



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

A hybrid meeting of the CABINET will be held on
Tuesday, 29th November, 2022 at 1.00 pm

Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 07385401954)

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, 25 November 2022 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

It is the intention to live stream this meeting, details of which can be accessed [here](#).

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. COMMENCEMENT OF THE AUTHORITY'S REVIEW OF THE LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

To receive the report of the Director of Frontline Services, which seeks to advise the Cabinet of the requirements to review and produce a revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (formerly known as a Flood Risk Management Plan), as required under

Section 10 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010. The report will further advise Members of the program of work required to deliver the review of the LFRMS and Action Plan, in accordance with the statutory timeframe stipulated by Welsh Government.

(Pages 5 - 14)

3. WASTE SERVICES - REVISED WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

To receive the report of the Director of Frontline Services which outlines proposals for revisions to the Council's operational waste management processes with a view to considering future arrangements for the collection of refuse and recycling designed to aid an increase in the rate of recycling across RCT which will also deliver financial efficiencies; and seeks Cabinet's approval to initiate a consultation exercise in respect of the options for change as presented in the report.

(Pages 15 - 44)

4. SERVICE REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE

To receive the report of the Director of Education and Inclusion Services which seeks Cabinet permission to assess the Council's Community Meals Service and to consult on the future of the service.

(Pages 45 - 100)

5. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.



Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services

Circulation: -

Councillors: Councillor A Morgan (Chair)
Councillor M Webber (Deputy Chair)
Councillor G Caple
Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon
Councillor M Norris
Councillor B Harris

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

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29th NOVEMBER 2022

COMMENCEMENT OF THE AUTHORITY'S REVIEW OF THE LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER; THE LEADER OF THE
COUNCIL; CLLR ANDREW MORGAN.**

AUTHOR(s): Andrew Stone, Head of Flood Risk Management and Strategic
Projects
Catrin Evans, Flood Risk Management Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the requirements to review and produce a revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (formerly known as a Flood Risk Management Plan), as required under Section 10 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010.
- 1.2 The Report will further advise members of the program of work required to deliver the review of the LFRMS and Action Plan, in accordance with the statutory timeframe stipulated by Welsh Government.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To commence the review of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan.
- 2.2 To note the indicative timescales, actions and reports being brought to Cabinet and Climate Change, Frontline Services & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in Appendix 1.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The review of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan meets the requirements under Section 10 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following the significant flooding in England and Wales in 2007, the UK government appointed Sir Michael Pitt to undertake an independent and detailed review of flood risk management in England. Pitt's recommendations were wide ranging and recognized the public did not understand nor particularly care what type of flooding they were suffering. He also noted that they were not bothered which organisation took the lead in dealing with the flooding as long as someone acted in order to prevent its reoccurrence.

- 4.2 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 came into force in April 2010, generally incorporating Pitt's recommendations.

- 4.3 Under the Act, the Council has been given the additional responsibility of dealing with flooding from local sources (ordinary watercourse, surface water and groundwater) as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

- 4.4 Under Section 10 of the Act, RCTCBC must "develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management". RCTCBC must:

- ensure the strategy is consistent with the National Strategy
- consult other risk management authorities and the public on the LFRMS
- publish a summary of its LFRMS
- consider issuing guidance about the application of the LFRMS
- submit a draft of the LFRMS to the Welsh Ministers for review

Welsh Government (WG) may approve with or without modification or reject it.

5. NATIONAL STRATEGY

- 5.1 The second iteration of the National Strategy on Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM), replacing the 2011 version, was published by the Welsh Ministers in October 2020¹.

¹ [National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales \(English\) \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/national-strategy-for-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-in-wales-english)

- 5.2 The aim of the National Strategy is to ‘*reduce the risks to people and communities from flooding and coastal erosion*’. To facilitate the overarching aim, the strategy sets out 5 core objectives which require the following:
1. Improving our understanding and communication of risk
 2. Preparedness and building resilience
 3. Prioritising investment in the most at risk communities
 4. Preventing more people becoming exposed to risk
 5. Providing an effective and sustained response to events
- 5.3 The publication of the National Strategy for FCERM in Wales triggers the requirements under Section 10 (5) of the FWMA 2010 for the Council as LLFA to review its current LFRMS and publish a revised version within 2 years of the National Strategy publication. It has been advised by the WG, however, that the date for publication of the revised LFRMS is October 2023.
- 5.4 At the time of writing, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) has suggested that due to delays in the production of Natural Resources Wales’s updated Flood Risk Assessment Wales dataset and WG guidance, the publication date for the LFRMS and Action Plan may be delayed to March 2024.
- 5.4 The revised LFRMS must be consistent with the objectives outlined within the updated National Strategy.

6. THE LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 6.1 RCTCBC published their initial LFRMS in January 2013² in accordance with Section 10 of the FWMA 2010. The LFRMS defines who the Risk Management Authorities (RMA) are, what their function is and what their responsibilities are. The strategy further identifies the Local Objectives and Measures being implemented for the short, medium and long term to manage flood risk from local sources (ordinary watercourses, surface water and groundwater) within the authority.
- 6.2 RCTCBC is also required to produce a Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP), under the 2009 Flood Risk Regulations. RCTCBC published their FRMP in November 2015³ in accordance with Flood Risk Regulations 2009. The FRMP developed the objectives and high-level actions outlined in our 2013 LFRMS into a detailed plan for managing local flood risk in our communities.

² [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, January 2013](#)

³ [Flood Risk Management Plan, November 2015](#)

- 6.3 To assist LLFAs when producing their revised LFRMS and to provide clarity and consistency across Local Strategies produced in Wales, the WLGA have, in consultation with a focus group of Local Authorities including this council, prepared a LFRMS template and guidance.
- 6.4 The general structure of the LFRMS will be as follows:
1. Introduction
 2. How the strategy responds to climate change
 3. Coordination with other strategic plans, key stakeholders / RMAs
 4. Roles and responsibilities for managing flood risk in RCT
 5. Strategic Objectives for Managing Flood Risk in RCT
 6. What is the risk of flooding in RCT?
 7. Funding and Prioritisation
 8. Flood Measures
 9. Flood Action Plan
 10. Environmental assessments
 11. Monitoring Progress
- 6.5 At the time of the writing, the updated guidance on the structure of the LFRMS has not yet been published by the Welsh Government. Whilst the Council previously published the LFRMS and FRMP separately, the guidance will likely outline that the revised LFRMS will consolidate the two documents into one single document. This will reduce complexity and enable the LLFA to communicate and manage local flood risk more effectively.
- 6.6 It has been established that the LFRMS requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). These will be developed alongside the LFRMS.
- 6.7 An initial non-statutory “initial public Consultation” via a questionnaire will be published prior to the drafting of the revised LFRMS; however, the Draft LFRMS and accompanying environmental reports (SEA and HRA) will require an additional statutory 6-week consultation. The initial public consultation will identify what is important for the constituents of RCT.
- 6.8 A high-level programme and timeline for the implementation of the review of the LFRMS and Action Plan is included in Appendix 1 and reflects the current known completion date of October 2023. However, as stated in 4.4 there are continuing delays to some essential information that may push this back the required completion date to March 2024.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 7.1 An Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment screening form will be prepared alongside the drafting of the LFRMS and the associated statutory consultation.

8. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATION

- 8.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) will be prepared alongside the drafting of the LFRMS and the associated statutory consultation.

9. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 9.1 It is a requirement of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 for the LLFA to consult on the LFRMS and accompanying environmental documents (SEA and HRA) with the public and risk management authorities that may be affected by the strategy.
- 9.2 An initial non-statutory “initial public consultation” via a questionnaire will also be published prior to the drafting of the LFRMS.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 10.1. The costs associated to the review of the LFRMS and Action Plan, and to facilitate the consultations, is supported by Revenue grant funding provided by the WG.
- 10.2 The measures and actions placed as part of the LFRMS and Flood Action Plan will incur costs over the life cycle of the LFRMS. In developing the LFRMS and Action Plan, the costs and benefits of the measures and actions will be reviewed as part of the drafting process and submitted to Cabinet for approval as part of report for Draft LFRMS, SEA & HRA, Appendix 1 item 8.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 There are legal implications, and the relevant legislation has been considered in Section 4-6.

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

- 12.1 The development of the LFRMS will identify how the detailed flood risk objectives, measures and actions align with local policies such as the Council's Corporate Plan "Making a Difference" 2020-2024, the Council's former LFRMS and FRMP produced in 2013 and 2015, respectively and reflect the sustainable development principles of the Well-being for Future Generations Act and will contribute to all seven national goals.
- 12.2 The development of the LFRMS will also identify opportunities to align with emerging local policies such as the Council's revised Local Development Plan and the Council's Tackling Climate Change Strategy.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 Since the adoption of our LFRMS in 2013, RCTCBC has been subject to significant rainfall and widespread flooding. This includes the storm events of February 2020, which saw over 1500 properties flooded, damages to critical highway and drainage infrastructure and major disruption to the communities of RCT.
- 13.2 Following the publication of the Welsh Government's National Strategy on FCERM in October 2020, triggering the requirement under S10 of the FWMA for the Council as LLFA to review and update its LFRMS, there is now a huge opportunity within this review to set a sustainable strategy to manage flood risk and build resilience and facilitate adaptation for future generations. This will be progressed over the next 12-18 months.
- 13.3 Although the review of the LFRMS is a statutory requirement, there is significant opportunity to review the current LFRMS alongside development of the revised Local Development Plan and the Council's Tackling Climate Change Strategy to ensure a cohesive response to the future challenges presented by increasing flood risk due to climate change.

