA;
 - broadly describe the nature of the advice;
 - set out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the LA.

The report should also follow the current guidance from Welsh Government on its structure and information that should be included in the report.

8. To participate in the LA's statutory complaints procedures in those instances where the complaints relate to religious education and/or collective worship.
9. To receive and make determinations in respect of applications from headteachers of county schools for the lifting or modifying of the requirements that collective worship in such schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Composition and Membership

10. The Council shall comprise persons appointed by the local authority to represent respectively:
 - a) Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.

- b) Such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the LA, ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area.
- c) The LA.

The Council may also include co-opted members.

In order to qualify for membership of RCT SACRE, all members must either reside within Rhondda Cynon Taf or be employed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council.

Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE has agreed the following membership:

Representatives from religious traditions and denominations.

To optimise the efficiency of the SACRE, membership is sought from a wide range of religious traditions.

14 places from a range of religions and denominations which could include but is not restricted to:

- The Church in Wales
- The Roman Catholic Church
- Free Churches
- Bahâ'í Faith
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism.

Teacher representatives

The relevant statutory provision gives discretion to the authority to determine which associations are to represent teachers and will therefore include.

10 places from a range of teacher associations.

The LA

6 members representing the local authority.

Co-opt members (with no voting rights)

Up to 4 members who have an interest in religious education and collective worship and can assist the committee in its functions.

- 11. Membership of the Council shall be for a period of four years. Any outgoing members may be re-appointed.
- 12. Membership of the Council is subject to the condition that the LA has taken all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed are representative, as the case may be, of the denominations or associations in question.
- 13. Members representing associations of teachers must include teachers of religious education.

14. Individuals may be removed from the Council if they cease to be representative of the denomination, association or of the Authority they were appointed to represent.
15. Any member of the Council may at any time resign his or her office.

Procedure

16. The Council shall meet not less than once in each school term.
17. Meetings are open to members of the public unless confidential information is to be disclosed.
18. RCT SACRE is a member of WASACRE (the Welsh Association of SACREs). It shall nominate up to four members, including the RE Consultant, to represent the SACRE at WASACRE meetings.
19. The Council shall elect from its membership a chairperson and vice chairperson at the first meeting in each academic year. The chairperson and vice chairperson in any one year shall not be drawn from the same representative group. An outgoing chairperson may be re-appointed.
20. On any question to be decided by the Council only the representative groups on the Council shall be entitled to vote, and each group shall have a single vote. Before a formal vote is taken opportunity shall be given to each representative group to determine how its vote is to be cast. Resolutions shall be passed to the education department as appropriate.
21. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.
22. The agenda for each meeting shall be determined by the chairperson and vice chairperson in consultation with the clerk to SACRE, Director of Education Representative and Professional Officer. Any voting member of SACRE shall be entitled to propose items for an agenda.
23. In the case of any member not being able to attend a Council meeting, a substitute may be nominated by the body which that person represents, provided that the substitute meets the eligibility criteria and the Education Directorate of the LA and the Clerk to SACRE is notified in advance of the meeting.
24. A meeting of the Council will be deemed to be quorate if at least one member of each of the three representative groups is present. The validity of proceedings of the Council shall not be affected by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council.
25. The representative groups on the Council, other than that representing the Local Authority, may call, at any time, for a review of the agreed syllabus current in the Authority. At such time, an Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be constituted and convened.

26. The Council shall consider its annual report at the first meeting to be held in each academic year. Upon the Council's ratification of the report, it shall proceed to publication.
27. The clerk to the SACRE shall arrange for copies of the annual report to be sent to all county schools within the Authority, to DfES, the National Library and to such other individuals and institutions as the LA sees fit.

**Rhondda Cynon Taf
Standing Advisory Council on
Religious Education**

**Annual Report
for the Academic Year
2019-2020**



CONTENTS

Section 1 - Information about SACRE

- 1.1 Duty to establish SACRE
- 1.2 Composition of SACRE
- 1.3 Membership of SACRE
- 1.4 Functions of SACRE
- 1.5 Meetings
- 1.6 Circulation of report

Section 2 - Executive summary

- 2.1 Religious education
- 2.2 Agreed syllabus
- 2.3 Training materials
- 2.4 Training for teachers
- 2.5 Collective worship
- 2.6 Other issues

Section 3 - Summary of advice to the local authority on religious education

- 3.1 The locally agreed syllabus
- 3.2 Standards in religious education
- 3.3 Methods of teaching, teaching material and teacher training

Section 4 - Summary of advice on collective worship

- 4.1 School inspection reports
- 4.2 School self-evaluation
- 4.3 Determinations

Section 5 - Summary of other issues

- 5.1 WASACRE
- 5.2 NAPfRE
- 5.3 Holocaust Education
- 5.4 New Curriculum for Wales
- 5.5 GCSE and GCE Specifications

Appendices

- Appendix 1 List of SACRE members
- Appendix 2 Record of meetings
- Appendix 3 List of organisations to which report has been circulated
- Appendix 4 Examination results – A level and GCSE 2016-18
- Appendix 5 Key stage 3 teacher assessment results 2018
- Appendix 6 Development plan

SECTION ONE

INFORMATION ABOUT SACRE

1.1 Duty to establish SACRE

All local authorities (LAs) are required to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) within their local area.

1.2 Composition of SACRE

Representation on SACRE is required as follows:

- such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- associations representing teachers; and
- the LA.

It is the duty of the LA to ensure that members of the groups are appointed and that they are representative.

1.3 Membership of SACRE

The list of members of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE is set out in Appendix 1.

1.4 Functions of SACRE

The main function of a SACRE is to:

- advise the LA on worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, including methods of teaching, advice on materials and the provision of training for teachers;
- consider whether to recommend to the LA that its current agreed syllabus should be reviewed by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference;
- consider applications from schools for determinations (to be exempt from the requirement that worship be “Christian”); and
- report to the LA and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) on its activities on an annual basis.

1.5 SACRE meetings

Three meetings of SACRE were held during the 2019– 2020 academic year:

- 19th November, 2019
- 9th March 2020
- 29th June 2020 (online)

A record of the main agenda items discussed during the meetings is to be found in Appendix 2.

1.6 Circulation of report

Copies of this report are circulated to the organisations/establishments listed in Appendix 3.

SECTION TWO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF THE ADVICE GIVEN TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY BY SACRE

2.1 Religious Education

A brief summary of the advice that SACRE has given to the Local Authority follows:

Aim: To monitor provision and standards in religious education

Action:

- 1) SACRE considers and analyses school inspection reports. If there are any issues regarding religious education, such as the non-fulfilment of statutory requirements, the Local Authority follows this up. During the academic year 2019–2020 no such follow up action was necessary.
- 2) SACRE analyses examination results over a three-year period and identifies trends in performance benchmarked against All Wales data. Schools are informed of the outcomes of this analysis and any issues raised by SACRE.
- 3) The LA and its SACRE gather and analyses data via the Consortium regarding key stage 3 teacher assessment in religious education. This information is presented to SACRE and sent to all secondary schools in the LA.

2.2 Agreed Syllabus

Aim: To fulfil the legal requirement to review the agreed syllabus for religious education on a five year basis and to monitor its implementation

Action:

- 1) In June 2013 the Agreed Syllabus Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the 2008 Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed syllabus for religious education with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review. This is still the situation.
- 2) During 2019 – 2020 SACRE members received updates on the two Welsh Government consultations relating specifically to Religious Education. Issues relating to the consultations were discussed at two of the SACREs meetings (autumn and summer) where members gave feedback on the proposals.

SACRE's consultant, Angela Hill, collated the responses and forwarded them to Welsh Government on behalf of SACRE.

- 3) SACRE will continue to monitor further developments in the curriculum review and respond accordingly on an ongoing basis as appropriate. It is proposed that RE remain a statutory curriculum requirement from Early Years Foundation Phase up until Key Stage 4. If proposals are adopted, Religious Education will be re-named Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) and the parental right of withdrawal will be removed. In the new curriculum RE (or RVE) will form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience.
- 4) SACRE is awaiting publication of the revised framework for RE/RVE, as well as determination regarding the status of locally agreed syllabi for Religious Education in the New Curriculum. The Welsh Government will continue to clarify the relationship between the Humanities AoLE and the locally agreed syllabus and will be working closely with representatives from WASACRE and NAPfRE.

2.3 Teaching Materials

Aim: To ensure that schools are informed of suitable teaching resources

Action:

The following resources and information have previously been provided to schools:

- 1) All schools were informed of the 2020 Holocaust Memorial Day theme and that Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk
- 2) Schools were advised that the formerly published RE News was now available to view on line at the following address: www.religious-education-wales.org
- 3) Information on visits and visitors in South Wales was distributed to schools.
- 4) The CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN was shared with schools.
- 5) The Newsletter of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales.
- 6) WASACRE advice and resources on home learning and socially distanced RE was distributed to schools.

2.4 Training for Teachers

Aim: To ensure that teachers are able to access appropriate continuing professional development.

Action:

- 1) Central South Consortium facilitates a teacher-led Lead Practitioners' Hwb, with Heads of RE/teachers of RE meeting once a term, focussing primarily on improving outcomes for external Religious Studies examinations (GCSE and GCE AS and A Level).
- 2) No RE courses were offered by the local authority via Central South Consortium this year, aside from the Lead Practitioners' Hwb, meaning that no subject-specific courses were provided for primary teachers or leaders of RE.

2.5 Collective Worship

Aim: To ensure that schools fulfil statutory requirements for collective worship and provide a worthwhile experience for pupils.

Action:

- 1) SACRE monitors the sections of inspection reports that are concerned with collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If there are any issues such as the non-fulfilment of statutory requirements the LA follows this up. During the academic year 2019–2020 inspection reports from June 2019 to March 2020, when school inspections ceased due to the pandemic were considered. 2 pupil referral units, 6 primary schools, 1 all-age school (3-16) and 1 secondary school were inspected. Non-fulfilment was not indicated in any of these reports and hence no follow up action was necessary. Comments around provision for collective worship were generally positive, indicating that schools were promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

2.6 Other Issues

Aim: To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues.

WASACRE

SACRE has maintained its membership of WASACRE and receives termly feedback from meetings of the association by its representatives. SACRE's Consultant, Angela Hill, attends termly WASACRE meetings on behalf of the SACRE and SACRE's clerk passes on invitations to members to attend meetings also.

National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE)

The RE Consultant to SACRE is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf

Curriculum Review

SACRE has received regular updates on the development of the new curriculum and the implications for religious education.

SACRE Training

The consultant to SACRE gives advice and invites discussion of issues relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship at termly meetings. At the Spring meeting at Y Pant Comprehensive School, pupils and members of the staff at the school gave presentations to the SACRE. Pupils and RE staff spoke about the RE curriculum at Y Pant. An Assistant Headteacher SB delivered a presentation giving SACRE an overview of the curriculum broken down into 6 areas of learning (AoLE) which includes the 3 areas of cross-curriculum themes and her involvement in developing these.

SECTION THREE

SUMMARY OF ADVICE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3.1 The Locally Agreed Syllabus

During the spring term 2008 Standing Conference had endorsed and adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September 2008. The agreed syllabus closely relates to *The National Exemplar Framework for RE*.

In June 2013 Standing Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed syllabus, with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review, and once the position of RE/RVE is clarified by Welsh Government. SACRE has actively worked with WASACRE and NAPfRE to keep abreast of all developments relating to RE/RVE in the New Curriculum for Wales, receiving termly updates on the consultations. SACRE continues to await further details from Welsh Government on curriculum and assessment issues before beginning any RE agreed syllabus review. Two further Welsh Government consultations relating Religious Education took place during the academic year 2019-2020. Members of RCT SACRE participated in these consultations and the SACRE Consultant fed back on their behalf to Welsh Government.

3.2 Standards in Religious Education

Examination Results 2019

SACRE considered examination performance in the secondary schools for 2019. The examination results for Rhondda Cynon Taf are compared with the Local Consortium, the All-Wales's figures and with the results of the previous years. SACRE members are also informed of the percentage of the year 11 cohort being entered for the religious studies GCSE examinations. The examination results are sent to all secondary schools within the Local Authority.

Full details of 2019 are published in Appendix 4 along with results for 2017 and 2018.

Key Stage 4

GCSE Religious Studies - Full Course

There was a decrease in entries for the GCSE Religious Studies course in 2019 with 879 candidates from 14 schools. In 2018, there were 1012, which was an increase on the previous cohort. There was also a small decrease in the All-Wales figure, with 10198 entries; down from 11870 entries the previous year.

The percentage of the Rhondda Cynon Taf cohort entered for full course GCSE Religious Studies fell from 40.8% in 2018 to 31.8% in 2019. However, this figure is only a small reduction on the 2017 percentage, which stood at 33.7%.

The overall % of A*-G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2019 is 95.4%, which is slightly lower than the local authority's performance in the previous two years, but in line with the All-Wales and Consortium figures.

The overall % of A*-C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2019 is 65.1% which is lower than performance in 2018, where the figure stood at 70.4%, but only slightly below performance at this level in 2017. Performance at A*-C is slightly higher than the Consortium figure and the All Wales figure.

In 2019 the overall % of A*-A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 23.5% which is lower than the previous year but an improvement on 20.0% in 2017. 2019's performance at this level remains slightly below the Consortium and All-Wales performance.

GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

2019 has seen an increase in the number of students sitting the GCSE Religious Studies short course.

Entries having decreased notably in 2018, in 2019, numbers are only very slightly lower than in 2017, with 858 entries for short course, compared with 868 in 2017 and just 705 in 2018. It is noteworthy that entries in 2019 came from only 8 schools, which is a significant reduction in the number of schools entering candidates (16 in 2017 and 14 in 2018).

Across Wales entries for short course GCSE Religious Studies continue to drop, with 6718 entries in 2019 compared with 8307 in 2018.

The overall % of A*-G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2018 decreased to 69.6%, which is lower than both the Consortium and All-Wales figures.

The overall % of A*-C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2019 is 30.4%. This is a significant improvement in comparison with 2018, where performance at this level stood at 23.7%. It is also a small increase on the 2017 figure of 28.8%. Performance is lower for Rhondda Cynon Taf than both the Consortium and All-Wales figures (38.0% and 35.0% respectively).

The overall % of A*-A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2019 is 7.0% which represents a significant improvement in performance for the LA, compared with the two previous years. The 2019 performance is, however, below the Consortium and the All Wales figures (11.0% and 10.0% respectively).

Key Stage 5

The reformed WJEC GCE A Level specification was introduced in September 2016 with these first examination results in 2017 for AS Level.

AS Level Religious Studies

Numbers of entries for AS Level Religious Studies declines significantly from 2017 to 2018, falling from 127 to 40 students. In 2019, 37 students in Rhondda Cynon Taf were entered for the AS Level Religious Studies examination.

The overall % of A-E grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2019 is 94.65% which shows a continuing improvement from the figure in 2017. Performance is higher than the Consortium and the All-Wales figures, which stand at 88.1% and 90.0% respectively.

The overall % of A-C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 51.4% which is a significant improvement on the previous year (37.5%) and on a par with the Consortium figure. It is however, below the All Wales figure, which stands at 57.0%.

The overall % of A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf is 13.5%; a marked improvement in 2018, but below the figures for the Consortium and All-Wales.