Other Information: -

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

Appendix 1: High-level Programme & Timeline

ID	Task Name	Description	Timescale
1	Report to SLT/Cabinet - Commencement of the Authority's revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy & Action Plan	To advise members of the requirements to produce a revised LFRMS and Action Plan, as required under Section 10 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, and to acknowledge the commencement of the revised LFRMS and Action Plan.	Oct – Nov 2022
2	Initial Public Consultation for the LFRMS (non-statutory)	The initial public consultation for the LFRMS is intended to understand what key themes the public want the revised LFRMS to focus and improve on. The consultation will also provide the LLFA with an understanding of the public's perception of flood risk in RCT. The consultation period will last 4-6 weeks.	Dec – Jan 2023
3	Consider consultation responses	The responses received by the public will help inform the drafting of the revised LFRMS and Action Plan.	Jan 2023
4	Draft LFRMS & Action Plan	The drafting of the revised LFRMS and Action Plan	Jan – Apr 2023
5	Scoping Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The drafting of the revised SEA	Jan – Apr 2023
6	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	The drafting of the revised HRA	Jan – Apr 2023
7	Report to Climate Change, Frontline Services & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	To provide the committee with an overview of the consultation responses and show how they will be included in the Draft LFRMS	March- April 2023
8	Report to Cabinet for Approval for Draft LFRMS, SEA & HRA	To commence formal statutory consultation on the Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, the Environment Report and the Habitats Regulations Assessment.	May – Jun 2023
9	Statutory Public Consultation on Draft LFRMS, SEA, HRA & EIA	Following approval from Cabinet, the draft LFRMS and Action Plan, along with accompanying documents, will be published for statutory consultation for a period of 6 weeks.	Jun – Jul 2023

Appendix 1: High-level Programme & Timeline (Continued)

ID	Task Name	Description	Timescale
10	Consider consultation responses	The responses received inform the re-drafting of the revised LFRMS and Action Plan (if required).	Jul 2023
11	Final LFRMS, SEA, HRA & EIA	Complete the final LFRMS and accompanying documents.	Aug 2023
12	Report to Cabinet for Approval for Final LFRMS, SEA, HRA, EIA	To adopt the LFRMS and to submit the LFRMS and accompanying reports to the WG for Ministerial approval.	Sep – Oct 2023
13	Submit Final LFRMS for Welsh Government approval	Submit the LFRMS and accompanying reports to the WG for Ministerial approval.	Oct 2023
14	Publish Final LFRMS	Publish LFRMS onto the Council's website.	Oct 2023
15	Potential revised publication date for final LFRMS	Revised date for submission and publication of final LFRMS	Mar 2024

Note: that due to the non-published WG guidance and the potential for an extension by WG to March 2024 the high level programme & timescales may need to be flexible. This will be reported in all future reports to Cabinet.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29th NOVEMBER 2022

WASTE SERVICES – REVISED WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – FRONTLINE SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE, (CLLR A CRIMMINGS), AND THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (CLLR A MORGAN)

Author: Roger Waters, Director – Frontline Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to:
- (i) Outline proposals for revisions to the Council's operational waste management processes with a view to considering future arrangements for the collection of refuse and recycling designed to aid an increase in the rate of recycling across RCT which will also deliver financial efficiencies; and
 - (ii) seek Cabinet's approval to initiate a consultation exercise in respect of the options for change as presented in the report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet notes the content of the report and duly resolves to initiate a public consultation and engagement exercise on the option for change, namely:
- (i) The collection of residual household waste on a 3-weekly basis for all domestic waste collections.
 - (ii) Presentation of waste on a 3-weekly basis will be as follows; strict volume control measures will apply to all domestic waste, namely:
 - (a) a maximum of 3 black bags per household, (for those properties with existing black bag waste collections),
 - (b) no side waste rule continues for those households with large wheelie bin collections; and

- 2.2 Initiate a trial of the use of reusable recycling sacks for the collection of dry mixed recycling, (DMR).
- 2.3 That, subject to 2.1 and 2.2 above, feedback from the consultation/ engagement activity and the trial are each reported back to Cabinet in order for Cabinet to determine whether, and if so how, they would wish to proceed with the option for change.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan, ***Making A Difference (2020- 2024)*** sets out the Council's commitments to Keeping RCT clean through efficient street cleaning services, minimising the amount of waste we send to landfill, achieving our recycling targets through weekly recycling and regular refuse collections, and reducing our carbon footprint.
- 3.2 Additionally, the Welsh Government's strategy to make the circular economy in Wales a reality, ***Beyond Recycling***, stipulates the next minimum target for the recycling of household waste is 70% by 2025, as we look to maintain our trajectory towards zero waste nation by 2050.
- 3.3 Further, Council strategy; ***Making Rhondda Cynon Taf Carbon Neutral by 2030***, commits the Council to ensuring it recycles or reuses 80% of all municipal waste by 2025 by supporting residents and businesses on initiatives that promote waste minimisation and reuse of materials, as well as investing in technology to increase the amount of waste we recycle and reuse locally.
- 3.4 All Welsh Local Authorities work towards recycling targets set by Welsh Government and, as noted above, the next milestone target is for 2025 where 70% of waste collected must be recyclable. (Failure to reach these targets will result in the Council being issued with heavy financial penalties).

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 RCT currently collects residual household waste fortnightly, (with Commercial waste collections taking place weekly apart from customers from RCT Primary Schools, who have fortnightly collections). Recent analysis of the Council's recycling rate showed that it is currently at 67.48%.
- 4.2 The current situation sees domestic waste in the Rhondda collected via black bags with the Cynon and Taf having collections via wheelie bins.
- 4.3 There are currently 13 Councils which collect household waste on a fortnightly basis, with an average recycling rate of 66.27%.

- 4.4 Additionally, there are currently 6 Councils which collect waste on a 3-weekly basis, with an average recycling rate of 66.79%.
- 4.5. Finally, 1 Council collects waste on a weekly basis, with a recycling rate of 63.02% and 1 Council collects waste on a 4-weekly basis with a recycling rate of 70.51%.
- 4.6 Of all 22 Councils in Wales, those with the highest recycling rates, (i.e. those with current rates in excess of 70%, namely: Bridgend CBC, Pembrokeshire CC, The Vale of Glamorgan CBC, Conwy CBC and Monmouthshire CC), all have strict volume controls on the amount of waste they collect, regardless of collection frequency. (Please see Appendix 1 for further information).

5. THE MOVE TO 3-WEEKLY REFUSE COLLECTIONS ACROSS RCT

- 5.1 When undertaking a study to model the potential impact of changing collection frequency, food waste yield data was used to create a baseline; it is seen as a good indicator for other streams of recycling.
- 5.2 Based on recent data, and noting comparisons with other Welsh Council's, there would appear to be no substantial evidence to suggest that there would be a significant increase in food waste yield per household resulting from a move to 3-weekly waste collections on their own in isolation. However, there is good evidence to suggest that accompanied with strong volume control measures such as limiting the amount of general waste that can be presented, (i.e. a maximum of 3 black bags per household, per collection or no side waste for those with large wheelie bin collections), then a move to 3-weekly collections would be beneficial.
- 5.3 It is estimated that by adopting this approach across RCT, it could lead to as much as a 20% increase, which would result in an additional food waste yield per household generating around 2,600 Tonnes per annum additional recycling.
- 5.4 Achieving additional food waste recycling of circa 2,600T per year, would enable estimated processing cost savings of up to £350k in a full year.
- 5.5 When applying these assumptions to 2021 data, the projected additional 2,600 Tonne increase would have equated a 1.9% increase in the Council's overall recycling rate, (increasing from 67.48% to 69.38%). Furthermore, it is anticipated that there will also be an uplift in the dry recycling to add to this, but this is difficult to reliably quantify at this time.
- 5.6 Moving to 3-weekly collections will also lead to a reduction in refuse collection rounds, which is likely to have an impact on the current staffing model of Waste Services. However, any reductions to the staffing model will be managed through our agreed employment procedures, which will include the use of the Council's Redeployment and Voluntary Early Retirement / Voluntary Redundancy Schemes.

- 5.7 Further, it is envisaged that a move to 3-weekly collections will also result in a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint. The Service currently utilises 60 Refuse Collection Vehicles, (RCVs), to undertake waste and recycling collection rounds and it is estimated that as many as 4 of these vehicles could be saved, (and removed from the Council's Fleet).
- 5.8 Based on removing two 26t vehicles and two 22t vehicles, estimated vehicle running cost savings would be £80k in a full year, (noting that a reduction in vehicle replacement capital expenditure will also be realised over the medium term).
- 5.9 A recent report from the Carbon Trust identified the Council's fleet contributing 7% of the Council's baseline carbon footprint. As part of the proposed service change, the removal of four RCVs, with annual journeys totalling more than 32k miles, would equate to saving of approximately 100TCO₂e per year. This can be seen as part of a phased approach to give the Council options and flexibility going forward to help ensure its Carbon Footprint is lowered and zero emissions targets are met in line with wider strategies and local plans.

6. THE TRIAL OF REUSEABLE RECYCLING SACKS

- 6.1 The Council currently issues single-use clear plastic bags to residents for the purpose of presenting their dry mixed recycling at the kerbside.
- 6.2 Records show that the Council purchased 30.2 million single use bags during 2021/22, at a cost of £877k (£867k full year estimated cost for 2022/23).
- 6.3 In November 2021 the Council issued reusable sacks for green waste collection as a replacement for the single use plastic bags. Implemented successfully, it also led to saving on the use of 3 million single-use recycling bags and it is considered that a switch to reusable bags for the collection of dry mixed recycling would result in an even higher number of single-use bags no longer being required.
- 6.4 An initial assessment of the potential to move to using reusable sacks has been undertaken and is summarised below, with further detail on technical, operational considerations and observations from initial trials included at Appendix 2.
- 6.5 Officers have carried out an initial technical assessment of the potential switch to reusable bags for kerbside recycling. Trials have taken place at Bryn Pica using the Council's existing reusable bags, as well as other sample bags provided by the same supplier, (many of which are in use by other Councils for the collection of domestic tin and plastic waste). The trials were limited to general observations regarding volume, weight, contamination and manual handling.

- 6.6 There are many examples of Waste Collection Authorities within the UK using reusable sacks for the collection of recyclable materials. Reusable bags can be considered to be a more sustainable option than single-use plastic bags, although further investigations into their service life would need to be undertaken to more accurately quantify annual cost savings, as it is envisaged that replacement reusable sacks would be required after a few years.
- 6.7 However, there is no evidence to suggest that a change to reusable sacks will increase the Council's overall recycling performance or act as a barrier to further improvements. Hence the need for piloting this initiative to fully understand the potential impacts.
- 6.8 Based on a scenario of re-useable sacks for recycling being implemented, this would also enable budget savings to be realised as part of the current bag distribution arrangements.
- 6.9 It is proposed that the results of an ongoing consultation event, (see Section 9 below), be considered alongside a trial of reusable recycling sacks in designated areas. Trials would allow the service to assess the operational impact, recycling volumes and quality of recycling produced. It would also enable further public engagement to obtain feedback and observations from service users which would be used to inform the potential for wider roll-out incorporating any amendments arising from lessons learned in the trials. Baseline data will be gathered for the selected trial sites so that the changes can be accurately captured with the outcomes reported back to Cabinet for further consideration.

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 7.1 An Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required. There are limited negative or adverse equality or diversity implications associated with this report, which can be easily mitigated.
- 7.2 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, Local Authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
 2. Advance equality of opportunity.
 3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 7.3 The Council is committed to meeting the requirements of the Equality Act and in doing so contributing to the national Well-being goal of a more equal Wales, required by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

8. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no Welsh language implications as a result of the recommendations in this report. However, although the recommendations to initiate a public consultation with regards to potential service changes in relation to the collection of waste do not have any direct impact on the Welsh language, opportunities for the service to maintain, grow or upskill Welsh speaking staff will remain a priority.

9. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 9.1 As an extension to National Recycle Week that took place in mid-October, Waste Services launched a “Let’s Talk” consultation campaign.
- 9.2 The campaign centres around the recycling and waste activities of RCT residents and aims to gather views and opinions on how residents are currently disposing their waste and recycling, how often they are using the kerbside services and how they think recycling could be made easier.
- 9.3 With specific regard to the option for change set out in Section 5, it is recommended that Cabinet initiates a public consultation exercise with residents in relation to this proposal. Subject to Cabinet’s agreement to initiate a consultation, feedback from that exercise would be reported back to Cabinet in order for it to determine whether, and if so how, it would wish to proceed with the recommended option for change.
- 9.4 As the current collection schedules are very long-standing, residents are well informed and have embedded routines regarding when general waste is to be put out. Therefore, any changes, either the move to 3-weekly refuse collections or trials of reusable sacks for DMR collections, would require clear communication campaigns to address any concerns or confusion, and minimise any disruption.
- 9.5 Furthermore, service management would strive to ensure any changes are reflected online, as 89% of all waste service queries reach the department digitally.
- 9.6 In addition to the above, it is also recommended that a trial is undertaken of reusable recycling sacks, as set out in Section 6 of the report, the results of which will be reported back to Cabinet separately for consideration.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 10.1 Moving forward, the programme of work to introduce a new operational refuse collection strategy, subject to agreement by Cabinet, would be incorporated into Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements to ensure resource requirements are reviewed, challenged and planned for.

- 10.2 High level initial estimates of revising residual collection frequency, (including volume control): 3-weekly collections based on current service arrangements, (bin collection in Cynon and Taf and black bag collection in Rhondda) – estimated annual saving of £0.8M, (additional costs built in for 1 additional recycling round of £127k).
- 10.3 Following on should black bag waste be reduced in favour of DMR or food waste, then this will result in a reduction in processing charges, this being incorporated into the estimated saving at 10.2, as it is significantly more expensive to dispose of residual waste than recycling or food waste. Currently it is £23.20 cheaper to process a tonne of recycling and £70.21 cheaper to process a tonne of food waste than it is to process residual waste through our energy from waste contracts. It will therefore be important for the Council to continue to promote and where appropriate, enforce, the requirement to recycle waste and in doing so support the Council's climate change commitments and ensure best use of resources.
- 10.4 Expenditure associated with the supply of single use plastic sacks during 2022/23 is projected to be £867k for an estimated usage of 27 million units.
- 10.5 To move to re-usable sacks, the estimated one-off cost of purchasing of reusable sacks is £842k and on-going, (base budget), requirement of approximately £220k per year (for replacement sacks).
- 10.6 The estimated net base budget saving, (assuming the one-off purchase costs are funded), is £647k, (i.e. £867k current base budget for single use recycling bags less on-going base budget requirement for re-usable sacks).
- 10.7 However, it is important to state that such analysis does not take into consideration any increase in costs resulting from additional or amended kerbside collection resources, plus any impact on loading times and resources, and would require a more detailed analysis to be undertaken.
- 10.8 Moreover, further work is required to work through, in detail, the estimated operational impact (round review) and update the estimated savings.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 The Council, as a designated Waste Collection Authority, has a duty to collect household waste, under section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended (EPA 1990).

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

- 12.1 The Council has committed to minimising the amount of waste we send to landfill, achieving our recycling targets through weekly recycling and regular refuse collections, and reducing our carbon footprint. This

supports the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan 'Making a Difference' – 2020-24.

- 12.2 This report reflects the Sustainable Development principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and its work contributes to all seven national goals.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 A change in refuse collection strategy, moving to 3-weekly collections, is crucial if the Council is going to achieve the Welsh Government recycling target of 70% by 2025 and move towards the RCT 80% target.
- 13.2 Investigation and analysis undertaken by the Waste Services section using food waste yield data as a baseline indicator for other recycling streams suggests that an increase in the Council's recycling rate could be achieved by adopting a new approach to collections of residual household waste.
- 13.3 In moving toward 3-weekly collections, with a strict volume control of a maximum of 3 black bags, (or no side waste for households with large wheelie bin collections), then there is potential to achieve the twin benefits of a reduction in general waste, as well as financial savings.
- 13.4 Whilst there is less evidence that extending to 3, or indeed 4-weekly waste collections in isolation has a strong influence on recycling rates, it is clear that they do offer the potential for financial savings.
- 13.5 Organic waste also has a high carbon footprint and as nearly 39% of the black bag waste sampled as part of the Council's investigations to inform the new collection strategy was organic waste, the proposed change in policy would have positive implications towards the Council's net zero climate change commitments.
- 13.6 It is proposed that a public consultation exercise is undertaken on the proposal to move to 3-weekly refuse collections, (as set out in Section 5 of the report), and separately, a pilot is undertaken on reusable recycling sacks, as set out in Section 6 of the report.
- 13.7 Increasing engagement with residents to maximise their rates of recycling will be imperative to improving the Council's recycling performance and avoiding potential fines for missing Welsh Government recycling targets of 70% recycling for 2024/25. Recycling rates will be monitored and evaluated to inform the ongoing strategy for waste and recycling collections across RCTCBC as we strive to achieve the Council's recycling target of 80% by 2025 as part of our commitment to the *Tackling Climate Change Strategy*.

Appendix 1 (All Wales Refuse and Recycling Collection Models) (2021/22)

Local Authority	Bag or Bin	Frequency	Cost	Bag or Bin	Collection Method	Recycling Rate
Blaenau Gwent CBC	Bin & Bags	3-weekly	No cost, no additional waste allowance. 1 wheelie bin or 4 bags	Box Stack of 3 Top: Paper Middle: Plastic & Cans Bottom: Glass. Separate white sack for card	Kerbside Sort	65.75%
Bridgend CBC	Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, 2 bag limit (bags provided)	Orange bag: Card. Blue bag: Plastic, Cans & Foil. White bag: Paper. Black caddy for glass	Kerbside Sort	73.75%
Caerphilly CBC	Wheelie Bin	Fortnightly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	Brown wheelie bin with mixed recycling	Comingled	60.16%
Cardiff County Council	Bin & Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, 1 wheelie bin or 3 bag limit (bags provided twice a year)	Green recycling bags. Blue bin for glass	Comingled - separate glass	58.11%
Carmarthenshire County Council	Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, 3 bag limit	Bags	Comingled - separate glass	62.20%
Ceredigion County Council	Bags	3-weekly	No cost, 3 bag limit	Clear recycling bags. Separate box for glass	Comingled - separate glass	68.57%

City and County of Swansea	Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, 3 bag limit	Green bag: Cans, Glass, Paper & Card. Pink Bag: Plastic	Hybrid	63.94%
Conwy CBC	Wheelie Bin	4-weekly	No cost, no additional waste	Box Stack of 3	Kerbside Sort	70.51%
Denbighshire County Council	Bin & Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	Bin & Bags	Comingled	65.53%
Flintshire County Council	Bin & Bags	Weekly	No cost, wheelie bin for HMO's no side waste, 1 bag limit	Blue bag: Paper & Card White/Grey bag: Cans White/Grey bag: Plastic and glass is collected separately in a blue box	Kerbside Sort	63.02%
Gwynedd Council	Bin & Bags	3-weekly	No cost, 1 bin or 3 bag limit. No additional waste	Box Stack of 3 Top: Paper Middle: Plastic & Cans Bottom: Glass. If residents have additional recyclable waste it can be placed in a blue box but not mixed	Kerbside Sort	63.82%
Isle of Anglesey CC	Wheelie Bin	3-weekly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	Box Stack of 3 Top: Paper Middle: Plastic & Cans Bottom: Glass & Card	Kerbside Sort	62.68%




Merthyr Tydfil CBC	Wheelie Bin	Fortnightly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	3 boxes: Box 1: Paper Box 2: Card Box 3: Glass. Plastic & cans collected in a blue reusable sack	Kerbside Sort	67.49%
Monmouthshire CC	Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, 2 bags limit	Box for glass fortnightly. Red bag: Paper/Card. Purple bag: Cans & Plastic	Kerbside Sort	70.41%
Neath Port Talbot CBC	Wheelie Bin	Fortnightly	No cost, 140L wheelie bin or 3 bag limit no additional waste	White Bag 1: Plastic & Cans, White Bag 2: Card, Black box with lid: Paper, Black Box without lid: Glass	Kerbside Sort	67.25%
Newport City Council	Wheelie Bin	Fortnightly	No cost, 180L bin (240L for porperties with 8+ people in household). No additional waste	Red reusable bag: Plastic & Cans, Green box: Card & Glass, Blue box: Paper, Textiles & small electrical items	Kerbside Sort	67.81%
Pembrokeshire County Council	Bags	3-weekly	No cost, 3 bag limit every 3 weeks. Households are provided with 52 grey bags each year	Residents have the option to purchase a Box Stack of 3 Top: Paper Middle: Plastic, Cans & Foil Bottom: Glass. Reusable blue sack: Card. If residents don't have a stack they can use bags Blue reusable sack: Card, Blue Box: Paper, Red reusable	Kerbside Sort	72.83%

				sack: Plastic, cans & Foil, Green Box: Glass		
Powys County Council	Wheelie Bin	3-weekly	3 bag limit every 3 weeks. Households will be assessed and if they can't accommodate a bin they will be provided with 52 purple sacks. Residents can purchase additional sacks for £59.90 per roll of 26 to cover additional collection costs	Red box: Plastic & Cans, Aqua Box: Glass, Blue Box with lid: Paper & Card	Kerbside Sort	67.07%
RCTCBC	Wheelie Bin (Cynon & Taf) 2 Black bags Rhondda	Fortnightly	No additional allowance Bags not provided	Clear single use bags for dry mixed recycling, separate food, nappies and re-usable green sack.	Comingled	67.48%

Torfaen CBC	Wheelie Bin	Fortnightly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	Blue bag: Card, Black box: Paper, Plastic, Cans, Foil & Glass	Comingled - separate card	63.61%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	Bags	Fortnightly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	Orange bag: Card. Blue bag: Plastic, Cans & Foil. White bag: Paper. Grey caddy for glass. Blue Reusable bag: mixed recycling Paper, Glass. Card, Plastic, Foil, Cans & Cartons	Hybrid	71.07%
Wrexham CBC	Wheelie Bin	Fortnightly	No cost, no additional waste allowance	Green box: Plastic & Cans, Blue Sack : Card & Paper, Black box: Glass	Kerbside Sort	68.92%

Appendix 2: (Reusable Recycling Sacks)

Technical / Operational Considerations: the types of bags considered all consist of a durable woven plastic as follows:

	<p>RCTs current reusable bag for green waste</p>	<p>450mm x 450mm x450mm (WxDxH) Handle on base for tipping retrieval. Rubber insert within base for increased durability.</p>
	<p>Sample bags provided by supplier. Currently used by Merthyr Council for the collection of Cans and Plastic.</p>	<p>450mm x 450mm x450mm (WxDxH) Handle on base for tipping retrieval. Top cover / flap with Velcro fastener. (Preferred option to protect paper and card).</p>
	<p>Sample bags provided by supplier. Currently used by Medway Council for the collection of dry mixed recycling very similar to RCT's current methodology.</p>	<p>350mm x 350mm x450mm (WxDxH) Handle on base for tipping retrieval. Rubber insert within base for increased durability. Top cover / flap with Velcro fastener.</p>

Trials were undertaken at Bryn Pica using the Council's existing reusable bags. The trials were limited to general observations regarding volume, weight, contamination and manual handling. Observations are summarised below.