A level Religious Studies

2019 saw a further, but small drop in entries for A Level Religious Studies at 91 students from 11 compared with 107 students from 13 schools in 2018. The number of candidates who sat the examination across Wales is lower at 935 entries compared with 1066 students in 2018.

The 2019 % pass rate for grades A*–E fell in comparison with previous two years, by around 9%. Performance is higher than the Consortium figure but lower than the All Wales figure.

The % pass rate for grades A*–C saw a continued improvement from 2017. Performance at A*-C is higher than both the Consortium figure and the All-Wales figure.

33.0% of students achieved A*-A grades in 2019. This is a significant upward trend since 2017. Performance at A*-A is below Consortium performance but above the All Wales figure.

Key Stage 3 Data

Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE also consider the levels awarded by teachers to pupils at the end of key stage 3. Comparisons are made with previous performance in religious education. The data is sent to all secondary schools within the Local Authority. End of key stage 3 levels are published in Appendix 5.

School Inspection Reports

SACRE, with the LA's agreement and co-operation, receives reports from professional officers on standards and provision and reviews summary reports of inspection findings as well as Estyn surveys as they occur.

From June 2019 until March 2020 when inspections for the academic year ceased due to the Covid-19 pandemic, 6 primary schools, 1 secondary school, 1 all-age school (3-16) and 2 pupils referral units were inspected and reported on in Rhondda Cynon Taf. These do not include denominational schools as these are not within the remit of the SACRE

The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements.

All inspection reports made some reference regarding spiritual, moral or cultural development, connected with Religious Education or Collective Worship. There was no indication of noncompliance in any of the inspection reports during this timeframe.

Among the comments, inspectors noted:

- a range of good opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and culture issues
- Visits from representatives of faith and belief communities which enriched provision of collective worship and religious education lessons
- Schools making use of local places of worship to enhance pupils' understanding of faith
- RE departments working with other subject areas to enhance pupils' engagement with a theme
- Pupils being given time for reflection and to develop positive attitudes towards difference and diversity.

SACRE sends letters to each of the schools from SACRE acknowledging the respective good practice and offering support where needed.

School Self-Evaluation

SACRE had resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. However, during 2014–2015 the decision to request self-evaluation reports was being reviewed by the School Improvement Officers to determine if this was the LA's preferred method of monitoring. It was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not continue to use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of monitoring provision and standards in religious education.

3.3 Methods of Teaching, Choice of Teaching Materials, Teacher Training

3.3.1 Teaching Materials

Materials have been circulated to schools by SACRE. Example of which are as follows:

Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 Resources

Schools were informed of the 2020 Holocaust Memorial Day theme.

Schools were informed by SACRE that further information about the theme and free educational Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk – these include lesson plans, film clips, case studies, collective worship/assembly material and worksheets suitable for primary to post 16 students.

Farmington Scholarships

Scholars are free to study any aspect of Religious Education they wish but preference will be given to applicants whose work can be seen to be of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools.

For more information schools can visit: www.farmington.ac.uk
or e-mail: farmington@hmc.ox.ac.uk

Interfaith News Bulletins were shared with schools:

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-ebulletin>

A list of **free resources** for schools was also distributed these included suggested useful websites as was information on **visits and visitors** in South Wales was distributed to schools.

The Churches Together in Wales **CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN** was shared with schools <http://www.cytun.org.uk/index.html>. CYTŪN produces bulletins throughout the year.

During the pandemic, resources and advice on socially distanced RE and home learning, as well as advice on collective worship, were collated by WASACRE and distributed to schools via SACRE.

3.3.2 INSET

Central South Consortium INSET

The Consortium facilitates a Lead Practitioners' Hwb for secondary Heads of RE/RE teachers, which meets once a term focussing primarily on enhancing outcomes in external Religious Studies examinations (GCSE and GCE AS and Level).

No RE courses were offered by the local authority via Central South Consortium this year for primary teachers or leaders of RE.

SECTION FOUR

SUMMARY OF ADVICE ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Monitoring of collective worship has continued through a review of inspection report findings.

4.1 School Inspection Reports

From June 2019 until March 2020, when school inspections ceased due to the Covid-19 pandemic, 2 pupil referral units, 6 primary schools, 1 all-age school (3-16) and 1 secondary school were inspected and reported on in Rhondda Cynon Taf. These do not include denominational schools as these are not within the remit of the SACRE

The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. Estyn noted no instances of non-compliance with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. A small number of inspection reports made no explicit judgement regarding spiritual development.

The quality of collective worship is mentioned in the majority of inspection reports and a number of good features are highlighted. Examples are shown below:

- Daily acts of collective worship provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect on values such as courage, friendship and kindness, thereby promoting their spiritual and moral development effectively.
- Schools have well-established links with local churches, whose representative contribute to collective worship
- Teachers use collective worship and assemblies effectively to enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural development. For example, a whole school assembly focuses well on being thankful for food and farmers at harvest time.
- Assemblies provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on the decisions they make and their relationships with others.
- schools provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural values. Staff encourage pupils to engage meaningfully in reflection time as part of collective worship and during lessons.

4.2 School Self-Evaluation

It was decided that SACRE would not continue to use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of monitoring provision and standards in religious education.

4.3 Determinations

As last year, no applications were received from schools for determinations to be made on the lifting of the requirements for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

SECTION FIVE

SUMMARY OF OTHER ISSUES

5.1 WASACRE

SACRE continues to support the work of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) and recognises the value of the body in promoting religious education and collective worship on a national basis. During 2019- 2020 issues considered at WASACRE meetings have been fully reported back to SACRE.

5.2 National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE)

The Consultant to RCT SACRE is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf.

5.3 Holocaust Education

Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE was informed of the 2020 Holocaust Memorial Day theme that further information about the theme and free educational Holocaust Memorial Day resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk. Schools were informed.

5.4 New Curriculum for Wales

SACRE has received and responded to termly updates, through feedback from the Consultant to SACRE, Maggie Turford, on the progress of the National Curriculum Review and its implications for RE in the curriculum. RE remains a statutory curriculum requirement from reception and will form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience. WG send a termly newsletter to SACREs outlining the developmental work of the Pioneer Schools in relation to RE in the Humanities.

5.5 GCSE and GCE Specifications

SACRE have been updated about the progress being made with regards to the development of the new GCE and GCSE specifications and the work of Lead Practitioners, via updates from the Consultant. Staff from RCT schools have been involved in this discussion.

SACRE MEMBERSHIP

LA: 6 Places

Religions and denominations: 14 Places

Teacher Associations: 10 Places

ORGANISATION	NAME
LA Officers	Gaynor Davies RCT
	Bernard Whittingham RCT
	Emma Griffiths RCT Clerk to SACRE
LA members	
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Jeffrey Elliott (VICE CHAIR)
	County Borough Councillor Ann Crimmings
	County Borough Councillor Mark Adams
Council	
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Sharon Rees
	County Borough Councillor Geraint Davies
	County Borough Councillor Geraint Hopkins
Religions and denominations	
Baptist Union of Wales	The Reverend David Brownutt (CHAIR)
Church in Wales	The Reverend Peter Lewis
Catholic Church	Wendy Lavagna
Sikh	Mr Gurwinder Singh
Bahá'í	Carol Adams
Jewish	Prof. David Cohen
Church in Wales	Ruth Moverley
Humanists UK	Mike Reynolds
Teacher associations	
NAS/UWT	Donna Graves (Y Pant)
NAS/UWT	Mr Mathew Maidment (Bryncelynnog Comp)
NEU	Lynsey Parsons (Cwmlai Primary)
NAS/UWT	Catherine Drew (Tonyrefail CS)
Co-opted members	
Co-opted	Jane Ward
Co-opted	Mrs Lynda Davies
RE Consultant	Angela Hill

RECORD OF SACRE MEETINGS

Three meetings of SACRE were held during the 2018–2019 academic year:

- 19th November 2019
- 9th March 2020
- 29th June 2020 (online)

19th November 2019

- Welcome and apologies for absence
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Action Points and Matters Arising
- Election/Re-election of Chair and Vice Chair
- To receive and approve the SACRE Annual Report 2018 – 2019
- Welsh Government Consultation on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners
- Role and purpose of SACRE, views on cross-SACRE working across Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
- WASACRE business
- Membership and vacancies
- AOB
- Future dates, venues and items

9th March 2020

- Welcome and Apologies
- Presentation by pupils and teachers of Y Pant Comprehensive School
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters Arising
- Membership and vacancies
- WASACRE business
- Update on cross-SACRE working
- Curriculum developments:
 - Discussion of Minister's press release of 21st January 2020
 - Discussion of the new draft framework for Religion, Values and Ethics in relation to the guidance on the Curriculum for Wales, published in January
- Meeting venues and dates

29th June 2020 (online, via Microsoft Teams)

- Welcome and apologies for absence
- Minutes from the last meeting
- Matters arising and actions
- Discussion of consultation and related correspondence
- Nominations for WASACRE executive committee and Vice Chair
- Proposals for recruiting a Muslim representative to SACRE (Donna Graves)
- AOB

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH THIS REPORT IS BEING SENT

- All schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf
- DfES
- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- Directors of Education, all other Welsh LAs
- Wales Association of SACREs
- University of Wales Trinity St David
- Welsh National Centre for Religious Education-Bangor
- Central South Consortium
- Church in Wales (Diocese of Llandaff)
- The Roman Catholic (Archdiocese of Cardiff)
- Other Churches
- Association of Religious Education Teachers in Wales
- National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
- Religious Education Movement Wales
- Cytun
- Swansea Metropolitan University
- Cardiff Metropolitan University

EXAMINATION RESULTS**Examination Results Analysis 2019 - GCSE Religious Studies (Full Course)**

	2017	2018	2019	Consortium 2019	All Wales 2019
A* - A	20.0%	26.8%	23.5%	26.0%	26.1 %
A* - C	66.2%	70.4%	65.1%	63.6%	63.0%
A* - G	97.9%	99.0%	95.4%	94.7%	95.0 %
Entry	999 students (38.8% of cohort) 16 schools	1012 students (40.8% of cohort) 14 schools	879 students (31.8% of cohort) 14 schools	4533 students (47.2% of cohort)	10198 students (32.5% of cohort)

Examination Results Analysis 2019 - GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

	2017	2018	2019	Consortium 2019	All Wales 2019
A* - A	2.4%	3.7%	7.0%	11.0 %	10.0%
A* - C	28.9%	23.7%	30.4%	38.0%	35.0%
A* - G	87.1%	82.0%	69.6%	73.8%	87.0 %
Entry	868 students (33.7% of cohort) 16 schools and EOTAS (education other than school)	705 students (28.4% of cohort) 14 schools plus EOTAS	858 students (31.0% of cohort) 8 schools	1768 students (18.4% of cohort)	6718 students (21.4% of cohort)

Examination Results Analysis 2019 - AS Level Religious Studies

	2017	2018	2019	Consortium 2019	All Wales 2019
A	7.1%	5.0%	13.5%	15.3%	19.0%
A - C	40.2%	37.5%	51.4%	50.8%	57.0%
A - E	76.4%	87.5%	94.6%	88.1%	90.0%
Entry	127 students	40 students (11 schools)	37 students (11 schools)	118 students	978 students

Examination Results Analysis 2019 - A level Religious Studies

	2017	2018	2019	Consortium 2019	All Wales 2019
A* - A	9.7%	22.4%	33.0%	40.3%	21.0%
A* - C	73.1%	74.8%	79.1%	71.4%	72.0%
A - E	97.9%	97.2%	89.0%	85.5%	99.0%
Entry	145 students 14 schools	107 students 13 schools	91 11 schools	392 students	935 students

KEY STAGE 3 YEAR 9 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEVELS 2019

All Pupils	NOR	% Not awarded a level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Excoitional	% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2208	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.3	1.4	7.6	35.3	33.5	19.4	1.9	0.0	100.0	90.1	54.8	21.3
Central South Consortium	7340	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2	2.1	8.6	31.2	37.2	18.4	1.9	0.0	100.0	88.7	57.5	20.4

Boys	NOR	% Not awarded a level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional	% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1116	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.4	2.0	10.6	40.5	32.3	12.3	1.2	0.0	100.0	86.2	45.7	13.4
Central South Consortium	3685	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	2.9	11.6	36.5	35.1	11.8	1.1	0.0	100.0	84.5	48.0	12.9

Girls	NOR	% Not awarded a level	% Disapplied	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5	% Level 6	% Level 7	% Level 8	% Exceptional	% Total Pupils	% L 5+	% L 6+	% L 7+
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1092	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.9	4.6	30.0	34.8	26.6	2.7	0.0	100.0	94.1	69.5	24.5
Central South Consortium	3327	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.6	5.1	30.7	38.1	21.9	2.8	0.1	100.0	93.6	62.8	24.8

Note

Teacher assessment is not moderated externally. Teachers arrive at judgements for each pupil using assessment information gathered during the course of key stage 3. Exemplification material is made available to schools in order to moderate standards internally against the level description contained in the agreed syllabus.

At all levels, the local authority perform broadly in line with the Consortium.

Girls outperform boys at all levels, but the gap is widest at L6+.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN**SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 – 2023 (ACADEMIC YEAR)****Aim 1: To monitor standards in Religious Education and Religious Studies.**

Work with school staff to support the above and to add value to work of the SACRE Questions to consider

- *How well do we know how our schools and the SACRE is doing?*
- *Do we have enough information to make judgements?*
- *What else could we do?*
- *Is there any way we can support teachers' professional development –CPD?*
- *What do we need to do to help schools understand the role of SACRE?*

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress at June 2020
1.1 Monitor standards through regular Review of inspection reports and/or Estyn thematic reviews and recommend, where necessary, action by Local Authority.	Termly/ annual	Full SACRE Adviser	Agenda time Adviser time for analysis	Advice to LA on trends across the county borough; advice, where appropriate, on particular schools; follow up through school contact and review of action plan where necessary.	Inspection analyses carried out on regular basis. The majority have judgements on RE and/or collective worship and spiritual development. Action to address non-fulfilment of statutory requirements has not been necessary.
1.2 Receive information on results of: Teacher Assessment at end of Key Stage 3; GCSE Religious Studies Full and Short Course; A/AS level Religious Studies.	Spring Term Actions	Full SACRE Adviser	Agenda time Adviser time for analysis	Advice to LA on trends; advice, where appropriate, on particular schools.	2019 outcome data for KS3, 4 and data analysed.

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress at June 2020
1.3 Identify CPD needs, monitor and offer advice on training.	Autumn Term Actions	Full SACRE	Agenda time	Training programme received along with figures on uptake; advice to LA.	Although the Consortium facilitates a Lead Practitioners' Hwb for teachers and Heads of RE in secondary schools, there remains a shortage of specialist RE CPD and the new curriculum will continue to make particular demands for this.
1.4 Involve staff in schools more closely with work of the SACRE.	ongoing Actions	Full SACRE teachers	Agenda time	Improved understanding of all SACRE members of work in schools and better understanding of the work of the SACRE	Staff from schools are active at all SACRE meetings. SACRE has resolved to meet at school venues whenever possible. Spring 2020 meeting was held at Y Pant, where pupils and members of staff delivered presentations to SACRE on RE at school and the New Curriculum for Wales.

SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020–2023 (ACADEMIC YEAR)

Aim 2: To review the agreed syllabus and support its implementation, taking into account consideration the new curriculum arrangements for RE as they are implemented.