Observations	Officer Comment
Volume	<p>During the test the contents of 5 current (single use) recycling bags was easily distributed with 2 of the Councils reusable bags. There was sufficient spare volume to pinch closed the top of the bags.</p>
Weights	<p>A total of 10 test iterations were carried out filling 2 reusable sacks with the contents of 5 randomly chosen recycling bags delivered to Bryn Pica. Weights in the range of 2.7kg to 5.4 kg were recorded. The average weight of the filled reusable sack was 3.8kg.</p> <p>Officers acknowledge that weights experienced at the kerbside could be significantly high if residents were to overfill with a particular waste type, particularly glass.</p>
Contamination	<p>The reusable bags did begin to soil up after the 10 test iterations. Soiling level will be dependent on the performance of individual households.</p>
Moisture Levels	<p>The impact on the quality of paper and card due to moisture ingress was not tested as part of this trial. Discussions with Amgen Officer have indicated a degree of caution in</p>

	<p>relation to any potential reduction in fibre quality. This can impact on rebates for recycling.</p>
Recycling Yield	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that a change to reusable sacks will increase the Council's overall recycling performance. Officers could envisage a slight reduction in overall yield of recycling as a result of lost bags barriers to replacement. Current single use bags offers the easiest method of participation with minimal barriers.</p>
Collection Round Impact	<p>No work has been undertaken in relation to the impacts such a change may have on pick rates, manual handling implications for recycling operative. This would need further testing.</p> <p>Officers do suspect a reduced pick rate at the kerbside due to the time it takes to deposit the contents of the reusable bag and then return it to the kerbside. This has been shown to be the case in the recent change in green waste collection.</p>



Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Climate Change, Frontline Services & Prosperity

Contact Officer

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WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

Stage 1 – Information Gathering

NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. Please see [Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for more information on data sources.

Proposal Name:	Revised Waste Management Strategy
Department	Frontline Services
Service Director	Steve Owen
Officer Completing the WLIA	Alistair Critchlow
Email	alistair.critchlow@rctcbc.gov.uk
Phone	07881 268186
Brief Description	The proposal seeks permission to consult residents regarding potential revisions to the Council's operational waste management processes with a view to considering future arrangements for the collection of refuse and recycling designed to aid an increase in the rate of recycling across RCT which will also deliver financial efficiencies.
Date	November 2022
Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)	Employees and the Wider Community.

What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?	The aim of the proposal is to consult with residents around potential future changes and innovations to the Council's refuse and recycling collection services in order to help achieve operational efficiencies, financial savings and improvements in recycling performance.
Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.	There are no Welsh language implications.
Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned	The Office for National Statistics, (ONS), undertakes an Annual Population Survey, which, in Wales, collects information about respondents' Welsh speaking ability and includes a question on how often people speak Welsh. The most recent Annual Population Survey, for the quarter ending December 2021, reported that 20.9% of respondents living in the County Borough said they could speak Welsh, this is compared to the "all Wales" percentage of 29.5% of respondents.
Other relevant data or research	N/A

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 (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral 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?
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<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</p> <p>e.g., staff, residents and visitors</p> <p>The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>All consultation correspondence will continue to be published in Welsh with the Welsh appearing first.</p> <p>Future recruitment will focus on recruiting Welsh speakers to increase face-to-face Welsh language service provision.</p> <p>As there are currently only 4% of staff within the Service area with Welsh language skills of level 3 or above, (the level at which speakers likely have sufficient skills to use the language more extensively at work), recruiting more Welsh speakers would have a positive impact on the service's Welsh provision, and the Council's attempts to promote the language.</p> <p>Moreover, in light of recent guidance from the Welsh Language Commissioner, the Council has a statutory duty not only to mitigate negative impacts, but to maximise any possible positive impacts too.</p>	<p>Current / ongoing public consultations shows Welsh language appearing first.</p> <p>The percentage of Welsh speakers in RCT according to the 2011 Census was 12.3%, and the Council's Welsh Language Skills Strategy aims to ensure the percentage of staff with Welsh language skills is at a similar level. It is anticipated that 2021 Census data will show a significant increase in percentage.</p> <p>Current linguistic profile of the Service area: - Level 0 = 36% Level 1 = 54% Level 2 = 4% Level 3 = NIL Level 4 = NIL Level 5 = 4%</p>	<p>Ensure that, upon each new order of consultation material, all correspondence is reviewed, and bilingualism retained.</p> <p>Encourage contact in Welsh by incorporating an appropriate additional line into correspondence, e.g., "we welcome correspondence in Welsh, which will not lead to a delay in responding".</p> <p>Ensure steps are taken for basic relevant Welsh lessons for those who need it with the aim of further upskilling and training as appropriate.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities to ensure there are a number of Welsh-speaking members of staff on the team through advertising some new posts as "Welsh-essential" roles <i>where practical to do so</i>.</p>
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral 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?
<p>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers e.g. Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Existing staff are being encouraged to begin Welsh language lessons and continue on their language journey</p> <p>Another of the Welsh Language Commissioner's key areas of focus currently is increasing the use of Welsh in the community, (increasing the opportunities for people to use the language/creating favourable conditions for its use are also key themes of the Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy, with which our forthcoming 5-year Welsh language Promotion Strategy is aligned).</p>	<p>All staff on Level 0 undertake online Level 1 training, (2-hour online course), plus one member of the team has recently completed a Welsh language Foundation Course with the University of South Wales.</p> <p>RCTs 5-year strategy requires the Council to increase Welsh language skills of our workforce. In addition, the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 strategy wants a million Welsh Speakers by 2050.</p>	<p>Staff to take Welsh language lessons / courses.</p> <p>Ensure a positive contribution is made towards the goals of local / national Welsh language strategies.</p> <p>Recruiting Welsh speakers will contribute to creating this environment and would increase opportunities to use the Welsh language.</p>

<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time</p>	Positive	All promotional activities will be provided bilingually. Welsh Language Services to be included at the beginning of the design process to ensure any consultation campaign “slogans” can have a Welsh version.	Bilingual promotional materials will be available when publicising service changes. Welsh Language Services will be engaged with accordingly. Consultation correspondence available bilingually.	Review promotional materials when consulting with residents in order to ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards. Ensure good communication and meaningful consultation with Welsh Language Services. Regularly evaluate procedures and systems to ensure constant provision of an end-to-end Welsh language service.
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral 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?

<p>Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards</p> <p>e.g. increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Positive	<p>Any consultation as part of publicising service changes will be bilingual and will comply with the relevant Welsh Language Standards guidance.</p> <p>Any new contracts or tenders will ensure all relevant Welsh Language Standards are listed in the documentation to ensure compliance from the outset, (in case of any system development / new system implementation).</p>	<p>Bilingual media releases will be published.</p> <p>New contract documentation will be available should the Council obtain new products – e.g. reusable recycling sacks.</p>	<p>Review material to be published when consulting with residents in order to ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>Review any new contract documentation to ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>If the service change results in reduction of staffing numbers, reasonable priority should be given to retain Welsh speaking staff.</p>
<p>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</p>	Positive	<p>All service communications, whether via letter, website or telephony is bilingual, with Welsh text first or to the left of English text.</p>	<p>Promotional materials, website and all subsequent correspondence available bilingually.</p>	<p>Regularly evaluate correspondence to ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.</p>
<p><u>Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal</u></p> <p>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.</p>				

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?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
Encourage staff to take Welsh language lessons to improve the linguistic profile across the whole team. (Factoring this into the team's workload, basic Welsh language lessons will be provided during working hours, and free of charge).	Ongoing	The Service Manager
Encourage contact in Welsh by incorporating an appropriate additional line into correspondence, e.g., "we welcome correspondence in Welsh, which will not lead to a delay in responding".	Ongoing	The Service Manager

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.

What was identified?	Why is it not possible?

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


Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
Impact on Welsh language is minimal due to the nature of the service. Nevertheless, any service change proposals should consider Welsh language skills among remaining staff, affording more opportunities to learn and utilise their Welsh language skills both at work and in the community.	22/11/22	
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

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<p><u>Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing</u></p> <p>How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?</p> <p>With specific regard to the recommendations set out in the Cabinet Report, a public consultation exercise with residents in relation to this proposal will be subject to frequent monitoring and interaction throughout its course. Furthermore, subject to Cabinet’s agreement to initiate a consultation, feedback from that exercise would be reported back to Cabinet in order for it to determine whether, and if so how, it would wish to proceed with the recommended options for change.</p>

<p><u>Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal</u></p> <p>Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.</p> <p><i>A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -</i></p> <p>There are no direct Welsh language implications as a result of the recommendations in this report. However, although the recommendations to initiate a public consultation with regards to potential service changes in relation to the collection of waste do not have any direct impact on the Welsh language, opportunities for the service to maintain, grow or upskill Welsh speaking staff should remain a priority.</p>

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Stage 7 – Sign Off			
Name of Officer completing the WLIA	Alistair Critchlow	Service Director Name:	Steve Owen
Position	Parking Services and Enforcement Manager	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	08/11/2022	Date	



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH NOVEMBER 2022

SERVICE REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND WELSH LANGUAGE, COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS

Author(s): Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards, Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to assess the Council's Community Meals Service and to seek permission to consult on the future of the service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the contents of this report.
- 2.2 Agree to initiate a consultation on Cabinet's preferred service change proposal of Option 3, in respect of the Community Meals Service, as outlined in section 5.4 of the report.
- 2.3 Subject to 2.2 above, It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council is facing significant financial challenges into the medium term and is considering the remodelling of key service areas to contribute to addressing the shortfall in funding.
- 3.2 To set out a number of proposed service change proposals for consideration by Cabinet in respect of the Community Meals Service.

3.3 To ensure that the process for progressing any proposals is undertaken efficiently and effectively and in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

4. **BACKGROUND**

4.1 The Community Meals Service has provided a subsidised service to adults in Rhondda Cynon Taf over many years, ensuring quality nutritional meals and daily contact with service users during weekdays.

4.2 The service provides wider benefits including social contact and support for vulnerable and isolated service users, who often live alone and could potentially be at risk of having a poor and unbalanced diet. The service can often reduce pressure on families/carers who might not be able to provide meals or support family members/neighbours due to work or other caring commitments. This service has been particularly appreciated by vulnerable service users and families at times of need, including during the pandemic and recent floods in our communities.

4.3 The Community Meals Service can offer a preventative service, which works alongside partners in adult social care and healthcare by supporting frailer adults to remain supported in their own home.

4.4 Service users can access the service in several ways, including via assessed Social Services' care and support packages, Health, family members, friends or self-referral to support the individual to remain independent in their own home.

4.5 The number of meals provided during the last three years is shown below in Table 1, which includes meals delivered to young adults and staff in day care based at Talbot Green Community Centre, Abercynon Day Centre, Wattstown Community Centre and Brynnar Jones Day Care Centre. Door to door delivery numbers have declined following the pandemic, due to several factors including sadly, elderly service users passing away, more choice of third sector providers, the availability of food delivery services and free transport to supermarkets. The number of meals delivered to Day Centres, including the Learning Curve, to service users and staff has increased following the service resuming back to normal after the pandemic.

Table 1: Annual Meal Numbers			
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 (Projected)
Door to Door Delivery	145,694	126,081	120,047
Day Centre Delivery	348	3,121	6,348
Total	146,042	129,202	126,395

4.6 The service user demographics are detailed in Table 2 and illustrate that the service, in the main, supports the older generation with 86% aged over 70 years. A proportion of these have some assessed care and support needs, with

11% of service users experiencing mobility issues, 11% displaying significant confusion and a further 3% displaying both mobility issues and memory loss, which as a Council we will need to continue to meet.

Table 2: Service Users Age Profile	
Age Range in Years	Number of Service Users
< 50	6
50-59	27
60-69	69
70-79	163
80-89	351
90-99	149
> 100	1

- 4.7 A summary of the budget for 2022/23 is set out below in Table 3 and the net cost of the service is £0.646M.

Table 3: Community Meals Budget 2022/23	
Expenditure Type	£'000
Employees	764
Premises	61
Transport	23
Supplies and Services	314
Total Costs	1,162
Income	-516
Net Cost of Service	646

- 4.8 The service is highly subsidised by the Council. The current daily charge to service users for a delivered meal is £4.05 and the Council is currently providing a further subsidy of £5.71 per meal for the 2022/23 financial year (compared to a budgeted subsidy, set at the start of the 2022/23 financial year, of £5.07 per meal). Table 4 below shows how the subsidy per meal has increased over the last three years (including the current year, taking account of the 2022/23 pay award).

Table 4: Subsidisation of Community Meals Service				
	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Revised Outturn Position
	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Gross Cost of Service	1,200,472	1,127,411	1,162,426	1,233,519
No. of Paid Meals	146,042	129,202	127,527	126,395
Direct Cost per Meal	8.22	8.73	9.12	9.76
Charge per Meal	3.95	4.05	4.05	4.05
Subsidy per Meal	4.27	4.68	5.07	5.71

- 4.9 For the 2023/24 financial year, based on current pay and non-pay inflationary assumptions (including energy costs) built into the Council's latest medium term

financial plan and assuming paid meal numbers are in line with those projected for 2022/23, it is forecast that the gross cost of providing the service, before taking into account the charge per meal, would increase to £1.323M, which is £10.46 per meal. This is clearly not affordable with the current charge per meal of £4.05 only covering 41% of the projected 2022/23 full year cost. The Bank of England has forecast that high inflation rates will continue for the next few years, which will have a significant impact on food, staffing and energy costs, which makes the service unviable. Therefore, alternative approaches have to be considered to identify whether the costs of production and delivery of the Community Meals Service can be lowered and also set a reasonable and affordable charge to the service user for the meals.

- 4.10 The Community Meals Service is producing on average 461 meals per day for service users across the authority. As Table 5 below shows, average daily meal numbers have declined over the last two years and are projected to decline for the current year (2022/23). Meals are produced and packed by 12 kitchen staff. Meals consist of a main course and a dessert. Special dietary requirements are also catered for, including pureed meals and meals suitable for diabetic residents.

Table 5: Average Daily Meal Numbers			
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 (Projected)
Average Meals per Day	560	484	461

- 4.11 The meals are currently distributed to service users in their own homes by 28 delivery staff using 14 vehicles. The service also provides meals, approximately 18 per day, to vulnerable young adults and staff in the Learning Curve and Day Care Centres using one vehicle.
- 4.12 Meals are produced to the NACC (National Association of Care Caterers) nutritional standards and food safety is paramount.
- 4.13 A frozen meal service is offered to service users at the weekend. The meals are procured from an external supplier and a varied choice of meals is offered.
- 4.14 There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Community Meals Service. However, there are a range of alternative options in the marketplace for service users to choose from, based on their own preference and needs.

5. OPTIONS FOR SERVICE CHANGE

- 5.1 A review of the service has been undertaken and several options for the future of the service have been evaluated.

Option 1: to continue the service as it currently operates with increased service user charges thus reducing the subsidy per meal.

Option 2: to reorganise the existing internal service with increased service user charges thus reducing the subsidy per meal.

Option 3: to reorganise the existing internal service and provide a hot/frozen Community Meal home delivery service with increased service user charges thus reducing the subsidy per meal.

Option 4: to cease the current service and support service users to find alternative options.

The following paragraphs set out the four options in more detail.

5.2 **Option 1: Current Status Quo Service with Increased Service User Charges**

5.2.1 The first option for consideration is to continue the service as it currently operates. The current service provides a prime cooked hot meal and dessert, five days a week, with an option of a frozen meal for the weekend delivered on a Friday, as part of the regular daily delivery service.

5.2.2 Based on 2022/23 projected costs and paid meal numbers, consideration could be given to increasing service user charges for the price of a meal, as detailed in Table 6.

Table 6: Price Increase						
% Increase	2022/23 Estimated Meals	Price Increase per meal (£)	Revised Meal Price (£)	Estimated Additional Income (£)	Current Budgeted Subsidy Per Meal (£)	Revised Subsidy Per Meal (£)
12	126,395	0.50	4.55	63,198	5.07	4.65
25	126,395	1.00	5.05	126,395	5.07	4.15
37	126,395	1.50	5.55	189,593	5.07	3.65

5.2.3 The following neighbouring local authorities provide a similar Community Meals Service to RCTCBC, whereby a prime cooked meal is prepared and delivered, and their charges range from £3.43 to £6.00, as detailed in following Table 7.

Table 7: Neighbouring Local Authority Meal Service – Prime Cooked			
Local Authority	Meal	Frequency of Delivery	Cost per Meal (£)
Bridgend County Borough Council	2 courses	Every day except Christmas Day (2 meals delivered on Christmas Eve) 1 delivery person per van	6.00
Caerphilly County Borough Council	2 courses	Deliver Monday to Friday and can provide a frozen meal for the weekend (delivered on a Friday) 2 delivery persons per van	3.43 Subsidised 5.78 Non-subsidised

5.2.4 There are benefits of continuing the current level of service, however, there are also risks associated with increasing charges and the impact on service users need to be considered in the current financial climate.

Benefits	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains daily welfare contact with service users on weekdays. • Social interaction and reduced loneliness and isolation for those who do not have regular social contact. • No disruption to service users and continuity in offer. • No impact on staff. • Potential increase in income, therefore, reducing the subsidy per meal. • Promotes independence and rehabilitation following direct contact through Health. • Continuation of service will provide an easily accessible service for adults with an assessed social care need. • Estimated increased full year income of between £0.063M-£0.190M (based on price increases of £0.50/£1.00/£1.50). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly some service users may be unable to afford increased charges, especially those who are accessing other Council services. • Potential loss of service users due to resistance to price increase. • High level of service subsidisation and continued affordability to the Council. This risk will be mitigated through increased income. • Whilst it is recognised that additional income will be received from increased meal charges this will be partly negated by rising food and energy costs due to the instability of the current economy. • Potential increase in adult social care costs if risks are realised and capacity issues to assess additional need within existing resources. This risk can be mitigated by allocating additional resources.

5.3 **Option 2: Reorganised Service Delivery with Increased Service User Charges**

5.3.1 The second option, in addition to the potential price increases detailed in 5.2.2, considers the possibility to reorganise the service and generate savings by reducing our staffing ratio with a reduction of delivery persons, and also undertaking a review of the delivery rounds, to ensure the most efficient delivery stops and routes are put in place to reflect the potential demand for hot delivered meals. This will reduce the number of staff and vehicles required and could possibly offer extended hours to the remaining delivery staff.

5.3.2 The current Community Meals Service consists of a prime cooked meal, prepared from scratch and delivered five days a week, with a frozen meal option offered for the weekend. Meals are prepared on site at one central meal kitchen in Ynyshir.

5.3.3 Currently there are two members of staff in each of the 14 vehicles, which are used to deliver meals. Following a review of the Community Meals Service

since the pandemic, practices have been robustly challenged and risk assessments undertaken and there are opportunities to continue to deliver the service in line with one person per vehicle as successfully introduced during the pandemic. This would generate an estimated saving, in a full year, of £0.298M.

5.3.4 The estimated reduction in staffing numbers required would be 14 and the Council would seek to ensure that compulsory redundancies are avoided by exploring opportunities for redeployment (in particular, in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Primary Free School Meals) and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff as part of on-going workforce planning arrangements.

5.3.5 The service currently has 17 vehicles and through reorganising service delivery, the number of vehicles required would be able to be reduced. This would enable the Council to generate a capital receipt; realise a revenue budget saving of £0.001M per year in respect of fuel/damage/replacement tyres; and would reduce our carbon emissions, thereby, supporting the Council's ambition of being Carbon Neutral by 2030.

5.3.6 If the staff and vehicle revenue savings identified in this option were implemented, the effect on the subsidy per meal is detailed below in Table 8.

% Increase	2022/23 Est. Meals	Price Increase per meal (£)	Revised Meal Price (£)	Estimated Additional Income (£)	Estimated Revenue Savings (£)	Current Budgeted Subsidy Per Meal (£)	Revised Subsidy Per Meal (£)
12	126,395	0.50	4.55	63,198	298,616	5.07	2.28
25	126,395	1.00	5.05	126,395	298,616	5.07	1.78
37	126,395	1.50	5.55	189,593	298,616	5.07	1.28

5.3.7 There are benefits of this restructured service option, which would allow the Council to continue the current level of a prime hot cooked service, however, there are also risks associated with increasing charges in this financial climate which are detailed below.