Questions to consider

- *How will new curriculum arrangements impact actions?*
- *What support will schools need?*
- *How can SACRE members be best updated on new curriculum?*
- *How are SACRE and Agreed Syllabus likely to change?*

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
2.1 To review the agreed syllabus for Religious Education	Ongoing, Spring 2021 onwards (or as appropriate) Actions, depending on timing of advice received from Welsh Government.	Full SACRE Adviser WASACRE NAPfRE	Advisory time and members' time to review the agreed syllabus. Establish a working group (if applicable). Convene a Standing Conference to adopt the syllabus. Publication/translation costs (as appropriate)	Agreed syllabus reviewed and adopted by Agreed Syllabus Conference. Agreed Syllabus training programme for schools (if required) Agreed syllabus to be implemented the Autumn term after adoption.	To be discussed at termly SACRE meetings. As SACRE still unclear about potential changes with new curriculum arrangements this will need to be on the agenda at each meeting.

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
2.2 Materials to support implementation of the agreed syllabus for RE	Ongoing Actions	Full SACRE Consultant	Advisory time Members' time	Support materials available to schools and accessed through Consortium website.	SACRE is awaiting determinations regarding RE/RVE in the New Curriculum to implement a plan to develop support materials. It envisages the establishment of a working group to develop materials to support RE/RVE in the New Curriculum.
2.3 To keep updated on progress in terms of implementation of RE in new curriculum	In line with WG implementation process Actions	Full SACRE Consultant	Advisory time Agenda time	Schools well informed and prepared to introduce new arrangements	New curriculum to be on each agenda. Members have discussed curriculum developments in detail at all meetings during 2019-20 and have contributed to 2 WG consultations on matters relating to RE/RVE in new curriculum.

SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020–2023 (ACADEMIC YEAR)

Aim 3: To monitor provision and provide support for collective worship.

Questions to consider

- *Are there other ways SACRE members can monitor the above?*
- *Links with Estyn?*

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
3.1 Monitor provision for collective worship through regular review of inspection reports/ school self-evaluation reports; recommend, where necessary, action by LA.	Termly Actions	Full SACRE and Adviser	Agenda time Adviser time for analysis	Advice to LA on trends across the county borough; advice, where appropriate, on particular schools; follow up through school visits and review of action plan where necessary.	Inspection reports scrutinised for indications of nonfulfilment as well as for comments relating to collective worship. For 2019-20, most reports mentioned collective worship in a positive light and made no reference to nonfulfilment, so no action was necessary.

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
3.2 To support the implementation of statutory collective worship	Ongoing Actions	Advisory service	Advisory time	Provision of INSET (if applicable) Schools informed of resources and websites for collective worship. Schools informed of guidance materials available for collective worship	WASACRE advice on collective worship with suggestions for resources shared with schools.

SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020-2023 (ACADEMIC YEAR)

Aim 4: To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues related to RE and collective worship in schools. In this to enable SACRE members to evaluate their own development and progress as a committee

Questions to consider

- *How can SACRE members best develop their role as a Council?*
- *In what other ways can we ensure that schools and local community understand the role and work of SACRE?*
- *What do we need to do to improve as a SACRE?*

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
4.1 To update members on the role of SACRE and its implications; recent developments in RE and collective worship; guidance materials from relevant bodies; input from practising teachers and outside providers	Termly/ Annually as required	SACRE members, Adviser, practising teachers, outside providers	Member time; Adviser / Officer time	SACRE members fully aware of their responsibilities. SACRE and schools updated and informed of recent developments and initiatives, both local and national.	Input from teacher representatives at SACRE meetings, as well as from teachers/leaders at Y Pant School, have helped to progress this area.
4.2 Programme of school visits	Termly/ Annually as required Actions?	SACRE members, Adviser/ Officers	Member time; Officer time to arrange visits	More informed SACRE on provision and practice regarding RE and collective worship in schools.	The Spring 2020 meeting was held at Y Pant Comprehensive School. SACRE had resolved to hold meetings in

Areas of development	Schedule	People involved	Time and costs	Outcomes	Progress
					<p>RCT schools wherever possible. Whilst this has been halted by the pandemic, SACRE intends to resume as soon as conditions permit.</p> <p>SACRE has also considered ideas for cross-SACRE working with other CSCJES LAs, although plans have been put on hold since the pandemic to focus on core SACRE business and imminent curriculum development issues.</p>
4.3 To ensure that members are aware of strengths and areas for development of the SACRE	Agenda items Actions				Ongoing as development plan updated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET
20th JULY 2021

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

Item:

Background papers – None

Officer to contact: Martyn Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer (Tel: 07508472085)

This page is intentionally left blank

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th July 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2021 (Year End/Quarter 4)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)

AUTHOR: Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services (01443) 680609

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, for the financial year ended 31st March 2021.

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 March 2021 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) including the additional one-off Welsh Government Covid-19 funding accounted for during the year to support service delivery.

Capital

- 2.3 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 31st March 2021 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31st March 2021 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

- 2.5 Note the year-end position regarding progress made against 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 March 2021 to enable elected Members and other stakeholders to scrutinise the performance of the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides Members with a year-end statement of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 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 Performance Reports presented during 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 in the majority of cases by Welsh Government. The fourth 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 4 REPORT

- 5.1 The Quarter 4 report is attached and comprises:
- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 4 (i.e. 31st March 2021).

- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – e setting out the detailed year-end financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted.
- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – e setting out year-end capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3f covering Prudential Indicators.
- **Organisational Health** – includes year-end 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 year-end position statements for the priorities of People, Places and Prosperity.
- **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 AND SOCI-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 The Council’s Performance Report sets out the year-end position on financial and operational performance for 2020/21; as a result, there are no equality and diversity or socio-economic duty implications to 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. With specific regard to progress made to implementation recommendations to enhance the Council’s response to extreme weather events, this information will be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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 4 2020/21, that is, 31st March 2021.

11.2 The year-end revenue budget position is a £0.204M overspend and represents an improved position to that reported for quarters 1 to 3 of 2020/21. The position is set in the unprecedented context of Covid-19 and takes account of additional one-off Welsh Government funding claimed during the year, and also reflects the continuation of key budget pressures particularly across Adult Services and Children's Services. It will be critically important that additional Welsh Government funding to address 'core' cost pressures remains in place for 2021/22 and beyond, for example, across social care services, together with additional Covid-19 funding to fund additional expenditure and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic.

11.3 Capital investment as at 31st March 2021 is £102M, supporting visible improvements to infrastructure and assets, taking account of Covid-19 restrictions and safety requirements.

11.4 Good progress was made overall across the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, where focus was afforded on providing essential support to residents and businesses to help counter the significant impact of Covid-19 alongside the continued delivery of strategic projects.

11.5 The second 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

20th July 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2021 (Quarter 4/Year End)

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item: 11

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 4 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 4 (year-end) 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 in-year quarterly Performance Reports during the year have 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 March 2021 (year-end), 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 March 2021		
	Full Year Budget £M	Full Year Expenditure £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	191.845	191.767	(0.078)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	159.852	160.351	0.499
Chief Executive (2c)	30.644	30.236	(0.408)
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d)	55.167	55.510	0.343
Sub Total	437.508	437.864	0.356
Authority Wide Budgets (2e)	71.239	71.087	(0.152)
Grand Total	508.747	508.951	0.204

Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the full year position at Quarter 4 (31st March 2021)

The full year revenue budget position as at 31st March 2021 is a £0.204M overspend. This position is based on additional costs and income losses incurred as a direct result of the pandemic being offset by additional funding made available by Welsh Government to all local authorities in Wales.

With regard to the Welsh Government funding made available, specific financial assistance has been 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). Welsh Government also provided additional funding toward the end of the year as part of supporting local authorities in their on-going recovery from the pandemic, for example, to support financial resilience, the delivery of on-going projects such as digitisation of services, to support council tax collection rates and additional resources for schools. These resources have been allocated for specific purposes and are included, as appropriate, within the Council's earmarked reserve balances as at 31st March 2021 (draft, subject to audit).

The Table below sets out the total full-year additional costs and income losses incurred and accounted for relating to the 2020/21 financial year.

Full Year Additional Costs And Income Losses Incurred As A Direct Result Of Covid 19 And Assumed To Be Fully Funded By Welsh Government

Service Area	Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (Quarters 1 - 4)*
	£M
Education & Inclusion Services	-14.720
Community & Children's Services	-22.890
Chief Executive	-1.922
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-6.156
Authority Wide	-5.305
TOTAL	-50.993

* Excludes additional costs incurred / projected in respect of Test, Trace and Protect, the funding for which is being made available by Welsh Government. Also excludes spend incurred and funded on Welsh Government schemes which the Council acted as an agent.

Revenue budget variances at Quarter 4 (year-end)

1. Community and Children's Services

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.519M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.529M overspend);
- Provider Services (£0.354M overspend); and
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.898M underspend).

CHILDREN SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£2.464M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.565M underspend);
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.242M underspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.974M underspend); and
- Management & Support Services (£0.057M underspend).

TRANSFORMATION

- Service Improvement (£0.076M underspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Community Services (£0.247M underspend);
- Communities & Wellbeing (£0.073M underspend); and
- Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.153M underspend).

2. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Transportation (£0.184M underspend);
- Facilities Cleaning (£0.118M underspend);
- Waste Services (£0.602M overspend);
- Fleet Management (£0.140M underspend); and
- Group Directorate (£0.068M overspend).

3. Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Human Resources (£0.134M underspend);
- Legal Services (£0.081M underspend);
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.064M underspend); and
- Corporate Estates (£0.079M underspend).

4. Authority Wide Budgets

- Capital Financing (£0.250M underspend); and.
- Miscellaneous (£0.094M overspend).

Earmark Reserve Update

- A breakdown of full year 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 during quarters 1 to 3 to ensure safe working arrangements and, in doing so, enabled the on-going delivery of capital programme projects.

Capital Programme Budget

Service Area	2020/21 - as at 31 st March 2021
	Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive (3a)	2.495
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b)	73.610
Education & Inclusion Services (3c)	20.992
Community & Children's Services (3d)	5.223
Total	102.320

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 4

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Targeted Regeneration Investment (TR) Programme (£0.254); Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways Capital Grant (£0.372M); WG Valleys Taskforce Regional (£0.280M); WG Local Transport Fund (£7.104M); WG Active Travel Fund (£2.670M); WG Active Travel Fund Core Allocation (£1.123M); WG Local Transport Network Fund (£0.277M); WG Local Road Refurbishment Grant (£1.260M); WG Safe Routes In The Community (£0.422M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant (£1.075M); WG Flood Recovery Funding (£1.321M); WG Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (£0.451M); WG Resilient Roads Fund (£4.514M); WG 21st Century Schools (£7.889M); WG Circular Economy (£0.560M); WG Capital Funding Grant Towards Schools Maintenance Budgets (£4.045M); WG Hwb in Schools Infrastructure Grant (£2.500M); WG WLGA Covid Grant (£0.414M); and Integrated Care Fund (£1.209M).

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	
	As at 31 st March 2021		As at 31 st March 2020	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	10,888	6.84	10,670	9.85
Community & Children’s Services	2,946	6.59	2,845 ¹	8.44 ¹
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	941	6.70	964	8.40
Education & Inclusion Services	1,258	6.52	1,265	8.14
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,873</u>	<u>7.47</u>	<u>4,855</u>	<u>11.64</u>
Primary	3,043	7.49	3,066	9.95
Secondary	1,830	7.43	1,789	14.53
Chief Executive’s Division	870	4.83	741 ¹	8.37 ¹

- **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 March 2021 %	As at 31 st March 2020 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	3.96	4.16
Community & Children’s Services	6.14	5.61 ¹
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	4.99	4.74
Education & Inclusion Services	3.20	3.70
<u>Schools</u>	<u>2.88</u>	<u>3.56</u>
Primary	3.21	3.79
Secondary	2.33	3.16
Chief Executive’s Division	2.62	2.48 ¹

For a more detailed breakdown of 2020/21 sickness absence information, [click here](#).

¹ Restated for comparative purposes following staff transfer from Community & Children’s Services - Business Services to Chief Executive - Finance & Digital Services

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 4 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by clicking [here](#), with specific updates included setting out the implications Covid-19 and the work undertaken to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

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 for the year ended 31st March 2021 is set out in Sections 5a – c and electronic links have been included to each approved action plan, providing more detailed information on progress during the year.

Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update

- **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

Summary of progress to 31st March 2021

Assessments continued to take a person-centred approach as far as practicable during quarter 4, although our focus was afforded to those with greatest need. However, under ongoing 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. This has restricted the number of visits to people but, where necessary, we have continued to undertake critical visits in agreement with the person and, where applicable, their carer. 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 continued to be commissioned to reduce assessment and review backlogs across Care and Support.

We continued 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. Despite care homes supporting the admission of patients from hospital, wherever possible and if they can provide the appropriate care safely, 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 1st January to 31st March 2021, we supported in total 665 discharges, around 51 per week. 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 continued to make progress towards completion in Summer 2021, despite the significant challenges faced by Contractors due to Covid-19. Funding to redevelop the former Danymynydd Care Home into 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 was agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 25th March 2021. Demolition of the former Care Home is planned for May 2021 and construction of the extra care housing scheme is due to commence in Autumn 2021, following planning approval during the Summer.

We continued 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 opened in January 2021. All of the flats have been allocated to people with a learning disability. Construction of supported housing accommodation at Oxford Street (Mountain Ash) also made good progress through the summer period and was completed in Spring 2021, with the building handed over on the 9th April 2021. Assessments of new tenants has commenced and residents will move in, in Summer 2021.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

The Council along with its regional Health and local authority partners worked with the care home sector to support the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination programme and asymptomatic lateral flow testing to frontline social care staff.

The majority of care homes have been subject to PHW Covid free restrictions from 20th December 2020, resulting in limited opportunity to provide outdoor 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. Indoor care home visits were allowed to resume from 13th March 2021 for one designated visitor. The decision on whether, and in what circumstances care home visits took place, rested with the individual care home provider, which included the Council in-house care homes. In each case, the care home put in place appropriate risk assessments, social distancing and safety measures to ensure resident safety.

In care homes with Covid-19 cases and unable to re-open to visitors, visits for exceptional circumstances, including, but not restricted to, end of life, still continued as they have been throughout the pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, care home providers have strived to maintain contact between their residents and their families, while operating within the wider restrictions in place. This has included, where possible, virtual visits and calls through various forms of technology to ensure residents remained connected with family members.

Whilst the majority of our day and respite services remain temporarily closed, we 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. Plans are in place to reopen more service on a phased basis during May 2021 as Covid-19 lockdown restrictions ease.

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. Stay Well @Home 2 has been key to reducing unnecessary attendance to hospital, in particular by the Welsh Ambulance Service, by supporting people to remain safely at home throughout the winter period.

We reinstated our seven Community Resilience Centres following the introduction of local and national restrictions. Since the start of the pandemic 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.

Performance in tracing cases and their contacts remained very high in spite of the significant surge in cases in winter 2020. Significant increases in staff for the service were secured from across all three Local Authorities in December in order to address demand and the service coped well, ensured adequate training was in place and completion of workloads. Some staff have returned to their substantive roles and some have moved into the vaccination programme. The staff in Test, Trace & Protect (TTP) will continue to respond to cases and contacts across Cwm Taf and undertake enhanced contact tracing whilst case numbers are manageable. There is flexibility to increase staff resource in TTP if the cases numbers increase.