Benefits	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains daily welfare contact with service users during weekdays. • Social interaction and reduced loneliness and isolation for those who have limited social contact. • No disruption to service users and continuity in service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly some service users may be unable to afford increased charges, especially those accessing other Council services. • Potential loss of service users due to resistance to price increase. • High level of service subsidisation and continued affordability to the Council. This risk will be mitigated

Benefits	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes independence and rehabilitation following direct contact through Health. • Potential increase in income and reduced expenditure on staffing, therefore, reducing the subsidy per meal. • Estimated increased full year income of between £0.063M-£0.190M (based on price increases of £0.50/£1.00/£1.50). • Estimated full year savings of £0.299M. 	<p>through increased income and reduced staffing levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst it is recognised that additional income will be received from increased meal charges this will be partly negated by rising food and energy costs due to the instability of the current economy. • Potential increase in adult social care costs if risks are realised and capacity issues to assess additional need within existing resources. This risk can be mitigated by allocating additional resources. • Impact on staff. This risk can be mitigated through opportunities for redeployment and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff.

5.4 **Option 3: Hot/Frozen Community Meal Delivery Service with Increased Service User Charges**

5.4.1 The third option would consist of providing service users with a choice of either a hot or frozen meal delivery service, which service users could order through a central point of contact within the Council. The frozen meals would be purchased by the Council through a third-party supplier and stored at the central meal kitchen.

5.4.2 Part of this option would also entail a proposed price increase of £0.50 to service users, which would increase the price of the meal from £4.05 to £4.55. This would generate potential additional full year income of £0.063M.

5.4.3 The meals would be regenerated on-site with a reduced number of staff and hours in the kitchen, five kitchen staff instead of 12, and 14 delivery persons. The meals would be delivered according to service users preferred option; hot or frozen. If a hot meal is chosen, they will be delivered between 11.30am and 2.00pm, directly to a service users' home, utilising existing Community Meals vehicles. The service would also undertake a delivery round review to ensure the delivery routes were the most efficient and consider the opportunity to deliver frozen meals outside the standard hot meal delivery times of 11.30am and 2.00pm, as the frozen meals could also be delivered in advance for a few days or the week ahead. Community Meals staff will continue to offer a welfare check to service users and support them with plating a meal if required. This would generate an estimated full year saving of £0.364M.

- 5.4.4 This option would allow the Council to continue to provide a hot meal service to the most vulnerable users and offer a frozen meal service to those that can heat their own food, whilst maintaining that important contact with service users. Minor adaptations to remodel the kitchen would be required, to provide additional freezer capacity, but the cost would be minimal to remove the redundant equipment and it could be reused in schools. The cost of the additional freezers would be funded by the Kitchen Replacement Programme in the Education and Inclusion Capital Programme.
- 5.4.5 The estimated reduction in staffing numbers required would be 21 and the Council would seek to ensure that compulsory redundancies are avoided by exploring opportunities for redeployment (in particular, in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Primary Free School Meals) and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff as part of on-going workforce planning arrangements.
- 5.4.6 This option would remove the need to prime cook meals, which would provide savings in food production, staffing and reduce our carbon and energy consumption.
- 5.4.7 If the additional income and revenue savings identified in this option were implemented, the effect on the subsidy per meal is detailed below in Table 9.

Table 9: Hot/Frozen Meal Delivery Service with Increased Service User Charges	
	Estimated Budget Requirement (£)
Estimated Gross Cost of Service	793,698
No. of Meals	126,395
Direct Cost per Meal	6.28
Charge per Meal	4.55
Subsidy per Meal	1.73

- 5.4.8 Four local authorities provide a similar Community Meals Service to that proposed in option 3, whereby meals are bought in and regenerated, and the price per meal (2 courses) ranges from £4.50 to £5.15. In addition, a further 15 local authorities do not provide a Community Meals Service, and in some instances, service users are signposted to an external provider who provide a frozen meal delivery service only; a typical price per meal (2 courses) is more than £5.00.
- 5.4.9 There are benefits of this restructured service option and to provide a hot/frozen Community Meal home delivery service, however, there are also risks associated with increasing charges and service users not choosing a frozen option, rather than a freshly cooked option, due to choice.

Benefits	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains daily welfare contact with service users during weekdays, supporting social care for the most vulnerable using the service. • Social interaction and reduced loneliness and isolation for those who have limited social contact. • No disruption to service users and continuity in service delivery in the provision of an option of a hot meal or frozen meal. • Promotes independence and rehabilitation following direct contact through Health. • Potential increase in income and reduced expenditure, therefore, reducing the subsidy per meal. • Estimated increased full year income of £0.063M (based on price increase of £0.50). • Estimated full year savings of £0.364M. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly some service users may be unable to afford increased charges, especially those accessing other Council services. • Potential loss of service users due to resistance to price increase and removal of prime cooked meal. To mitigate this risk a high-quality, nutritional frozen meal will be offered with regular quality checks. • Level of service subsidisation and continued affordability for the Council. This risk will be mitigated through increased income, reduced staffing levels and removal of food production costs. • Potential increase in adult social care costs if risks are realised and capacity issues to assess additional need with existing resources. This risk can be mitigated by allocating additional resources. • Impact on staff. This risk can be mitigated through opportunities for redeployment and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff.

5.5 **Option 4: Cease to Deliver an In-House Service**

5.5.1 The fourth option for consideration would be to cease the Council run Community Meals Service entirely and support service users to find alternative options.

5.5.2 The Council will need to re-assess the needs of the most vulnerable service user groups to establish their social care needs and to ensure that risks are mitigated. In the short term, this will potentially be a significant issue for Adult Social Care and additional resources will be required to undertake assessments. Employing additional staff on a short-term basis is difficult and relocating existing staff away from current work will increase already high waiting lists. The longer-term impact on ongoing care and support for most service users with assessed needs, will be challenging if Option 4 is implemented.

5.5.3 The Community Meals Service currently has 803 active service users (as at the end of October 2022) receiving meals. 205 of these individuals access Adult Services, as detailed in Table 10 below. Therefore, the removal of the Community Meals Service will potentially require further support from other services.

Table 10: Service Users in Receipt of Adult Social Care Services	
Service	No. of Community Meals Service Users in Receipt of Adult Social Care Services
Domiciliary Care and Direct Payments	191
Day Care	14

5.5.4 The Community Meals Service has provided back-up support to the Council's Homes for the Elderly when required. A contingency plan can be put in operation utilising existing secondary school kitchens to assist as and when required. Support will also be required for those Day Care service users and staff who commission a meal from the Community Meals Service to find alternative options. On average 90 meals are provided per week to service users and staff in the 4 settings.

5.5.5 The current Community Meals Service structure is detailed in Table 11 below. 40 employees (estimated) would be made redundant (28 delivery persons and 12 kitchen staff), however, the Council would seek to ensure that compulsory redundancies are avoided by exploring opportunities for redeployment (in particular, in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Primary Free School Meals) and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff, as part of on-going workforce planning arrangements.

Table 11: Community Meals Service Structure			
Post	Post Title	2022/23 Budgeted Hours	Grade
Service Manager	Service Manager	37	Grade 7
Kitchen Staff	Cook	37	Grade 5
	Assistant Cook	35	Grade 3
	General Kitchen Assistant x 9	264	Grade 2
Delivery Staff	Delivery Person x 30	660	Grade 3
Total		1,033	

5.5.6 The option of discontinuing the service would generate savings, in a full year, of £0.646M. As part of this, there would be additional short-term costs to re-assess service users and support transitional arrangements, such as assisting service users to source alternative meal choices, amounting to £0.100M, and would equate to a net overall budget saving of £0.546M. In addition, it is anticipated that there may be additional costs of care provision to ensure those service users with an assessed need continue to receive appropriate support. Based on an assumed 15-minute visit per day (5 days per week) for all service

users that are currently in receipt of domiciliary care and direct payments or day care, the potential estimated additional annual cost would be approximately £0.250M. Consideration should also be given to potential assessment cost of service users social care needs.

5.5.7 In addition to the budget savings, there will be positive environmental factors to consider such as a reduction in energy costs, carbon, waste management and vehicle emissions. There will also be an opportunity to recycle the existing catering equipment to replace older, less energy efficient equipment in school kitchens.

5.5.8 The consequences and risks of discontinuing the Community Meals Service need to be balanced against assessing the service users social care needs for the future.

Benefits	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated net budget savings in a full year of £0.546M. • Potential reduced impact on the environment due to reduced energy costs, carbon, waste management and vehicle emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No service user contact from the Community Meals Service, which would increase demand on other Council services, i.e., home care, which would include an already stretched capacity issue and highly likely a higher unit cost per hour. This risk can be mitigated with a re-assessment of need and by putting in place appropriate care packages or an alternative service offer than the home care sector such as private enterprises. • Service users could potentially be unable to contact alternative providers due to health issues such as confusion, dementia, visual/hearing impairment, disability or no family/carers to assist. This risk can be mitigated through re-assessment of need and by putting in place appropriate care packages or an alternative service offer than the home care sector such as private enterprises. • Potential increase in adult social care costs if risks are realised and capacity issues to assess additional need with existing resources. This risk can be mitigated by allocating additional resources.

Benefits	Risks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on staff. This risk can be mitigated through opportunities for redeployment and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff.

5.5.9 Following consideration of each proposal, the preferred option is Option 3: Hot/frozen Community Meal delivery service with increased service user charges. This option provides service users with a choice of a hot or frozen meal on a daily basis (Monday to Friday) and frozen meals on the weekend, delivered on a Friday; continuation of daily weekday contact with service users; and delivery of cost reductions that enable the Council to reduce the current high level of subsidisation.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1 The Council must satisfy its public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations based on protected characteristics.

6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and is attached in Appendix A. The Assessment will be published on the Council's website, together with a consultation document that outlines the proposal in further detail and in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.3 There are 8 negative and 9 neutral equality and diversity implications associated with this report. These risks will be mitigated by a range of actions as detailed in the impact assessment.

6.4 Subject to Cabinet agreeing to initiate a consultation on the preferred service change, the impact assessment will be reviewed and updated to include any further mitigated risks following the consultation process.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been prepared and is attached in Appendix B. This will be published on the Council's website together with a consultation document that outlines the proposal in further detail and in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

7.2 There are no negative or adverse Welsh Language implications associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Subject to the agreement of the recommendation in Section 2.2 above, there is a duty on the Council to consult with service users, carers, providers and stakeholders, that are likely to be affected by the proposal. The consultation must take place whilst the proposals are at their formative stage.

8.2 The Council must provide the consultees with sufficient information to enable them properly to understand the proposal being consulted upon and to express a view in relation to it. The information must be accurate clear and concise.

8.3 The consultees must be given adequate time to consider the proposal and to respond. It is proposed that consultation will be undertaken for a period of 4 weeks (this excludes the Christmas holiday period) with current users of the service, their family/carers and other stakeholders. Subject to Cabinet approval, it will commence on 5th December 2022 and end on 9th of January 2023. Consultation methods will include face to face interviews, meetings and online questionnaires.

8.4 The present recipients of the Community Meals Service will need to be informed in writing of the Council's preferred option.