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 managed staffing challenges well with minimal impact on availability of provision. Lateral flow tests were also successfully introduced across all settings for staff.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

We continued 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 continued 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 and indoor and outdoor classes were cancelled in line with Welsh Government restrictions on meeting people outside of your household.

Independent and small group outdoor activities have been promoted on all social media platforms and through the Leisure For Life APP, along with key "benefits of regular activity" messages - for example, information to enable local walking, cycling and family activities. Support was also provided to sports clubs and organisations to access the Sport Wales Be Active Fund. All messages were in line with Welsh Government restrictions e.g. exercising alone or with your household during Level 4 restrictions.

A range of weekly wellbeing classes were 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 were also provided through our social media platforms, including support for individuals with anxiety. Learners on our courses 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 continued to work to Welsh Government statutory guidance, subject to risk assessment and physical distancing requirements, adapting methods of service delivery as necessary. Given our statutory duties, we are incrementally returning to business as usual, with the key difference being working from home and risk management of face to face work. Most staff have now been vaccinated. Priority was given to safely visiting and hearing the voices of children most at risk; this included those on the child protection register, those looked after where there is potential placement breakdown or those where input is critical to maintain them at home. We continued to look after children in both residential and foster care, prioritising children and carers most in need of support. We commissioned UKICS to increase social work capacity in our Intensive Intervention Services. Child Protection Conferences and Children Looked After reviews took place virtually attended by partners and family members where possible.

Youth Engagement & Participation Service (YEPS) staff remained 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 remained available and will now remain as part of ongoing service delivery 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 4

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE		
Investment Area	Investment Value² £M	Quarter 4 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	

² 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 March 2021

Street cleaning and waste services continued 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 continued 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 and have been extremely busy during 2020/21. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year, recycling performance was 69.72% (64.78% last year), the highest ever reported at a year end, and provides a sound platform to build on and achieve the Council's own target of 80% recycling by 2025 in line with the RCT Climate Change commitment.

The Highways Improvement Programme for 2020/21 continued during quarter 4. We have progressed plans for The Cynon Gateway North; the design and [land negotiations](#) of the A4119 dualling between Coed Ely has been progressed; and the Environmental Impact Assessment for Llanharan Bypass is nearing completion with pre-planning consultation anticipated during the early part of the 2021/22 financial year. Our work continued on Storm Dennis repairs with the completion and reopening of the Ynysyngharad Park footbridge in March 2021 and the completion of major earthworks and restoration of the river to normal course in the Tylorstown Tip Phase 2/3 works. Phase 4 of this scheme is currently being designed.

The Council's Transportation Service worked to existing delivery plan priorities during the year, reacting to requests and delivering safe passenger transport services that operated within required Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidelines.

With reference to air quality monitoring, provisional data continued to indicate 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. Air quality monitoring data will be reviewed in the coming months in preparation for submission of the annual Air Quality Progress Report to Welsh Government required by September 2021.

Substance Misuse service users continued to be supported remotely and face to face meetings were held when necessary. The newly developed Specialist Substance Misuse and Mental Health Team became operational and provided crisis intervention support to residents across Cwm Taf Morgannwg including those residents placed in temporary accommodation including Bed and Breakfast accommodation and hostel provision.

We continued to provide remote and face to face support (where it was considered safe) to those experiencing domestic abuse and recovery plans are being discussed on how to safely return and meet with clients at the Oasis Centre.

Our community cohesion work had been difficult to progress with limited contact throughout the pandemic. Despite this, we continued to explore opportunities for working virtually with our key partners.

We continued to work with our partners, the National Trading Standards Team and North Yorkshire Trading Standards, to ensure scam media accounts and websites were removed. We also increased our social media presence to ensure scam warnings reached a wider audience particularly with the increase of 'voice automated' scam messages from HMRC, DVLA, Royal

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play

Mail and COVID test scams. There has also been an increase in Council Tax scams this quarter that we are working on in partnership with the National Anti-Fraud Network.

Our successful work to target the worst hit Truecall clients continued as part of the Carmarthenshire Trading Standards Pilot. This has enabled us to effectively target resources and block scam callers permanently.

This quarter saw a rise in complaints of doorstep crime for building, roofing and gardening work, which is common for this time of year. We increased our messaging to residents to ensure that they protect themselves and can make informed decisions, and how they can report any incidents should they occur.

We continued to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. Grass cutting plans for 2021/22 are being developed that will commence in April, and our biodiversity areas will be cut at the end of August. We also progressed the signposting of wildflower management areas.

Our work to repair flood damage in Ynysangharad Park has been completed, and our programme of playground upgrade and repairs continues.

The latest Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group took place on [17 March 2021](#).

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 4

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	8.624	<p>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.</p> <p>The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £3M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.</p>
Play Areas	0.675	<p>There are 28 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2020/21. As at 31st March 2021, 17 had been completed, 1 remained under construction, 5 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 5 are to be designed. Due to prioritising schemes and contractor restrictions/delays, the 11 schemes not completed at year-end will be carried forward to 2021/22.</p> <p>The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £0.250M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.</p>
Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas	0.184	<p>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; all 4 schemes will be carried forward and completed in 2021/22.</p>
Cynon Gateway South – Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link	4.750	<p>On 16th October 2020 the link road between the A4059 and B4275 Miskin Road was opened.</p>
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 reinstatement works completed in quarter 4; 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 lfor (Hopkinstown),

³ 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 ³ £M	Quarter 4 Update
		<p>Rhydyfelin Culverts, Gwawr Street (Aberaman - repairs to walls) and Phase 1 of B4273 Ynysybwl/Glyncoch Retaining Walls; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New scheme – Bodringallt bridge (Ystrad) - where works are due to start in mid-2021.
Parks Structures	1.335	<p>The investment funding has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works completed - Station Street River Wall (Treherbert); Bridge replacement of Nant Lonydd Bridge (Upper Boat); Replacement culverts at Blaennantygroes and Hirwaun Welfare Ground; retaining wall maintenance at Dare Valley Country Park; and replacement footbridges at Clydach Vale Countryside Park, near Crownhill Community Centre and at Llwynau Farm; and • 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. <p>The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £0.750M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.</p>
Parks and Green Spaces	1.000	<p>This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The programme comprises 93 schemes that are being managed across financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22.</p> <p>The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £0.500M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.</p>
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); • Trealaw – reset road drains; and • Glyntaff Cemetery - additional roadworks; waste removal; additional top car park, introduction of security measures, supply, delivery and installation of materials for decoration of the South Chapel; public conveniences; creation of screen and store; and replacement of fencing around main car park.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 4 Update
Llanharan Bypass	2.000	This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology investigations. The next stage programmed is the pre-Planning Application Consultation that is scheduled to be undertaken during summer 2021.
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	6.000	This investment funding is supporting the dualling of the highway between the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters roundabout and Coed Ely roundabout. Detail design work is progressing; planning permission was granted for an Active Travel footbridge toward the northern end of the project; and work is on-going to secure land required and the associated Compulsory Purchase Order has been submitted.
Community Hubs	0.401	This investment funding relates to supporting: <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).
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 and a WeITAG stage 1 has been completed.
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. Following the pre-Planning Application Consultation during quarter 3, the responses were evaluated and a planning application submitted in quarter 4.
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.
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. Works have been completed in respect of the new office building, garage, IT networking, CCTV and lighting.
Land Drainage	0.750	This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes works at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abercynon (Plantation Road) and Porth Relief Road – works complete; • Cwmbach – works commenced and scheduled for completion in the first half of 2021/22; and

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value³ £M	Quarter 4 Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property Flood Resistance Programme – on-going engagement with property owners and provision of flood prevention measures e.g. flood gates.
Total	35.222	

o **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 March 2021

Covid-19 recovery grants for town centre businesses has provided over 80 businesses across RCT with grants totalling £435,000 to make external improvements to premises. Other renewed grant offers for businesses include a new flood resilience grant, a new major projects investment fund and refocussed enterprise investment fund and town centre maintenance grant, providing a comprehensive package of support to help businesses survive, adapt and diversify. Since September, the enterprise investment fund has supported 50 businesses with grant awards totalling £275,000 and 7 businesses have benefitted from flood resilience grants. Plans to deliver a package of support for manufacturing businesses, in partnership with Welsh Government's South East Wales Regional Team, will be progressed in the new financial year.

Key schemes are underway which will lead to a more sustainable future for our town centres, including the redevelopment of Mountain Ash Town Hall and Llwynypia Courthouse. Also in Mountain Ash, the Oxford buildings scheme is now complete, delivering supported housing for adults with learning disabilities. Good progress is being made on the Porth Transport hub with planning permission granted, detailed development discussions continuing with Transport Wales and the construction tender process underway. A grant award to Rhondda Housing will see the delivery of a new housing development replacing badly fire damaged properties in Tonypany. Construction of 20 modern business units at Robertstown is well underway, with completion planned for late 2021. Across RCT several key commercial property redevelopments have also commenced which will repurpose empty properties for new uses, with further schemes in the development stages.

Engagement on the draft RCT Tourism Strategy is currently underway. Development work at Dare Valley Country Park and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park continues as part of the Valleys Regional Park development. Zip World is now opened, with other key projects including Abernant and Rhondda Tunnels under development. As the Tourism sector reopens, we continue to promote visits to RCT through marketing campaigns and engage with local tourism businesses. Funding has also been granted for the development of a cultural hub in Treorchy, with external work underway.

Work continued on the Local Development Plan review, with over 200 potential sites put forward during the call for candidate sites, covering a wide range of uses.

In 2020/21, 164 affordable housing units were delivered utilising £8.2M Social Housing Grant allocation. Increased funding of £15.3M has been secured for 2021/22. The social housing lettings agency scheme also continued to progress well with positive engagement with landlords.

During the second lockdown period, schools were provided with guidance and support on distance, digital and blended learning, including sharing best practice and the provision of bespoke support packages to best meet the needs of individual schools. The return of pupils to face to face learning has been well organised in partnership with schools, with no significant operational issues. School improvement services continue to work closely with schools to evaluate the impact of Covid-19 on learner outcomes and ensure that strategic approaches promote high quality teaching and learning to improve outcomes for our children and young people.

Pupil wellbeing continued to be a high priority and effective use of grant funding continued to support strategic action plans for Wellbeing and Additional Learning Needs Transformation, including training in nurture approaches. Workshops, virtual training and the Education Psychology Service helpline

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

continued to provide advice and guidance to schools on supporting wellbeing and pupils with additional learning needs.

Significant progress is being made on the second wave of school investments in Band B, including completion of the first phase of works at Ffynnon Taf primary school and work commencing at YGG Aberdar. Projects in the greater Pontypridd area are also underway, with 3 projects out to tender and 2 in the design phase.

Referrals into employment support programmes have increased, with Communities for Work+ supporting 369 people into work and the Communities for Work programme achieving targets for engaging with adults and young people over the lifetime of the scheme. The chromebook loan scheme has seen 30 devices being loaned to clients to carry out job search and training, and to attend online interviews. In addition, during 2020/21 the Council recruited a further 26 graduates and 33 apprentices with plans for the next intake in September 2021 now underway.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 4

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value ⁴ £M	Quarter 4 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 – all works completed (i.e. to the main swimming pool hall, construction of new retaining wall and entrance path and new signage installed); ○ Gelli Primary – all works completed (i.e. internal refurbishment, two classroom extension, additional external works, fencing, new kitchen windows and resurfacing of driveway and line marking); and ○ Llanharan Primary – all works completed (i.e. to remodel/refurbish foundation phase classrooms, extend yard, alter/fence-in carpark and 2 classroom extension (including toilets and associated external works)).
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 the strategic development at Coed Ely. Works on-going include preliminary design of the main junction together with Active Travel

⁴ 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 ⁴ £M	Quarter 4 Update
		improvements. Further ground investigation work and drainage surveys were carried out in quarter 3 and design work is continuing.
Llys Cadwyn Development	2.024	<p>Project complete.</p> <p>3 Llys Cadwyn handed over to Transport for Wales and lease agreements signed for the A3 units. Marketing of the office and A3 space in 2 Llys Cadwyn is ongoing. Final works were also undertaken on the footbridge, including the installation of permanent gates.</p>
Park and Ride Programme	1.000	<p>This investment funding is supporting the development work needed to create additional ‘park and ride’ car parking spaces at:</p> <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	<p>This funding has been approved for the Guto Square development (Mountain Ash) which 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. The demolition phase of the project commenced on 22nd February, for a period of 6 weeks, with the demolition and removal of two vacant / dilapidated buildings and the area prepared for the construction phase. The project is scheduled for completion during summer 2021.</p>
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robertstown – good progress made during quarter 4 including: foundations laid, steel frames erected and roofing works underway for a number of plots; formation of the access road is underway; and manhole installation and culvert diversion in progress. • Coed Ely – the building was handed over on 15th January 2021. During quarter 4, air tests were undertaken, CO2 / Smoke vents installed, signage installed and snagging works progressed. Work is on-going to secure a tenant for the unit.
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.

This page is intentionally left blank



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH JULY 2021

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021/22 TO 2024/25

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR M NORRIS

AUTHOR: Barrie Davies (01443 424026)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2021/22 to 2024/25, based on current modelling assumptions in advance of formulating the detailed budget strategy proposals for 2022/23 during the autumn.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- i. Note the current position modelled in respect of the 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25' and receive further updates in the autumn as part of the annual budget setting process; and
 - ii. Note that the MTFP will be presented to Council in September and will be reviewed by the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee in line with their terms of reference alongside our budget consultation arrangements.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need to keep Members informed of the budget modelling work being undertaken as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements. This work is in advance of the Provisional Local Government Settlement, due from Welsh Government later this year.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Each year as part of the Council's robust financial management arrangements, an update on the Medium Term Financial Planning assumptions is provided to Members in advance of the detailed budget strategy work in the autumn.

- 4.2 The Public Sector has faced a prolonged period of real term reductions in funding levels for a number of years and unprecedented challenges lie ahead for services across local government, not least as a result of the national and international economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic. This position is also coupled with increasing demand and costs associated with many services, in particular Social Care Services and the need for us to support our residents, businesses and communities in recovering from the pandemic.
- 4.3 Locally, this Council has demonstrated its ability and willingness to invest in services over a long term period, linked to our priorities as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan "Making a Difference - 2020 – 2024", in order to meet the changing needs of our people and communities. The significant 'additional' investment already agreed by Members during recent years is providing real improvements across many areas including Schools, Town Centres, Roads and Parks and Play Areas.
- 4.4 Whilst investment through the use of one off funds has been very positive, the Council recognises that it must still address projected base budget shortfalls and make difficult decisions to balance its ongoing revenue budget into the medium term. This report provides an updated view on the range and scale of the challenge faced and the arrangements being put in place to address any shortfalls across the planning period.
- 4.5 Members will note the latest indication from the UK Central Government is that a Spending Review is planned for the Autumn (2021); this will be a key driver and determinant of the level of funding available to devolved nations and the prospects for settlement levels next year and beyond.
- 4.6 Whilst the majority of additional costs and income losses we have incurred as a direct consequence of the pandemic have to date been funded by Welsh Government, the continuation of these arrangements is increasingly important and will remain a key risk. In this context, our medium term approach to financial and service planning will be even more critical.

5. CURRENT MODELLING ASSUMPTIONS

- 5.1 The detailed modelling assumptions are included as part of the up-dated 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25' and is attached at **Appendix 1**. The updated plan sets out the detailed basis of the medium term strategy with references to revenue spending, capital plans, income levels and reserves.
- 5.2 Key assumptions used in the construction of the revenue budget modelling to 2024/25 are shown below:

5.3 Income

- Local Government settlement levels have been modelled on a range of planning scenarios:

Year	Potential Settlement	Potential Settlement	Potential Settlement
2022/23 to 2024/25	2.0% per annum	3.0% per annum	4.0% per annum

- Council Tax increases are currently being modelled at 2.65% per annum.
- One-off funding from Welsh Government assumed to continue in respect of Social Services and Children's Services specific grants.
- Fees and charges uplifted by inflation only (other than where exceptions have already been agreed by Cabinet).

5.4 Expenditure

- Service area pressures reflected which arise from statutory requirements, demand led pressures, demographics etc.
- Uplifts included for pay and non-pay inflation.
- Authority wide requirements reflected including Capital Financing, Levies and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- Schools budget is modelled to cover, in full, pay and non-pay inflation plus specific budget pressures (and in the context of the projected range of local government settlement levels).

6. CURRENT MODELLING OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The modelling uses a number of assumptions which are all subject to change and will be reviewed as part of the detailed budget strategy work underway. Due to current uncertainty at a UK Central Government level around public sector funding levels, as set out in paragraph 4.5, a range of modelling assumptions have been compiled based on Welsh Government funding being at +2%, +3% and +4% per year for financial years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. The variability of the potential level of the Settlement from Welsh Government has a significant impact on the budget gap, at £4.0M per 1% and Figure 1 illustrates the outcome of the range of modelling assumptions currently applied.

Figure 1 : Modelled Budget Gap 2022/23 to 2024/25

Budget Requirement	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Additional Budget Requirement	28,353	29,150	29,713
Additional Resources			
Council Tax	3,634	3,745	3,860
Transition Funding	- 711	-	-
Social Services and Children's Services Specific Grants	-	-	-
WG Resource at +2%	8,088	8,249	8,414
WG Resource at +3%	12,131	12,495	12,870
WG Resource at +4%	16,175	16,822	17,495

Remaining Budget Gap at Welsh Government Settlement Levels				3 Year Budget Gap
2% Increase	17,343	17,156	17,439	51,937
3% Increase	13,299	12,910	12,983	39,191
4% Increase	9,255	8,583	8,358	26,196

Note: a 2.65% Council Tax increase per year is assumed as part of the modelled gap

- 6.2 As shown above, all of our planning assumptions result in a budget gap being faced by the Council. The extent of the impact on our services is clearly going to be largely and directly determined by the level of settlement we receive from Welsh Government, noting the constraints they have themselves.
- 6.3 To further demonstrate the scale of our reliance on funding from WG, a cash flat level of settlement would result in a budget gap over each of the next 3 years as shown below.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
0% Increase	25,430	25,406	25,853

7. **BALANCING THE BUDGET**

- 7.1 The Council continues to focus on the budget gap position over the medium term and has successfully implemented a strategy of early identification and

delivery of base budget reducing measures in-year. This has enabled the Council to deliver financial savings early and to replenish the Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation Reserve which has been used proactively as part of the budget strategy for a number of years.

- 7.2 Our immediate priority and focus remains responding and supporting the recovery from the pandemic and ensuring that our residents, communities and businesses are being protected and supported. Options are being developed which can help address the range of the potential budget gap which we will face but it is important that in doing so we ensure that we maintain our valued and critical services. Inevitably the focus at annual budget setting time is for the forthcoming financial year, that is, 2022/23, and the savings quantum required is still to be confirmed pending receipt of the Local Government Settlement from Welsh Government.
- 7.3 As part of developing options opportunity must be taken to ensure that we continue to “lock in” the transformation and service delivery changes which we have made across many, if not all of our service areas. The Council has taken the opportunity to make a step change in our working arrangements and become more efficient in terms of maximising the use of digital solutions where appropriate, recognising that such delivery does not meet the needs of all of our residents. Work continues to ensure that we maximise the opportunities afforded by technology and digital solutions.
- 7.4 In line with the above, the areas we will explore include the continued: maximisation of efficiency saving opportunities including on-going review of workforce requirements and resources; delivery of our Social Services Transformation Programme (including our significant commitment and investment in the provision of Extra Care facilities); review of our base budget requirements at both a service level and an authority wide level including our built assets; maximisation of opportunities to invest for the long term and collaboration with others; and a focus on the principles of Digitalisation, Commercialism, Early Intervention and Prevention, Independence and being an Efficient and Effective Organisation.
- 7.5 As work develops through the areas described in 7.4 above, this will be reported to Members as appropriate.
- 7.6 Greater clarity will be available on the level of savings required post the Provisional Local Government Settlement later in the year. The position will be reported to Members as soon as possible after the settlement publication and as referenced above, the continued focus across a medium term planning period is paramount.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 8.1 There are no immediate equality and diversity or socio-economic duty implications to consider as an Equality Impact Assessment will be an integral part of the budget strategy itself that will be reported on later in the year.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 There are no specific consultation requirements at this time.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The financial modelling assumptions and implications are set out in the detail of the report. At this stage, the Council or Cabinet is not being asked to make any new financial decisions in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

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

12.1 The report supports our Corporate Plan cross-cutting priority of 'Living within our Means'.

12.2 The Medium Term Financial Plan is a key enabler for the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and its obligations to support wider partnership objectives.

13. CONCLUSIONS

13.1 This report and the accompanying 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25' sets out the current position on the financial challenges facing the Council in the medium term. The report notes, that subject to the level of funding from Welsh Government, a significant budget gap is likely to be faced in 2022/23 and for the following two years.

13.2 The report clearly states that the proactive strategy adopted in recent years through early identification of savings and the targeting of key areas such as new ways of working and an increased emphasis on preventative approaches can still deliver significant efficiency savings.

13.3 The focus will switch to the 2022/23 budget strategy upon receipt of the Provisional Local Government Settlement and, as part of this, setting out a range of budget saving options to enable the Council to deliver a balanced budget for the forthcoming year.

Other information

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

20th July 2021

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021/22 TO 2024/25

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item: 12

Background Papers

- Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Cabinet/2020/10/13/Reports/Item8MediumTermFinancialPlan202021to202324.pdf>
- Council Performance Reports
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Cabinet/2021/03/25/Reports/Item15CouncilPerformanceReport31stDecember2020Quarter3.pdf>
- Budget Strategy 2021/22, Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24 and Council Tax Resolution
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Council/2021/03/10/Council10Mar2021.aspx>

Officer to contact: Barrie Davies



**Rhondda Cynon Taf
County Borough Council**

Medium Term Financial Plan

**2021/22 – 2024/25
(updated July 2021)**

Medium Term Financial Plan - Contents

Introduction and Purpose

Section 1 Background and Context

Section 2 Covid-19 – Financial Implications

Section 3 Local Government Settlement – Prospects

Section 4 Council Tax

Section 5 Individual Schools Budget

Section 6 Fees and Charges

Section 7 National and Local Pressures

Section 8 Inflationary Pressures

Section 9 Specific Grants

Section 10 Summary Spend Requirements and Resource Availability

Section 11 Reserve Policy (General Fund Reserves and Earmarked Reserves)

Section 12 Balancing the Budget

Section 13 Capital Programme

Section 14 Consultation and Scrutiny

Section 15 Other Relevant Documents

Annex 1 Council Revenue Budget by Services Provided

Annex 2 Council Revenue Budget by Priority Area

Annex 3 Council Capital Programme by Priority Area

Annex 4 Council Earmarked Reserves

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Medium Term Financial and Service Planning is an essential component of the effective financial management of this Council. It is the cornerstone of good governance and an enabler of service delivery and service improvement within the constraints of available resources.

This Medium Term Financial Plan sets out, holistically, the financial context within which the Council is operating and forward projects the financial challenge facing the Council over a 3 year planning period.

It will also align and link our financial resources to our Corporate Plan Priorities and will enable us to track resource allocation in this way over future years.

It will be appropriate to ensure the Strategy continues to be kept under on-going review particularly in light of the significant impact of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19), recognising that as the Council and wider society continues to recover from the pandemic, the effect on the Council's finances will be subject to change.

Section 1 Background and Context

- 1.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf has a track record of strong and effective financial management. Medium Term Financial Planning is an essential part of these arrangements.
- 1.2 The austerity measures emanating from the actions of Central Government have impacted on the resources available to Welsh Government and consequently local government in Wales over a sustained period, recognising that for last 2 financial years more positive local government settlements were received. At a national level, the overall local government settlement for Wales over the last 8 financial years is shown below in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Financial Year	All Wales Settlement
2014/15	-3.9%
2015/16	-3.5%
2016/17	-1.4%
2017/18	+0.2%
2018/19	+0.2%
2019/20	+0.2%
2020/21	+4.3%
2021/22	+3.8%

- 1.3 For Rhondda Cynon Taf the real term reductions in funding over many years has translated into a need to make budgetary savings in excess of £100M over the last 10 years or so, equating to a reduction of approximately 19% of the Council’s net budget.
- 1.4 In March 2020, the Council agreed a new Corporate Plan ‘Making a Difference’ 2020 – 2024 that set the overall direction for the Council over the four year period, describing its vision, purpose and ambition for the County Borough.
- 1.5 The Council’s vision is:

“To be the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy, and prosperous”.
- 1.6 The Council’s purpose and the reason why it exists is:

“To provide strong community leadership and create the environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous”.
- 1.7 The Council is focused on the following three priorities that have also been adopted as its Well-being objectives in line with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act:
 - Ensuring ***People: are independent, healthy and successful;***

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

1.8 The Corporate Plan is a key component of the Council's budgetary and business planning process, and it recognises that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the wider public sector continue to face significant financial challenges. The Corporate Plan sets the context that despite significant reductions to Government spending since 2010 and a return to economic growth, the financial environment for the Council, the wider public sector and residents continues to be challenging, and was summarised in the Plan as follows:

- Despite the new UK Government increasing its spending commitment for public services, for the first time for many years, pay and pensions costs are rising quickly. This negates the majority of the benefit of the increase in public sector funding.
- It is likely that over the next three years further spending cuts will be required, as the UK budget deficit still stands at around £40 billion or 2% of national GDP meaning that some form of austerity will continue.
- Increasing pressure on services: increasing demand on services is driven by a changing population. Rhondda Cynon Taf's population is increasing but health and social services in particular are facing acute challenges due to the growth in older cohorts, as people live for longer.
- Wider financial pressure on households: from energy bills, housing costs, wage restraint, and benefit reforms.
- Increasing public expectations in terms of responding to climate change and the need to act, will require the Council to invest 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.
- Knowing that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges in the years ahead, it has a responsibility to develop and agree a plan for meeting the challenge.

1.9 The above context still applies, albeit, the challenges faced have intensified, significantly, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The Council has taken steps, via stakeholder consultation as part of its 2021/22 Revenue Budget Setting process, to test whether its Corporate Plan priorities remain relevant: the feedback from this process showed that 92.8% of respondents agreed with the priorities of People, Places and Prosperity.

1.10 The Council has proved that it has the capacity and capability to respond to the challenge of austerity and still invest in its priorities and modernise its services over a sustained period, and the ambition is to continue this approach of investment and modernisation into the future. The Corporate Plan seeks to build upon the changes we have made to the way we work, including transformational changes over the past 12

months supported by digital technology, to help ensure local residents and businesses are sufficiently skilled, supported and resilient to respond to the opportunities and threats the global economy presents to us all, including on-going recovery from the pandemic.

- 1.11 The Council's agreed Revenue Budget for 2021/22 amounts to £527.903M. Annex 1 sets out the Council budget for 2021/22 as allocated across services.
- 1.12 The budget has also been analysed across the 3 priority areas of People, Places and Prosperity as set out in the Corporate Plan (referenced in paragraph 1.7) in order to demonstrate the allocation of Council Revenue Budget resources to these priority areas. Whilst some allocation has been necessarily subject to a degree of 'best fit', this is still felt to be a helpful analysis and provides a basis to track resource allocation over time. This is attached at Annex 2. A similar analysis is also included for the 3 year capital programme at Annex 3.

Section 2 Covid- 19 – Financial Implications

- 2.1. The Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan has been prepared against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, an event that eclipses anything we have seen in recent decades, and has required an unprecedented response both locally and nationally.
- 2.2 In recognition of the pandemic’s widespread impact, Welsh Government responded by announcing and funding a range of measures to support the economy (for example, grants and extended rate relief for businesses and self-isolation payments for individuals), and also provided direct support for local authorities, via the creation of a Covid-19 Hardship Fund, to enable additional expenditure and income losses incurred as a result of the pandemic to be reclaimed.
- 2.3 Rhondda Cynon Taf Council submitted claims to the Welsh Government Covid-19 Hardship Fund on a monthly basis during 2020/21, and publicly reported quarterly updates as part of its Performance Reporting arrangements. A summary of additional expenditure and income losses incurred and recovered by Rhondda Cynon Taf for 2020/21, as a direct result of the pandemic, are included in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Service Area	Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (2020/21)
	£M
Education & Inclusion Services	-14.720
Community & Children's Services	-22.890
Chief Executive	-1.922
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-6.156
Authority Wide	-5.305
TOTAL	-50.993

- 2.4 Looking ahead in the short term, Welsh Government have allocated £206M to a Local Government Covid-19 Hardship Fund for the first 6 months of 2021/22, with review work underway in partnership with local authorities to assess the on-going financial implications, including social care, and ensure the finite Covid-19 funding available in 2021/22 is targeted to support the most critical areas.
- 2.5 Looking further ahead, whilst the funding provided by Welsh Government to date has covered the majority of additional costs and income losses incurred as a direct result of Covid-19, it is recognised that the availability of such additional funding is unlikely to be everlasting. The Medium Term Financial Plan therefore aims to set out a robust position of the financial challenges and the programme of work planned to ensure the continued financial stability and resilience of the Council, and at the same time, reinforce the importance of the role to be played by Welsh Government.

Section 3 Local Government Settlement – Prospects

- 3.1 As referenced in Section 1, local government as a whole has received negative and below inflation settlements from Welsh Government in overall terms for 6 of the last 8 financial years. Whilst positive settlements have been received since 2017/18, for three of these years the levels have been some way below inflation. For Rhondda Cynon Taf the level of settlements received, in comparison to the all Wales average, are shown below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 – Rhondda Cynon Taf Settlement Levels Compared To All Wales Settlement Levels

Financial Year	RCT Settlement	All Wales Settlement
2014/15	-3.7%	-3.9%
2015/16	-3.7%	-3.5%
2016/17	-0.9%	-1.4%
2017/18	+0.4%	+0.2%
2018/19	+0.5%	+0.2%
2019/20	+0.8%	+0.2%
2020/21	+4.5%	+4.3%
2021/22	+3.8%	+3.8%

- 3.2 Welsh Government have not provided any definitive indication of future year financial settlements, leaving local government to themselves model potential scenarios. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) support local government in this regard.
- 3.3 Nationally, Brexit, the on-going impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the implications of the next UK Central Government Comprehensive Spending Review scheduled for autumn 2021 will mean continued uncertainty over future public sector funding levels.
- 3.4 The level of Welsh Government funding is a key factor in the Council's overall resource availability, accounting for 76.6% of our budget. Each 1% change in the level of Welsh Government funding amounts to approximately £4.0M of funding for this Council.
- 3.5 For planning purposes, this Council has modelled a range of scenarios based upon planning assumptions as summarised in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: RCT Planning Assumptions – Welsh Government Settlement

Year	Potential Settlement	Potential Settlement	Potential Settlement
2022/23 to 2024/25	2.0% per annum	3.0% per annum	4.0% per annum

- 3.6 The provisional local government settlement for 2022/23 is anticipated to be received during the autumn 2021 (subject to any impact on timing as a result of the UK Central Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, also scheduled to be announced in autumn 2021).