8.5 In addition, appropriate consultation will also be undertaken with all staff (and their Trade Union representatives) potentially impacted by the proposal, in accordance with the Council's Managing Change Policy, if this report is approved.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The 2022/23 budget for providing the current Community Meals Service is £1.162M. The budgeted total income from service users is £0.516M, therefore, the net cost and subsidisation to the Council is £0.646M. The 2023/24 budget forecast, based on the predicted food, staff and energy price increases, is that the gross cost of the service before the income received from service users will increase by 14% to £1.323M.

9.2 Continuing the Community Meals Service as it currently operates, with increased service user charges, could generate estimated additional income in a full year of between £0.063M and £0.190M, dependent upon the level of price increase per meal.

9.3 Reorganising the existing Community Meals Service, in addition to increasing service user charges, as detailed in 9.2, could generate a combined total estimated revenue savings in a full year of between £0.362M and £0.489M.

- 9.4 Reorganising the existing Community Meals Service to provide a hot/frozen meal home delivery service with increased service user charges could generate a combined total estimated revenue savings in a full year of £0.427M.
- 9.5 Ceasing to operate the service would generate estimated revenue savings in a full year of £0.546M (and noting that as part of consultation arrangements, a review of service users with an assessed need would be undertaken to ensure they continue to receive appropriate support and to establish any on-going additional budget implications for the Council).
- 9.6 A summary of the estimated financial implications of each option is set out in Table 12.

Table 12: Financial Implications of Service Review Options			
Option	Estimated Total Annual Revenue Savings (£'000)	2022/23 Budgeted Subsidy Per Meal (£)	Estimated Subsidy Per Meal (£)
1. Current Status Quo Level of Service with Increased Service User Charges	63 – 190	5.07	4.65 – 3.65
2. Reorganised Service Delivery with Increased Service User Charges	362 – 489	5.07	2.28 – 1.28
3. Hot/Frozen Community Meal Delivery Service with Increased Service User Charges	427	5.07	1.73
4. Cease to Deliver an In-House Service	546	5.07	0

- 9.7 In addition, redundancy costs will need to be met by the Council.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There is no legislative requirement to deliver a Community Meals Service. However, in considering this report the Council needs to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The Act and accompanying Part 4 Code of Practice sets out where a local authority has carried out an assessment, which has revealed that the person has care and support needs then the local authority must decide if those needs meet the eligibility criteria and, if they do, it must offer access to services that meet those needs.
- 10.2 Any employment issues that arise will need to be considered in conjunction with Human Resources, and in accordance with any relevant policies and legislative provisions.

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

11.1 This proposal is aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan 'Making a Difference 2020-2024' and the priority 'Ensuring people: *are independent, healthy and successful*'.

11.2 In addition, the report considers one of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 wellbeing goal of: A Healthier Wales and a society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised.

12. STRATEGIC OR RELEVANT TO ELECTORAL WARDS

12.1 This applies to all electoral wards.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 The report provides options for consideration of alternative ways of meeting the nutritional needs of our most vulnerable residents in RCT and how we ensure that we provide the appropriate support for the future. The recommendation to initiate a consultation on Option 3 would be required to furnish Cabinet with the outcome in order for Members to best consider how the needs of current service users would be best met in the future.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee-

Children and Young People Scrutiny

Contact Officer:

Andrea Richards, Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH NOVEMBER 2022

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, YOUTH
PARTICIPATION AND WELSH LANGUAGE, COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS**

Item: SERVICE REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE

Background Papers

None

Officer to contact:

Andrea Richards, Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation

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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: Andrea Richards

Service Director: Gaynor Davies

Service Area: Catering Services, Education & Inclusion Services

Date: 21.11.22

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Community Meals Service Review

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The Council is facing significant financial challenges into the medium term and is considering the remodelling of key service areas to contribute to addressing the shortfall in funding. A review of the Community Meals Service has been undertaken and several options for the future of the service have been evaluated.

Option 1: to continue the service as it currently operates with increased service user charges.

Option 2: to reorganise the existing internal service with increased service user charges.

Option 3: to reorganise the existing internal service and provide a hot/frozen Community Meal home delivery service with increased service user charges.

Option 4: to cease the current service and support service users to find alternative options.

There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Community Meals service and it is highly subsidised. The proposal seeks approval from Cabinet to initiate a consultation on the preferred service change proposal of option 3.

The current service provides a prime cooked hot meal and dessert, five days a week, with an option of a frozen meal for the weekend, delivered on a Friday, as part of the regular daily delivery service. Meals are prepared on site at one central kitchen in Ynyshir by a variety of kitchen staff. 2 Members of staff in each of the 14 vans deliver the meals.

The proposal would consist of providing service users with a choice of either a hot or frozen meal delivery service, which they could order through a central point of contact within the Council. The frozen meals would be purchased by the Council through a third-party supplier and stored at the central meal kitchen. Part of this option would also entail a proposed price increase of £0.50 to service users, which would increase the price of the meal from £4.05 to £4.55. The meals would be regenerated on-site with a reduced number of staff and hours in the kitchen, half the number of delivery drivers. Community Meals staff will continue to offer a welfare check to service users and support clients with plating a meal if required

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

There is no statutory requirement to provide a Community Meals Service.

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>)	Negative	<p>The proposal would have a negative impact on older people, who may be more likely to be unable to prepare a meal for themselves and rely on the Community Meals Service to provide assistance to manage and maintain their own nutrition and well-being.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to provide a delivered meal service to support this group of people. However, a proposed increase in the cost of a meal may impact on some older people, as the majority of service users are over 70 years of age.</p> <p>Also, if service users are unable to afford the service, and withdraw, this could impact on other areas of the Council such as Adult Social Care.</p>	The age profile of current service users is detailed in Table 2 of the Cabinet report and illustrates that the service, in the main, supports the older generation with 86% of clients aged over 70 years.

<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>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.</p> <p>Community Meals Staff:</p> <p>The age profile of staff ranges from 35 to 65.</p> <p>To mitigate any compulsory redundancies, opportunities for redeployment will be available (in particular, in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Primary Free School Meals) and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff, as part of on-going workfore planning arrangements.</p>	Staffing profile from iTrent.
Disability	Negative	The proposal would have a negative impact on service users with a disability / long-term health condition,	Our service records indicate that a proportion of service users have some significant

<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?
<i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i>		<p>who may be more likely to be unable to prepare a meal for themselves and rely on the Community Meals Service to provide assistance to manage and maintain their own nutrition and well-being.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to provide a delivered meal service to support this group of people. However, a proposed increase in the cost of a meal may impact on some service users who have either a physical or mental disability.</p> <p>Also, if service users are unable to afford the service, and withdraw, this could impact on other areas of the Council such as Adult Social Care.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales</p>	<p>needs, with 11% experiencing mobility issues and 11% displaying significant confusion. A further 3% of clients display both mobility issues and memory loss.</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?
		Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on staff.	
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>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
Race <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this 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?
Religion or Belief <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. The Service is able to offer culturally appropriate food choices, however, requests for meal choices such as kosher and halal are limited. Vegetarian and vegan meal options are readily available.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
Sexual Orientation <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who 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>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
Carers <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Neutral	The proposal would have a neutral impact on carers, who may take responsibility for providing care for family members / friends / neighbours, as the Council is continuing to provide a delivered meal service to service users. However, a proposed increase in the cost of a meal could impact on carers, if the service user can no longer afford this service, which could put additional pressures on carers. To mitigate this impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.

		<p>disability benefits. Carers will also be entitled to their own assessment, which will help to mitigate against indirect hardship caused by any future decisions.</p>	
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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:

N/A

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision? Yes No

Name: Andrea Richards
 Position: Service Director for 21st Century Schools and Transformation
 Date: 21/11/22

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:

<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
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<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/<u>Income Poverty</u> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
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>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
<u>Material Deprivation</u> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in meal price and who are unable to afford to heat or	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.

<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?
<i>electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>		prepare meals.To mitigate this impact, as part of the consultation process, service users will be assessed to ensure that there is adequate means of safely storing meals, in terms of appropriate white goods, and appropriate means of heating and preparing meals if required. The Council will also continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	

<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?
<u>Area Deprivation</u> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
Socio-economic background <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
Socio-economic disadvantage <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.

<i>protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>		will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	
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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.**

The proposal has a negative impact on eight disadvantaged groups highlighted in section 3, which includes age, disability, those on Low Income / Income Poverty, Low and / or No Wealth, Material Deprivation, Area Deprivation, Socio-economic Background and Socio-Economic Disadvantage. A detailed action plan to reduce/mitigate these impacts will be collated during and following the consultation process.

To minimise the impact of a price increase on these groups, the Council will reorganise the Service and continue to provide a subsidisation, which will keep the price of the meal as low as possible at £4.55, whilst taking into account inflationary price increases. This still demonstrates good value for money when compared to prices charged by other Local Authorities for a similar service or the price an external provider would charge for a frozen delivery meal service only. The Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. The Chancellor, in his Autumn Statement on 17.11.22, announced some measures, which will assist households facing financial challenges, such as additional cost of living payments in 2023/24 of £900 to households on means tested benefits; £300 to pensioner households and £150 to individuals on disability benefit. Also, in April 2023, the state pension will increase in line with inflation, which equates to a £870 increase. Benefits will also rise in line with inflation.

- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

To be updated when redeployment opportunities have been identified and expressions of interest for Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme received.

- 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.

Community Meals Service records and Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

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.

To be actioned following Cabinet's approval to consult on the service proposal.

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:

Following the consultation, the impact assessment will be updated and Cabinet will receive a further report on the outcome of the consultation.

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

To be determined following Cabinet's final decision .

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

Director of Education & Inclusion Services

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

To be determined following Cabinet's final decision.

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 EqlA 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
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.

There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Community Meals service and it is highly subsidised. The proposal seeks approval from Cabinet to initiate a consultation on the preferred service change proposal of option 3.

The current service provides a prime cooked hot meal and dessert, five days a week, with an option of a frozen meal for the weekend. The proposal would consist of providing service users with a choice of either a hot or frozen meal delivery service, which they could order through a central point of contact within the Council. Part of this option would also entail a proposed price increase of £0.50 to service users, which would increase the price of the meal from £4.05 to £4.55. The meals would be regenerated on-site with a reduced number of staff and hours in the kitchen, and a reduction in the number of delivery drivers. Community Meals staff will continue to offer a welfare check to service users and support clients with plating a meal if required.

There are 8 negative and 9 neutral equality and diversity implications associated with this report. These risks will be mitigated by a range of actions as detailed in the impact assessment, which will be updated following the consultation process.

SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS

Lead Officer:

Name: Andrea Richards

Position: Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation

Date: 21.11.22

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 & Inclusion Services

Date: 21.11.22

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.