Longer Term Outlook

- 3.7 The Wales Governance Centre (Wales Fiscal Analysis) published a paper on the 16th April 2021 which outlined the prospects for local government in Wales (“Local Government and the Welsh Budget: Outlook and Challenges for the next Welsh Government”). This provides helpful information to inform the Council’s on-going planning arrangements, as set out below.
- 3.8 In terms of context, there has been a marked change in the way local authorities in Wales are funded over the past decade: the value of government grants to local authorities fell by 16.8% in real terms between 2009–10 and 2019–20; Council Tax now accounts for a significantly larger share of the total tax take in Wales (5.4%) than in England (4.3%) and Scotland (3.8%); spending on local authority services fell by 6.0% in real terms between 2009–10 and 2019–20 (adjusting for population growth, spending per head is 9.4% lower than it was a decade ago); and more than £500 million was delivered to local authorities through the Single Hardship Fund during 2021–21 (in total, the value of Welsh Government support to aid local authorities’ response to the pandemic exceeds £1 billion).
- 3.9 With regard to forecasted spending pressures to 2025/26, based on central projections, meeting local authority spending pressures in full entails an average increase in spending of 3.4% a year (in cash terms) between 2020–21 and 2025–26 (2.5% and 4.4% based on lower and higher cost scenarios), with the Council’s medium term financial planning arrangements also applying an approach of modelling a range of scenarios.
- 3.10 Despite the considerable uncertainty around the ongoing costs of COVID-19, they are dwarfed by the underlying demographic and inflationary pressures, with unfunded costs associated with the pandemic forecasted to account for only 9% of total spending pressures in 2022–23, and this share continues to fall in future years. By 2025–26, social services costs are forecasted to account for 55% of all local authority spending pressures, with school pressures accounting for a further 21%; this picture is generally consistent with that modelled for Rhondda Cynon Taf where the areas of social services and schools represent the most significant areas of forecasted expenditure.
- 3.11 In respect of the revenues outlook to 2025–26, based on current spending plans, local authority gross revenue expenditure is projected to grow by 2.9% a year on average between 2022–23 and 2025–26. If the UK Chancellor reverses cuts made to planned spending since March 2020, gross revenue expenditure is projected to grow by an average of 3.8% a year over the same period.
- 3.12 Taking forecasted spending pressures and revenues together, in 2022–23, spending pressures are projected to exceed local authorities’ spending power by £178 million due to a combination of COVID-19 legacy costs and slower growth in the settlement. This gap narrows in future years, but spending levels remains £132 million short of the amount required to meet all pressures in 2025–26 on current plans (in cash terms).
- 3.13 If the Welsh Government decides to meet the projected legacy costs of COVID-19 on the NHS from within its own budget, local authorities’ spending power could fall short of spending pressures by £607 million in 2022–23, and an average of £362

million a year over the following three years. Even if the UK government reverts to its pre-COVID spending plans, funding remains £198 million short of spending pressures in 2022–23, though the pressures could be met in future years. Above-inflation increases to Council Tax are set to continue – the numbers quoted above are predicated on a 4.5% annual increase and the Welsh Government’s newly acquired powers over devolved taxes and local taxation arrangements could provide an alternative way of funding additional local expenditure over the next Senedd term.

- 3.14 The proposed Comprehensive Spending Review planned for Autumn 2021 will now be key in determining resource levels for 2022/23 and beyond, and will be taken account of as part of the Council’s on-going medium term financial planning arrangements.

Section 4 Council Tax

- 4.1 Council Tax income accounts for 22.5% of the Council's net budget, generating £118.742M from local taxpayers in 2021/22.
- 4.2 The total yield from Council Tax is determined by a combination of the level of the tax base and the level at which Council Tax is set.
- 4.3 The Tax Base is the measure of the relative taxable capacity of different areas within the County Borough and is calculated in accordance with prescribed rules. The Gross Tax Base is the number of chargeable dwellings in the area expressed as Band D equivalents after allowing for exemptions, disablement reductions and discounts. This is then adjusted for an assumed collection rate to give the Net Tax Base.
- 4.4 The Tax Base is provided to Welsh Government and is used as part of the distribution formula for the Local Government Settlement. The Tax Base is calculated for the County Borough as a whole and for those areas that have a Community Council.
- 4.5 The Tax Base movement over recent years is shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 – Tax Base Movement

Year	Gross Tax Base (£)	Collection Rate	Net Tax Base (£)
2014/15	75,189	96.5%	72,557
2015/16	75,565	97.0%	73,298
2016/17	76,207	97.5%	74,302
2017/18	76,901	97.5%	74,978
2018/19	77,608	97.5%	75,668
2019/20	78,844	97.5%	76,873
2020/21	79,317	97.5%	77,334
2021/22	79,381	97.25%	77,198

- 4.6 The level of any increase or decrease of Council Tax is considered each year as part of the annual budget consultation process, and subsequently determined by Council as part of the annual budget strategy. The formal resolution is also agreed by Council.
- 4.7 Council Tax levels over recent years are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 – Council Tax Levels

Year	Band D Council Tax £ ¹	Increase over Previous Year
2014/15	£1,248.00	4.5%
2015/16	£1,295.48	3.8%
2016/17	£1,331.17	2.75%
2017/18	£1,361.18	2.25%
2018/19	£1,406.17	3.3%
2019/20	£1,456.85	3.6%
2020/21	£1,498.44	2.85%
2021/22	£1,538.15	2.65%

¹ Band D Council Tax – excludes the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales Precept and Community Council Precepts

- 4.8 The total amount raised through Council Tax is derived by multiplying the net tax base by the band D Council Tax charge, which for 2021/22 amounts to (77,198 x £1,538.15) £118.742M.
- 4.9 For modelling purposes in our medium term calculations as part of this report, a Council Tax increase of 2.65% per annum is currently being used for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25, noting of course that this is a key decision for Members to make as part of setting each year's budget. In terms of generating resources, a 1% increase in the level of Council Tax will raise an extra £910k² of additional income each year (this is net of the costs associated with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme described in more detail below).

Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)

- 4.10 During 2020/21 the Council paid CTRS to 25,704 eligible applicants at a net cost to the Council of £24.680M (after taking account of additional one-off Welsh Government funding received for CTRS purposes of £1.023M). For 2021/22 the Council has estimated the cost to be £25.334M, this representing a 2.65% uplift in line with the Council Tax increase for the current year. Discussions are ongoing with Welsh Government to clarify the funding arrangement should demand continue above the level budgeted for, noting that the CTR Scheme in Wales is a national scheme developed by Welsh Government.

Tax Base

- 4.11 On 19th December 2017 Cabinet approved a policy which enabled the Council to reduce the Council Tax bill for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 who were resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf to zero. The policy has been operational during 2018/19.
- 4.12 During 2018/19 the Welsh Government introduced legislation, effective from 1st April 2019, making all properties in Wales that are occupied by Care Leavers (up to the age of 25) exempt from paying Council Tax. This removed the requirement for the Council to have its own discretionary policy for this category of residents.
- 4.13 All awards of this new exemption type have been reflected in the Council Tax Base from 1st April 2019.

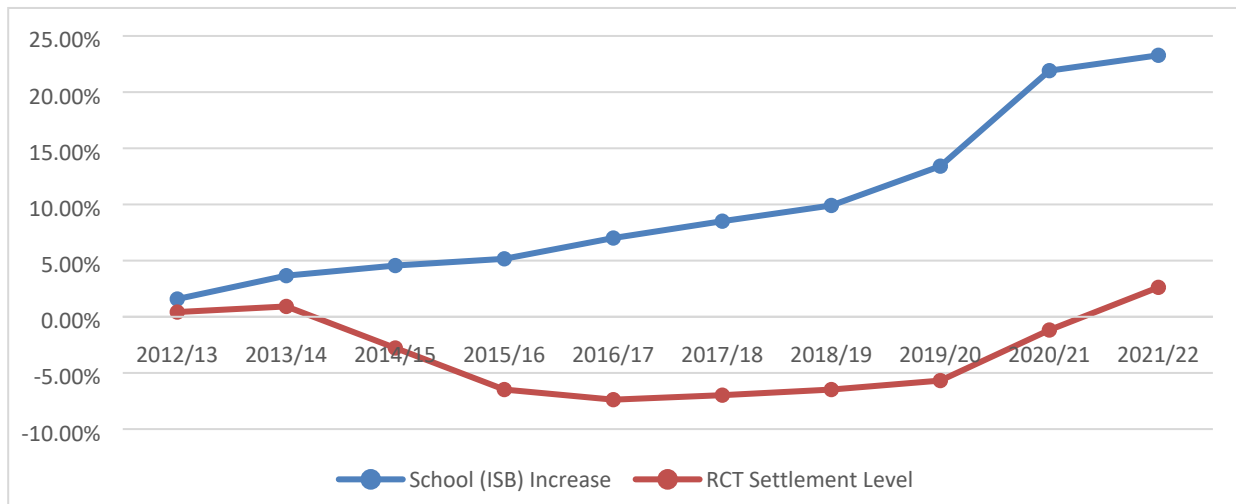
² Based on 2021/22 Council Tax Income

Section 5 Individual Schools Budget (ISB)

- 5.1 The total Individual Schools Budget (ISB) for the Council in 2021/22 amounts to £163.784M and represents over 31% of the Council's net budget.
- 5.2 Since 2012/13, the ISB has increased at a level above other Council services and above the level of the Council's own settlement from Welsh Government, and, at the same time, recognising that there is still an expectation that schools will continue to make a positive contribution toward balancing the overall Council budget. The ISB has been subject to protection requirements by Welsh Government over this period which ended in 2016/17. The comparative ISB increases over the last ten years are shown in Table 5.1 and graphically below:

Table 5.1 – School Budget Increases Compared to RCT Settlement Levels

Year	School (ISB) Increase	RCT Settlement Level
2012/13	+1.58%	+0.42%
2013/14	+2.08%	+0.5%
2014/15	+0.9%	-3.7%
2015/16	+0.6%	-3.7%
2016/17	+1.85%	-0.9%
2017/18	+1.5%	+0.4%
2018/19	+1.4%	+0.5%
2019/20	+3.5%	+0.8%
2020/21	+8.5%	+4.5%
2021/22	+1.37%	+3.8%



- 5.3 Over the 10 year period shown in Table 5.1, the ISB has received an increase amounting to 23.28%, as opposed to the Council's remaining budgets having been increased by 2.62%. In monetary terms, applied to an ISB of £138M (2011/12 ISB), this amounts to an extra £33.8M being provided to schools over the period.

- 5.4 Pupil number forecasts are modelled across Primary, Secondary, All-Through and Special Schools sectors with the financial implications included in the Schools Budget requirement.
- 5.5 The levels of school reserves held as at the 31st March 2021 are shown in Table 5.2 below (draft, subject to audit). The 2020/21 year end position has increased compared to the previous year primarily as a result of additional one-off Welsh Government funding received to support schools in their recovery from the pandemic, for example, Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards / Additional Learning provision grant, Revenue Maintenance grant, for which work has commenced by schools and will continue in 2021/22.

Table 5.2 – School Reserves

Type of School	31/03/2020	2020/21 Movement	31/03/2021
	£k	£k	£k
Primary	2,942	4,712	7,654
Secondary	(1,190)	3,736	2,546
Special	317	443	760
All Through Schools	315	760	1,075
Total	2,384	9,651	12,035

- 5.6 As part of ensuring sustainable levels of resources for schools over the medium term (to meet pay and non-pay pressures), it will be critical that on-going funding, via Welsh Government, continues to be included in core (RSG) settlements. In parallel, it will also be critical for Welsh Government to give key regard to funding requirements that will enable local authorities to deliver its long term programme of education reform across Wales that includes, amongst other things, ensuring educational inequalities narrow and standards rise.

Section 6 Fees and Charges

- 6.1 The Council raises approximately £22M³ of income annually from fees and charges across services. The level of charges is reviewed annually.
- 6.2 Cabinet reviewed (25th February 2021) fees and charges levels with the objective to continue to provide a comprehensive range of quality services at affordable prices. The initial budget modelling for 2021/22 had assumed a 1.70% increase.
- 6.3 The outcome of Cabinet’s review was a 1.70% standard increase to fees and charges (allowing for rounding adjustments as appropriate) with the exception of a number of areas that would be subject to specific treatment. A summary of these exceptions are set out in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 – Summary of fees and charges not subject to the standard increase

Area of Charge	Exception
Leisure for Life	Nil Increase
Car Park Charges	Nil Increase
Summer and Winter Playing Fees (sports clubs)	Nil Increase
Meals on Wheels / Day Centre Meals	10p per meal and then price frozen until 2023
School Meals	Nil Increase (and price frozen until April 2023)
Bereavement Fees	Nil Increase
Lido / Rhondda Heritage Park	Nil increase

- 6.4 With specific regard to:
- Meals on Wheels / Day Centre Meals - the 2020/21 meal price was £3.95 with the price increased for both to £4.05 for 2021/22. In terms of comparing across Wales, based on the latest information available, prices range between £3.30 and £5.65; and
 - School Meals – the price of a primary school meal is £2.55 and the free school meal value of a secondary meal £2.80, both prices frozen at this level since 2020/21.
- 6.5 The impact of the agreed changes set out in Table 6.1 reduces income by £185k in a full year (as compared to all fees and charges being increased by 1.7%).
- 6.6 In addition, a number of fees and charges decisions have previously been approved and accordingly have already been incorporated into the Council’s 2021/22 Budget Strategy. These are summarised in Table 6.2.

³ Income from fees and charges annually (£22M) – includes Adult Social Care income received from clients

Table 6.2 – Summary of decisions already approved

Area of charge	Decision approved
Adult Social Care Charges (non-residential care services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase from £90 to £100 per week in line with the revised limit determined by Welsh Government (Cabinet 18th July 2017)
Fixed Penalty Notice (for environmental crimes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set at £100 with effect from 1st April 2018 (Cabinet 25th January 2018)
Houses in Multiple Occupation - Licenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • License fees set for the period 2019/20 to 2023/24 (Cabinet 14th February 2019)
Bereavement fees and charges for war veterans and service men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% reduction to all Council bereavement fees incurred by families of deceased war veterans and service men and women resident in Rhondda Cynon Taf (Delegated Decision 8th May 2019)

- 6.7 A pilot was also approved at the [21st November 2019](#) Cabinet meeting to apply a reduced cremation fee for funeral directors offering a Direct Cremation⁴ in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Following the introduction of the pilot, 28 Direct Cremations have taken place at Glyntaff Crematorium equating to a reduction in income of £4k. As the pilot was still in place as at March 2021, no budgetary impact was built into the 2021/22 Revenue Budget. Since this time, Cabinet approved on the [29th April 2021](#) the continuation of offering a Direct Cremation at the reduced prescribed fee of £568 in line with the rate applied for the pilot scheme and also for the Direct Cremation fee level for 2022/23 onwards to be determined as part of Cabinet’s consideration of Council fees and charges each year.
- 6.8 For completeness, a full list of all 2021/22 fees and charges across all Council services can be accessed [here](#).

⁴ Direct Cremation - A “direct”, “simplicity” cremation or “cremation without ceremony” is where a funeral director arranges a service with no mourners and brings the deceased directly to the crematorium with no religious service or attendees. The fees and charges to the family of the deceased are significantly reduced making the service more affordable, particularly for those on low incomes.

Section 7 National and Local Pressures

7.0 Authority Wide Budgets

7.1 Appropriate sums must be set aside to cover a number of Authority Wide costs. These include the following:

Capital Financing

The projected level of capital charges are linked to the Council's Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy.

Levies

Levies are raised (against non-service specific budgets) by the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the Coroner, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the Glamorgan Archives (Joint Committee).

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

This demand led area of expenditure is in line with the Welsh Government national scheme introduced from financial year 2013/14.

Miscellaneous

The areas of expenditure held here include:

- Graduate and Apprenticeship programmes
- Trade Union Costs
- Local Government Elections
- Planning Appeals
- Former Authority Pension Costs
- Voluntary Termination Costs
- Local Government Pension Scheme including auto-enrolment
- Bank Charges
- Housing Benefit Subsidy Costs
- Energy / Invest to Save
- External Audit Fees
- Vehicle Replacement Funding
- City Deal Costs
- Insurance Costs
- Contribution to General Fund Balances
- Discretionary Non Domestic Rate Relief
- Apprenticeship Levy

7.2 A summary of the projected requirement for Authority Wide budgets from the current year (2021/22 budget) to 2024/25 is shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 – Forecasted Authority Wide Budget Requirement

Authority Wide Budgets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Current Budget	(Projected)	(Projected)	(Projected)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Financing	19,950	20,308	20,658	20,658
Levies	12,874	12,940	13,199	13,463
CTRS	25,334	26,183	26,968	27,777
Miscellaneous	14,205	14,794	15,817	16,339
Total	72,363	74,225	76,642	78,237
Change - Inc / (Dec)		1,862	2,416	1,596

The above position includes a contribution of £0.5M per year, until 2023/24, to replenish our General Fund Reserves by £1.5M.

7.3 Service Inescapable Pressures

7.4 There are clearly areas of our budget which are exposed to more uncontrollable spending requirements each year and which might arise from demand led or demographic changes, legislative or regulatory change, the effect of external market forces (and prices) and the financial implications of policy and service planning decisions made by the Council. It is also recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic will have an impact, of varying degrees, on each of the above uncontrollable spending requirements. These are **inescapable pressures** and include the ongoing implications of inflation and Living Wage on our External Contracts, the cost of pay awards for our teaching and non-teaching (APT&C) workforce, changes in pupil number projections, demand led social care pressures for adult services, children's services and additional learning needs, and assumptions around reductions in specific grants. Discussions are continuing between Welsh Government and Local Government around funding options should additional costs directly relating to Covid-19 and over and above the budget provision made by councils materialise.

7.5 The amount included for Service Inescapable Pressures within the Budget Requirement is shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 – Forecasted Inescapable Budget Pressures

Forecasted Inescapable Budget Pressures	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools	3,143	992	-564
Education and Inclusion Services	293	1,978	800
Community and Children's Services	3,825	4,697	6,715
Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services	1,633	1,214	230
Chief Executive's Division	419	11	11
Total	9,313	8,891	7,192
			25,396

7.6 Service Financial Risks

- 7.7 In addition to the above inescapable budget pressures, there are items of risk which have been identified and which are captured and estimated in financial terms (similar to inescapable budget pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic will have an impact, of varying degrees, on each risk area). A view is then taken on the potential overall likelihood of the risk materialising and the quantum of it which should be included in the early modelling of the budget requirement. As time progresses the risks will either become inescapable or will fall away, possibly with a longer-term impact.
- 7.8 The amount included for Service Financial Risks within the Budget Requirement is shown below in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 – Forecasted Service Financial Risks

Financial Risks	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Value of Risk Included	1,548	7,225	9,908

7.9 School (ISB) Requirements

- 7.10 Section 5 set out the context for school budgets noting their favourable treatment as compared to other Council services and the expectation that schools will continue to make a positive contribution toward balancing the overall Council budget. As part of modelling assumptions, pay and non-pay inflation pressures are fully funded together with estimated additional cost pressures associated with additional needs; this position is set within the current planning assumptions for Welsh Government settlement levels and recognising that there may still be a requirement for local efficiency saving planning at an individual school level. The modelled ISB budget increases are set out in Table 7.4 below.

Table 7.4 – School (ISB) Modelled Budget

Schools (ISB) Modelled Budget	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Modelled Budget	172,150	176,664	179,725
Modelled Increase	8,366	4,513	3,061

Section 8 Inflationary Pressures

8.1 Employee Inflation

8.2 For modelling purposes, initial estimates of employee inflation levels built into the medium term financial plan are teachers' (average) pay and non-teaching staff pay both increasing by 2% per year. For the 2022/23 financial year, a further uplift has been incorporated, on the basis that the 2021/22 pay negotiations are ongoing. Base budget provision for a pay award was built into the Council's 2021/22 revenue budget in line with the UK Government Spending Review in November 2020 that included a proposed pause of national public sector pay, an effective pay freeze for public sector staff with the exception of a pay increase of £250 per year for salary points below £24,000. Welsh Government did not receive any further funding in this respect from UK Government. Employee inflation forecasting will be kept under on-going review.

8.3 Preparations for the Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund triennial valuation (2022) is currently underway, the results of which will be taken into account as part of future and on-going modelling. For current modelling purposes over the period of this medium term plan, no changes to employer pension contribution rates have been assumed.

8.4 Non-Employee Inflation

8.5 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee continues to set monetary policy to meet a 2% inflation target. For the MTFP, inflation is included across all expenditure and income heads currently at 1.9%, 1.8% and 1.9% for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively. A number of specific cost areas where inflation is known or anticipated to differ from these rates have more appropriate inflationary allowances applied as detailed below.

8.6 Specific Inflation

8.7 There are some budget heads which are particularly volatile and susceptible to variations in rates of inflation which are outliers to the central forecasts. More detailed analysis and procurement intelligence is applied to uplifts for the following expenditure heads:

- Electricity
- Gas
- Fuel (Petrol)
- Food

8.8 The overall cost of inflation to the Council is summarised in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 – Forecasted Cost Of Inflation

Inflation	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employee Related	10,837	6,367	6,495
Non-Employee	4,793	4,251	4,522
Total	15,630	10,618	11,017
			37,266

8.9 The above includes inflationary costs for schools.

Section 9 Specific Grants

- 9.1 The Council is mindful of the opportunities that are likely to accrue by the Council attracting specific grants to supplement its base revenue budget. Whilst specific grants can dilute local accountability, the fact remains that in attracting such funding, it allows us to undertake projects that otherwise we may have had to defer or cancel.
- 9.2 By their nature, specific grants tend to be time-limited and involve an assessment process. It is important therefore, that any specific grant funded programme complements the Council's locally determined priorities. In addition, even if they are initially successful in attracting specific grants, authorities are restricted in their ability to confidently forward plan, as they have no guarantee of ongoing (specific grant) funding. Consequently, because specific grants are time limited it is vital to develop appropriate "exit strategies".
- 9.3 Whilst specific grants come from a number of sources, for 2021/22 the Welsh Government alone will provide over £1Billion in total to Welsh Local Authorities (excluding funding set aside in relation to the on-going financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local authorities). The allocation of specific grants remains a key feature of the Welsh Government's annual local government settlements, albeit the Welsh Government is committed to reduce this form of hypothecation in the longer term.
- 9.4 Table 9.1 sets out the main areas of expenditure and services which are funded currently by specific revenue grants.

Table 9.1 – Specific Revenue Grants

Award Body	Purpose	2020/21 Amount £M	2021/22 Amount £M
<u>Community & Children Services</u>			
Shaw Trust & Working Links	Subsidisation of Employment of Disabled Workers	0.303	0.278
Department for Work & Pensions	Housing Benefit Subsidy Bed & Breakfast Scheme	0.122	0.122
Welsh Government	Children's and Community Grant	13.442	14.097
	Communities 4 Work	1.093	1.112
	Inspire 2 Work	0.317	0.331
	Social Care Workforce Development Programme	0.556	0.556
	Substance Misuse Action Fund	3.810	3.810
	Community Learning	0.232	0.257
	Youth Support Grant	0.712	0.712
	Child Burial Grant	0.048	0.048
	Housing Support Grant	9.070	12.237

Award Body	Purpose	2020/21 Amount £M	2021/22 Amount £M
Welsh Government	Integrated Care Fund	3.310	3.680
	National Exercise Referral Scheme	0.168	0.168
	National Approach to Advocacy (Children's)	0.049	0.049
	Regional Facilitation Grant Arts Portfolio Wales	0.066	0.066
		0.150	0.150
Cwm Taf Health Board	Community Joint Care Programme	0.068	0.068
Heritage Lottery Fund	RCT's Sporting Heroes	0.032	0.032
Home Office	Police & Crime Commissioner	0.111	0.121
	Youth Justice Provision	0.517	0.438
Sport Wales	Disability Sport Wales Community Scheme	0.020	0.020
	Free Swimming	0.060	0.060
	Local Sport Plan	0.475	0.475
Total Community & Children's Services		34.731	38.887
<u>Education & Inclusion Services</u>			
Welsh Government	Post-16 Provision in Schools	9.805	10.322
	Education Improvement Grant (EIG) Delegated to Schools	9.010	9.030
	Education Improvement Grant (EIG) Admin	0.018	0.018
	Education Improvement Grant (EIG) Foundation Phase Non Maintained	0.145	0.160
	Pupil Development Grant Delegated to Schools (estimate)	7.238	7.292
	Pupil Development Grant Children Looked After (estimate)	0.358	0.395
	Local Authority Education Grant – Minority Ethnic & Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Learners	0.243	0.243
	Early Years Pupil Development Grant (estimate)	1.732	1.432
	Seren Network	0.045	0.074
	Nursery Childcare Administration	0.279	0.279
	Nursery Childcare (estimate)	2.549	2.309
	Additional Learning Needs Transformation Grant (estimate)	0.753	0.753

Award Body	Purpose	2020/21 Amount £M	2021/22 Amount £M
Welsh Government	Period Dignity in Communities	0.018	0.017
	Period Dignity in School	0.093	0.186
	Reduction in Infant Class Sizes Grant	0.432	0.500
	Out of School Childcare Grant	0.083	0.083
	Small and Rural Schools	0.000	0.128
	Professional Learning Grant (estimate)	0.944	0.955
	ICT Hwb in Schools Infrastructure Grant	0.242	1.246
	Education Grant - Emotional Wellbeing	0.121	0.000
	Education Grant - PDG Access - School uniform grant	0.504	0.504
	Education Grant – Counselling	0.000	0.143
	Education Grant – Interventions	0.000	0.049
	Education Grant – Training	0.000	0.031
	School Holiday Enrichment Programme (estimate)	0.000	0.065
	Elective Home Education	0.000	0.046
Rural Payments Agency	Infant Milk (Estimate)	0.471	0.472
Total Education & Inclusion Services		35.083	36.732
Chief Executives			
Department for Work & Pensions	Housing Benefit Administration Subsidy	0.779	0.701
Welsh Government	NDR Admin Grant	0.394	0.394
Total Chief Executives		1.173	1.095
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services			
Welsh Government	Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing Grant	0.030	0.030
	Sustainable Waste Management Grant	1.154	1.126
	Lead Local Flood Authority Grant	0.070	0.070
	Concessionary Fares	6.789	6.839
	Road Safety	0.125	0.057
	Bus Service Support	0.665	0.665
	Tomorrow's Valley Residual Waste	1.189	1.189

Award Body	Purpose	2020/21 Amount £M	2021/22 Amount £M
Welsh Government	Tomorrow's Valley Food Waste	0.064	0.064
Total Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services		10.086	10.040
TOTAL SPECIFIC REVENUE GRANTS		81.073	86.754

- 9.5 Assumptions are made in the MTFP about future levels of specific grants, in particular where they are effectively funding core services (e.g. the Sustainable Waste Management Grant which provides funding for our Recycling services and the Social Care Workforce Grant) and it is important that we seek to ensure their continuation beyond 2021/22.

Section 10 Summary Spend Requirements and Resource Availability

10.1 The impact of the aforementioned modelling, including schools, is aggregated into Table 10.1 to show the forecast budget position over the next 3 years. The modelling shows a projected budget gap over the 3 year period which needs to be addressed and closed with actions during the period. Whilst modelled over a three year period, the Council must also be mindful of its legal responsibility to set a balanced budget annually and for the forthcoming financial year this has to be completed before the 11th March 2022.

Table 10.1 – Summary Of Expenditure Requirements and Resources Available

Budget Requirement	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Additional Budget Requirement			
Inflation	10,407	7,097	7,392
Inescapables	6,170	7,899	7,756
Risks	1,548	7,225	9,908
Schools (Uplift)	8,366	4,513	3,061
Authority Wide	1,862	2,416	1,596
Budget Requirement	28,353	29,150	29,713
Additional Resources			
Council Tax	3,634	3,745	3,860
Transition Funding	-	711	
Social Services and Children's Services Specific Grants	-	-	-
WG Resource at +2%	8,088	8,249	8,414
WG Resource at +3%	12,131	12,495	12,870
WG Resource at +4%	16,175	16,822	17,495

Remaining Budget Gap at Welsh Government Settlement Levels				3 Year Budget Gap
2% Increase	17,343	17,156	17,439	51,937
3% Increase	13,299	12,910	12,983	39,191
4% Increase	9,255	8,583	8,358	26,196

10.2 Clearly a significant determinant on the budget gap is the level of funding which the Council receives from Welsh Government. Each 1% change in the level of settlement from Welsh Government equates to an approximate £4.0M change in resources available to the Council (based on 2021/22 settlement levels).

10.3 To further demonstrate the scale of our reliance on funding from WG, a cash flat level of settlement would result in a budget gap over each of the next 3 years as shown below.