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WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

Stage 1 – Information Gathering	
NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance for more information on data sources.	
Proposal Name:	Community Meals Service Review
Department	Education & Inclusion Services
Service Director	Gaynor Davies
Officer Completing the WLIA	Lisa Kidner
Email	Lisa.J.Kidner@rctcbc.gov.uk
Phone	07795 391750
Brief Description	<p>The Council is facing significant financial challenges into the medium term and is considering the remodelling of key service areas to contribute to addressing the shortfall in funding. A review of the Community Meals Service has been undertaken and several options for the future of the service have been evaluated.</p> <p>Option 1: to continue the service as it currently operates with increased service user charges.</p> <p>Option 2: to reorganise the existing internal service with increased service user charges.</p> <p>Option 3: to reorganise the existing internal service and provide a hot/frozen Community Meal home delivery service with increased service user charges.</p> <p>Option 4: to cease the current service and support service users to find alternative options.</p>

	<p>There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Community Meals service and it is highly subsidised. The proposal seeks approval from Cabinet to initiate a consultation on the preferred service change proposal of option 3.</p>
<p>Date</p>	<p>21st November 2022</p>
<p>Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)</p>	<p>The proposal will affect service users, employees and the wider community.</p> <p>The current service provides a prime cooked hot meal and dessert, five days a week, with an option of a frozen meal for the weekend, delivered on a Friday, as part of the regular daily delivery service. Meals are prepared on site at one central kitchen in Ynyshir by a variety of kitchen staff. 2 Members of staff in each of the 14 vans deliver the meals.</p> <p>The proposal would consist of providing service users with a choice of either a hot or frozen meal delivery service, which they could order through a central point of contact within the Council. The frozen meals would be purchased by the Council through a third-party supplier and stored at the central meal kitchen. Part of this option would also entail a proposed price increase of £0.50 to service users, which would increase the price of the meal from £4.05 to £4.55. The meals would be regenerated on-site with a reduced number of staff and hours in the kitchen, half the number of delivery drivers. Community Meals staff will continue to offer a welfare check to service users and support clients with plating a meal if required</p> <p>If the Community Meals Service were to reorganise and move to a hot/frozen meal, instead of a prime cooked meal with increased charges, service users would be affected as they would have to pay more for their meal and it would be a frozen cooked meal in place of a prime cooked meal.</p> <p>Current employees of the Community Meals Service would also be affected by the proposal. The estimated reduction in staffing numbers required would be 21, however, the Council would seek to ensure that compulsory redundancies are avoided by exploring opportunities for redeployment (in particular, in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Free School Meals) and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff, as part of on-going workforce planning arrangements.</p>

The proposal will also impact on the wider community in terms of:-

- Family/carers – potential increased pressure on this group to provide care and support if service users do not want to choose this option.
- Council – potential increased pressure on other parts of the Adult Social Care system.
- Supermarkets/third party meal providers – increased opportunity to provide business if service users are unable to afford increased charges or do not want this option.

<p>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?</p>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to consult on the preferred option, which is to reorganise the existing internal service and provide a hot/frozen Community Meal delivery service, with increased service user charges, thus reducing the subsidy per meal. The Consultation with service users, employees and the wider community will be undertaken in both Welsh and English and accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.</p>																											
<p>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</p>	<p>Welsh language groups such as service users, employees and the wider community will continue to be able to deal with the Council in the Welsh language, if they choose to do so, as there will be continuity of service.</p>																											
<p>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</p>	<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 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 in 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 table that follows illustrates the Welsh language skills of residents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="797 839 1957 1297"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Welsh Language Skills of Residents</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rhondda Cynon Taf</th> <th>All Wales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Can Speak, Read and Write Welsh</td> <td>9.7%</td> <td>14.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Speak and Read but Cannot Write Welsh</td> <td>0.9%</td> <td>1.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Speak but Cannot Read or Write Welsh</td> <td>1.6%</td> <td>2.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Understand Spoken Welsh Only</td> <td>4.2%</td> <td>5.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Combination of Skills</td> <td>3.3%</td> <td>2.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No Skills</td> <td>80.4%</td> <td>73.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100.0%</td> <td>100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Welsh Language Skills of Residents				Rhondda Cynon Taf	All Wales	Can Speak, Read and Write Welsh	9.7%	14.6%	Can Speak and Read but Cannot Write Welsh	0.9%	1.5%	Can Speak but Cannot Read or Write Welsh	1.6%	2.7%	Can Understand Spoken Welsh Only	4.2%	5.3%	Other Combination of Skills	3.3%	2.5%	No Skills	80.4%	73.3%	Total	100.0%	100.0%
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The Annual Population Survey 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 June 2022, reported that 20.5% of respondents living in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf said they could speak Welsh this is compared to the All-Wales figure of 29.7% of respondents. This can be further broken down into the data contained in the table below:-

Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)		
	County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales
Can Read Welsh	17.9%	26%
Can Write Welsh	17.2%	24%
Can Understand Spoken Welsh	24.1%	33.4%

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 below provides 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	7.4%	14.8%
Speak Welsh Weekly	5.0%	5.6%
Use it Less Often	6.1%	7.6%

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

	<p>The Welsh Language Use Survey 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.</p>
<p>Other relevant data or research</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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 (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments can be found by [clicking here](#).

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral 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?
<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</p> <p>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</p> <p>The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Positive	The proposal will have a positive impact on service users, staff and the wider community, to use the Welsh language, if Cabinet approve the proposal to reorganise the existing internal service and provide a hot/frozen Community Meal home delivery service with increased service user chargers.	Clients of the Community Meals Service, employees and the wider community are currently able to deal with the Council through the medium of Welsh, if they choose, and our website and correspondence is bi-lingual. Phone greetings are also bi-lingual and customers are	Service users, staff and the wider community will be able to use the Welsh language, when they are given the opportunity to express their views on the proposal during the consultation process.
				Opportunities for redeployment (in particular,

		<p>The above Groups will continue to have opportunities to use the Welsh Language and have dialogue with the Council through this medium if they choose as there will be continuity of service. The Community Meals Service will also continue to promote the use and development of the Welsh Language in its operation.</p> <p>However, for those staff potentially made redundant as part of this proposal, the opportunity for them to use the Welsh Language with future employers may be limited or non-existent as the Welsh Language (Wales) Measures do not apply to non-public bodies.</p>	<p>encouraged to communicate with the Service in Welsh.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to greet service users in Welsh and use the Welsh Language in work.</p> <p>All new starters must complete Level 1 Welsh, if they are not already a Welsh speaker, and there are opportunities to learn Welsh in the Council.</p>	<p>in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Free School Meals) will be explored so that staff affected by the proposal would continue to be employed by RCTCBC.</p> <p>School kitchen staff will be given Welsh lessons as part of Outcome 7 of the new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</p>
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral 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?
<p>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers e.g Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The proposal would have a neutral impact on the numbers and/or percentages of Welsh speakers with service users, employees and the wider community.</p> <p>The Community Meals Service will continue to promote and use the Welsh Language in line with statutory standards.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to learn Welsh and speak Welsh in work.</p>	<p>Staff are encouraged to learn and speak Welsh and are provided with staff updates from the Translation unit on training opportunities.</p> <p>All new starters must complete a Level 1 Welsh course if they are not already a Welsh speaker.</p> <p>The Community Meals Service currently has no Welsh speakers, however, as Catering is part of the 21st Century Schools Team and Education & Inclusion Directorate, there are Welsh speakers who can assist.</p> <p>The Service is currently unaware of the number of service users who are Welsh speakers.</p>	<p>Catering Services are working with the Translation Unit to develop a tailored Level 1 Welsh course for kitchen staff which Community Meals staff would also benefit from. They will be able to learn Welsh words and phrases that would be specific to their role.</p> <p>The Service will update its referral form so that it captures information on service users' ability to speak Welsh.</p>

<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The proposal would have a positive impact on the opportunities to promote the Welsh language with service users, employees and the wider community.</p> <p>The Community Meals Service is already promoted through the medium of Welsh on the Councils website and the continuation of the Service, will allow opportunities to further encourage and promote the Welsh language.</p> <p>All communication is bi-lingual. Enquiries in Welsh are responded to in Welsh. All consultation is undertaken bi-lingually.</p>	<p>Current service users can have daily contact with Community Meals staff in person and over the telephone where the Welsh language can be promoted as all staff have to undertake Level 1 training. Staff are provided with opportunities to learn Welsh.</p> <p>The Service is looking to develop an on-line referral form, which will be available in both Welsh and English.</p>	<p>Current service users will continue to receive a service from the Council so the Welsh language will continue to be promoted and all promotional material to new service users will be bi-lingual.</p>
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral 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?
<p>Compliance with the <u>Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards</u> e.g increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The proposal will have a positive impact on compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards as the new proposal is not reducing the Council's ability to deliver service through the medium of Welsh. A reorganisation of the Service will provide an opportunity to strengthen the standards.</p> <p>All digital and offline communications are bi-lingual. All consultation with customers is undertaken bi-lingually.</p> <p>We have a good working relationship with the Translation Unit, ensuring that all our</p>	<p>The consultation process will be in compliance with the Welsh Language standards as will all correspondence with service users and staff.</p> <p>Staff will be enrolled on a proposed bespoke Level 1 Welsh course with the aim of further development.</p>	

		documentation, letters, online material is compliant with the Welsh standards.		
Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language	Positive	<p>We will continue to monitor and improve systems in place to ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>All consultation documents and correspondence will be produced in both Welsh and English.</p> <p>All digital and offline communications are bi-lingual and any enquires/complaints in Welsh will be replied to in Welsh.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to learn Welsh and speak Welsh in work. All new starters must complete Level 1 Welsh, if they are not already a Welsh speaker.</p>	The Community Meals Service ensures their website content, correspondence with service users, signage, phone greetings etc are bi-lingual.	

Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal

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?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
We will require staff to complete the tailored Level 1 Welsh course	Once finalised by the Translation Unit	Principal Officer, Community Meals
Revise the referral form to capture if service users are Welsh speaking	Once service review is complete	Principal Officer, Community Meals
If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.		
What was identified?	Why is it not possible?	
N/A	N/A	
N/A	N/A	

Stage 4 – Review

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

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 completed (Stage 1>6) impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation report 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.

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 in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
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

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Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

Following the Consultation, Cabinet will receive a further report on the outcome of the consultation.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write ‘please see full report at Appendix x’ in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -

Welsh language groups such as service users, employees and the wider community will continue to be able to deal with the Council in the Welsh language, if they choose to do so, as there will be continuity of service. There are no negative or adverse Welsh Language implications associated with the proposal.

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Stage 7 – Sign Off			
Name of Officer completing the WLIA	Lisa Kidner	Service Director Name:	Gaynor Davies
Position	Service Manager, Catering Services	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	<i>LJ Kidner</i>	Service Director Signature	<i>Gaynor Davies</i>
Date	21.11.22	Date	21.11.22