0% Increase	25,430	25,406	25,853
--------------------	---------------	---------------	---------------

Section 11 Reserves Policy (General Fund Reserves and Earmarked Reserves)

- 11.1 Reserves play an important part of the overall financial management and financial standing of the Council. The Council's General Reserve balances at 31st March 2020⁵ amounted to £8.709M and following an in-year over-spend for the 2020/21 financial year of £0.204M, the remaining balance at 31st March 2021 is £8.505M (draft position, subject to audit). The level of general reserves will be kept under on-going review by the Council's Section 151 Officer and replenished going forward, as appropriate, and taking into account the overall quantum of the budget and the financial risks therein and facing the Council.
- 11.2 The Council also holds Earmarked Reserves which are sums set aside for specific purposes. The full schedule of reserves is attached at Annex 3 (as at the draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21).
- 11.3 All reserves are reviewed at least twice yearly, at budget setting stage and as part of the year end closure of accounts process. In between, changes in risk and potential liabilities are continuously monitored as part of the Council's financial management and budgetary control arrangements and changes in reserve levels are actioned, following elected Member approval, as appropriate.
- 11.4 The Council has used reserves prudently as part of supporting its annual budget strategy for a number of years. Whilst reserves can be used to balance the budget, this alone is not a sustainable strategy and more permanent changes / reductions to the base budget must be made. With regard to the budget gaps modelled in Section 10, to balance the budget, for example, based on a +3% per annum Welsh Government settlement level, for the next 3 years using reserves alone would require the use of over £78M of reserves and the Council would still have a need to reduce its base budget by over £39M.
- 11.5 The Council holds reserves for the following purposes:

Capital, Treasury and Insurance Reserves

Reserve	Purpose
Capital Developments	Resources set-aside from revenue budget, earmarked to fund the Council's approved 3-year capital programme.
Treasury Management Reserve	Funding for known and potential future pressures upon the Capital Financing budget.

⁵ General Reserve Balances at 31st March 2020 – General Reserve balances at 31st March 2019 amounted to £10.498M and following the approved in-year allocation of £1.5M to support the Council's recovery work from Storm Dennis coupled with an in-year overspend of £0.289M, the remaining balance at 31st March 2020 was £8.709M.

Insurance Reserve	To provide for estimated costs of incidents that have occurred during the policy year but have not yet resulted in a claim being received.
--------------------------	--

Other Revenue Related Reserves

Reserve	Purpose
Revenue Budget Strategy 2021/22	Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation Reserve (transitional funding) to be released to fund the 2021/22 Budget Strategy.
Joint Committee Reserve	Reflects the Council's share of General and Earmarked Reserves of the Joint Committees in which it has an interest.
Revenue Grant Reserves (IFRS)	Carry forward of Revenue Grants not yet applied to spend – required accounting treatment to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards.
Financial Management and Human Resources Risk Management	Resources set aside as cover for future liabilities relating to various risks identified and being managed.
Infrastructure / Investment	To fund current and future costs of maintaining and enhancing infrastructure across the County Borough.
Prior Year Commitments	Carry forward of existing funding to finance projects for which commitments have already been made in the prior year.
Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation	Resources set aside as transitional (one-off) funding to support the Council's medium-term financial and service planning requirements.
Other Specific Reserves	Represents a number of reserves held for specific and identified purposes.
Invest to Save	Funding identified (pump priming) to support Invest to Save opportunities as and when they arise.

Section 12 Balancing the Budget

- 12.1 Whilst the budget setting process is necessarily and statutorily an annual process, this Council has for a number of years moved away from the annual cycle for financial planning purposes and seeks to address the budget gap on an ongoing basis over the medium term period.
- 12.2 Part of this process is the early identification and delivery of base budget reducing measures in-year and therefore before the start of a financial year. This has enabled the Council to deliver financial savings early and to replenish our Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation Reserve which we have used proactively as part of our budget strategy approach for a number of years.
- 12.3 Our priority and focus has continued to be ensuring that our residents, communities and businesses are protected and supported and at the same time, resuming the provision of services in line with national rules and where deemed safe to do so. Options will now be developed which can help address the range of potential budget gaps which we will face but it is important that in doing so we ensure that we maintain our valued and critical services.
- 12.4 We have taken the opportunity to “lock in” £4.6M of budget efficiencies as a result of transformation and service delivery changes made during the pandemic, with these being incorporated into our 2021/22 Revenue Budget. This position is now being built upon, as an on-going programme of work, to assess further budget saving opportunities whilst ensuring service resilience is maintained. This includes:
- a. Efficiency – we have for many years delivered significant efficiency savings as part of our ongoing work and which have contributed to closing the budget gaps we have faced. Over the last 3 years we have delivered over £16M of efficiency savings. It is important that we maximise our efficiency more than ever as part of balancing next year’s budget in order to ensure that we preserve and where possible enhance our critical services.
 - b. Workforce – a review of the Council’s Senior Management structure and all service areas reviewing workforce requirements, informed by service self- evaluation and service delivery planning arrangements;
 - c. Digitisation and an updated Digital Strategy – providing the framework for services to continue to use digital solutions to support further transformational change, recognising that such solutions do not meet the needs of all of our residents.
 - d. A Built Asset Review - that will set out opportunities around the future use and optimisation of the Council’s buildings.
 - e. Social Services Transformation Programme - including our significant on-going commitment and investment in the provision of Extra Care facilities. The financial impact of our ongoing preventative strategy will continue to be modelled alongside changes in demand for services linked to the demographic profile of the County Borough.

- f. Review of base budget requirements - at both a service level and an authority wide level, with ongoing modelling around key service pressures including inflationary requirements, contractual arrangements and capital charges.
- g. Invest to save – exploring options that will maximise opportunities to invest for the long term, benefiting residents and reducing our core ongoing spend requirements in doing so.

12.5 As part of progressing the above programme of work, the Council will collaborate and work with others where it is for the benefit of Rhondda Cynon Taf, with the overall approach aligned to the Council's strategy of maximising opportunities across the following areas: Digitalisation; Commercialism; Early Intervention and Prevention; Independence; and Efficient and Effective Organisation.

Section 13 Capital Programme

- 13.1 The Council's 3 year capital programme, 2021/22 to 2023/24 was agreed by Council on the 10th March 2021.
- 13.2 The three year Capital Programme is a key component of the overall Medium Term Financial Planning and Resources Strategy for this Council. Targeted capital investment can make a significant impact on service delivery and used effectively, is able to underpin the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities, where relevant.
- 13.3 The three year programme amounted to £116M and includes further additional one-off investment of £9.4M in priorities aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan (this comprising of £5.484M through the realignment of existing earmarked reserves following a review and assessment of such reserves, £1.137M through the identification of core capital underspend and £2.779M of additional Welsh Government capital funding).
- 13.4 The rolling 3 year programme is reviewed and determined annually (in March of each year) and provides service managers with the opportunity to plan investment in our infrastructure and assets over the medium term.
- 13.5 A summary of the current 3 year programme is provided in Table 13.1.

Table 13.1 : THREE YEAR SUMMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

GROUP	BUDGET		
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£M	£M	£M
Community & Children's Services			
Adult & Children's Services	4.703	1.995	0.495
Public Health, Protection & Community Services	1.633	0.495	0.495
Education & Inclusion Services			
Schools	17.565	0.342	0.140
Supplementary Capital Programme	7.170	3.875	3.875
Chief Executive's Division			
Finance & Digital Services	0.700	0.700	0.700
Corporate Estates	1.200	0.925	0.925
Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services			
Planning & Regeneration	6.726	0.763	0.600
Private Sector Housing	13.522	5.950	5.150
Highways Technical Services	12.949	1.805	1.805
Strategic Projects	12.076	0.165	0.165
Waste Strategy	0.888	0.000	0.000
Fleet	2.081	1.573	1.573
Buildings	0.100	0.100	0.100
TOTAL CAPITAL BUDGET	81.313	18.688	16.023

Section 14 Consultation and Scrutiny

- 14.1 Following consideration of this MTFP by Cabinet, it is proposed that this document and the planning assumptions will be reported to full Council and thereafter be made available to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee, as part of the consultation on the draft 2022/23 budget strategy.
- 14.2 The MTFP will be used as a basis of planning for our 2022/23 budget strategy consultation processes, updated as appropriate to reflect the implications of the provisional local government settlement which is due to be received in autumn 2021.

Section 15 Other Relevant Documents

Below are links to other documents which are relevant to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Budget Book

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Performancebudgetsandspending/Councilbudgets.aspx>

Statements of Account

2018/19 Audited Statement of Accounts -

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Performancebudgetsandspending/StatementofAccounts.aspx>

2019/20 Audit Statement of Accounts –

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Performancebudgetsandspending/RelatedDocuments/StatementofAccounts/StatementofAccounts2019to2020.pdf>

2021/22 Capital Strategy Report incorporating Prudential Indicators

<https://rctcbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s25330/Report.pdf?LLL=0>

2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy incorporating Investment Strategy, Treasury Management Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement

<https://rctcbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s25360/Report.pdf?LLL=0>

Council Performance Reports

Quarter 4 2019/20 -

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Cabinet/2020/07/28/Reports/Item7CouncilPerformanceReport31stMarch2020YearEnd.pdf>

Quarter 4 2020/21 – link to be added subject to approval by Cabinet on 20th July 2021

Corporate Plan (2020-2024)

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/Council/2020/03/04/Reports/AgendaItem6CouncilsDraftCorporatePlan20202024.pdf>

Council 3 Year Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24

<https://rctcbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s25359/Report.pdf?LLL=0>

GENERAL FUND REVENUE : SERVICES PROVIDED		
2020/21 Budget £M		2021/22 Budget £M
	<u>Community & Children's Services</u>	
91.604	Adult Services	94.877
49.369	Children's Services	54.466
2.567	Transformation	2.618
16.395	Public Health, Protection & Community Services	16.625
159.935		168.586
	<u>Education & Inclusion Services</u>	
30.582	Education & Inclusion Services (Non Delegated)	31.941
161.578	Delegated Schools	163.784
192.160		195.725
	<u>Chief Executive</u>	
0.391	Chief Executive	0.388
2.913	Democratic Services & Communications	2.948
11.997	Human Resources	12.088
1.636	Legal Services	1.613
10.702	Finance & Digital Services	10.840
3.255	Corporate Estates	2.980
30.894		30.857
	<u>Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services</u>	
2.791	Prosperity & Development Services	2.778
52.495	Frontline Services	57.594
55.286		60.372
438.275	Total Group Budgets	455.540
	<u>Authority Wide Budgets</u>	
19.713	Capital Financing	19.950
12.438	Levies	12.874
13.216	Miscellaneous	13.780
0.425	NDR Relief	0.425
24.680	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	25.334
70.472	Total Authority Wide Budgets	72.363
508.747	TOTAL REVENUE BUDGET	527.903

Council Revenue Budget by Priority Area

Budget 2020/21	Priority Area	Budget 2021/22
£'000		£'000
	<u>PEOPLE</u>	
49,837	Children's Services	55,042
97,108	Adult Services	100,331
4,151	Leisure (including physical participation) / Heritage Sites	4,117
151,096		159,490
	<u>PLACES</u>	
7,435	Libraries / Parks / Play Areas	7,271
427	Anti-Social Behaviour / Domestic Violence / Substance Misuse	427
648	Crime Reduction (inc hate crime)	642
4,787	Highway cleanliness	5,279
18,349	Waste / Recycling	20,965
9,052	Highways Infrastructure and Road Maintenance / Condition	9,931
40,697		44,515
	<u>PROSPERITY</u>	
27,028	Economically active people / Job Seekers Allowance Claimants / Job Creation / Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) / Town Centres	27,394
204,083	School Attainment	206,996
425	Town Centre Vacancy Rates (businesses)	425
1,109	Housing / Affordable Housing Delivered / Homelessness Prevention	1,298
232,646		236,113
	<u>LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS</u>	
1,505	Customer Care	1,513
5,058	Office Accommodation/Buildings	5,781
6,563		7,294
431,003	TOTAL SPEND ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES	447,412
4,867	REGULATORY PUBLIC SERVICES	5,799
2,284	OTHER SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC	2,290
45,367	AUTHORITY WIDE COSTS	46,604
25,226	CORE SUPPORT	25,798
508,747	TOTAL COUNCIL BUDGET	527,903

COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY PRIORITY AREA

Priority/Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2021 - 2024			
	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget	2023/24 Budget	Total 3 Year Budget
	£M	£M	£M	£M
People				
Adult Services	10.088	6.773	5.293	22.154
Children's Services	0.428	0.422	0.417	1.267
Total - People	10.516	7.195	5.710	23.421
Places				
Parks, Leisure, Libraries, Culture & Heritage, Open Spaces	2.596	0.260	0.260	3.116
Crime Reduction	0.050	0.058	0.072	0.180
Highways Cleanliness	0.160	0.105	0.069	0.334
Highways Infrastructure	26.440	2.070	3.422	31.932
Waste Strategy	1.913	1.410	0.025	3.348
Total - Places	31.159	3.903	3.848	38.910
Prosperity				
School Attainment	24.739	4.217	4.015	32.971
Business Support	3.336	0.363	0.200	3.899
Town Centres	1.850	0.400	0.400	2.650
Housing	7.832	0.800	-	8.632
Total - Prosperity	37.757	5.780	4.615	48.152
Living Within Our Means				
Management and rationalisation of service accommodation	0.975	0.975	0.975	2.925
Total - Living Within Our Means	0.975	0.975	0.975	2.925
Total Capital Budget Allocated to Council Priorities	80.407	17.853	15.148	113.408
Regulatory Public Services	0.182	0.135	0.175	0.492
Authority Wide Costs	0.024	-	-	0.024
Core ICT Systems Support	0.700	0.700	0.700	2.100
Total Capital Budget	81.313	18.688	16.023	116.024

COUNCIL EARMARKED RESERVES

Capital, Treasury and Insurance Reserves

Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31/03/20 £'000	Transfers Out £'000	Transfers In £'000	Balance at 31/03/21 £'000
Capital Developments	Resources set-aside from revenue budget, earmarked to fund the Council's approved 3-year capital programme.	59,029	(4,003)	11,339	66,365
Treasury Management Reserve	Funding for known and potential future pressures upon the Capital Financing budget.	2,465	0	0	2,465
Insurance Reserve	To provide for estimated costs of incidents that have occurred during the policy year but have not yet resulted in a claim being received.	8,122	(1,123)	1,000	7,999
Total		69,616	(5,126)	12,339	76,829

Other Revenue Related Reserves

Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31/03/20 £'000	Transfers Out £'000	Transfers In £'000	Balance at 31/03/21 £'000
Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21	Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation (transitional funding) to be released to fund the 2020/21 budget.	800	(800)	0	0
Revenue Budget Strategy 2021/22	Medium Term Financial Planning & Service Transformation (transitional funding) to be released to fund the 2021/22 budget.	0	0	711	711
Joint Committee Reserve	Reflects the Council's share of General and Earmarked Reserves of the Joint Committees in which it has an interest.	1,243	(574)	0	669
Revenue Grant Reserves (IFRS)	Carry forward of Revenue Grants not yet applied to spend - required accounting treatment to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards.	2,600	(2,600)	4,824	4,824
Financial Management and Human Resources Risk Management	Resources set aside as cover for future liabilities relating to various risks identified and being managed.	13,287	(3,658)	22,012	31,641
Investment / Infrastructure	To fund current and future costs of maintaining and enhancing infrastructure across the County Borough	6,235	(6,054)	9,316	9,497
Prior Year Commitments	Carry forward of existing funding to finance projects for which commitments have already been made in the prior year.	8,416	(1,940)	12,160	18,636
Medium Term Financial Planning and Service Transformation	Resources set aside as transitional (one-off) funding to support the Council's medium-term financial and service planning requirements.	3,562	(710)	767	3,619
Other Specific Reserves	Represents a number of reserves held for specific and identified purposes.	2,885	(702)	975	3,158
Invest to Save	Funding identified (pump priming) to support Invest to Save opportunities as and when they arise.	0	0	1,036	1,036
Total		39,028	(17,038)	51,801	73,791

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank