



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21st September 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30th June 2021 (Quarter 1)

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

**AUTHOR: Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance and Improvement
Services (01443) 680609**

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first three months of this financial year (to the 30th June 2021).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the on-going impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on service delivery and, in parallel, the re-introduction of services as Covid-19 restrictions are gradually lifted.

Revenue

- 2.2 Note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 30th June 2021 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) and note the incorporation of Welsh Government Covid-19 funding into this position to support on-going service delivery.

Capital

- 2.3 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 30th June 2021 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 30th June 2021 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

- 2.5 Note the Quarter 1 progress updates for the Council's Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – c of the Executive Summary).
- 2.6 Note the progress update to enhance the Council's short term and long-term response to extreme weather events (Section 6 of the Executive Summary).

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To agree the Council's financial and operational performance position as at the 30th June 2021 to enable elected Members and other stakeholders to scrutinise the performance of the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides Members with the first update of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 2022.
- 4.2 The aim of the report is to bring together the Council's performance into an Executive Summary and make available more detailed information to the reader through electronic links. Information contained in the Executive Summary includes financial data, progress against our Corporate Plan priorities (with exceptions highlighted within the detailed sections to ensure that elected Members and other readers are able to quickly identify the key issues) and progress made to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events.
- 4.3 Members will note that this report is set in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to pose significant challenges in the delivery of Council Services alongside on-going significant additional costs and income losses that have, to date, been funded in the majority of cases by Welsh Government. Further information in this regard is included within the Executive Summary.

5.0 QUARTER 1 REPORT

- 5.1 The Quarter 1 report is attached and comprises:
- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 1 (i.e. 30th June 2021).

- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – e setting out the detailed projected financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted.
- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – e setting out capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3f covering Prudential Indicators.
- **Organisational Health** – includes information on turnover, sickness absence, organisational health related investment areas and Council strategic risks.
- **Corporate Plan Priorities** – three action plans (Sections 5a – c) setting out progress updates for the priorities of People, Places and Prosperity.
- **Enhancing the Council’s response to extreme weather events** - Section 6 setting out progress made to implement the recommendations agreed by Cabinet on [18th December 2020](#).

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS AND SOCI-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 The Council’s Performance Report provides an update on financial and operational performance for the first 3 months of 2021/22; as a result, there are no equality and diversity or socio-economic duty implications to report.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Following consideration by Cabinet, this Report will be presented to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee for review, challenge and where deemed required, the scrutiny of specific areas in line with the Committee’s Terms of Reference. With specific regard to progress made to implementation recommendations to enhance the Council’s response to extreme weather events, this information will be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

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

10.1 The Corporate Plan progress updates included within this report align with the priorities as set out within the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 "[Making a Difference](#)". With regard to the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), at the 4th March 2020 Council meeting, it was agreed that the Corporate Plan priorities would also serve as its Well-being Objectives in line with the Act.

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council as at Quarter 1 2021/22, that is, 30th June 2021.

11.2 The Quarter 1 revenue budget position is projecting a £0.415M overspend. This is an early projection for the full year and reflects the impact of forecasted changes in demand through to year-end, with key pressures being primarily within Adult Social Care and Children's Services, and takes account of forecasted additional costs and income losses as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic (that are assumed to be fully funded by Welsh Government). Work will continue to closely monitor the Council's financial position, refresh financial forecasts as updated information becomes available and continue to engage with Welsh Government to highlight the importance of providing additional funding to support the financial implications of Covid-19 and also on-going permanent cost pressures.

11.3 Capital investment as at 30th June 2021 is £10.624M, with a number of schemes being re-profiled during the quarter to reflect changes in costs and also new external grant funding approvals received. The expenditure to date represents the continuation of a long-term programme of investment that is supporting visible improvements to infrastructure and assets across the County Borough, taking account of Covid-19 safety requirements.

11.4 With regard to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, overall, good progress has been made during the first three months of the year.

11.5 The third progress update on the delivery of recommendations to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events shows a positive position, with key actions being taken forward that provide a clear direction for the future.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: Paul Griffiths

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item: 10

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 1 2021/22
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 2a Education and Inclusion Services;
- 2b Community and Children’s Services;
- 2c Chief Executive;
- 2d Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services; and
- 2e Authority Wide Budgets.

Earmark reserve update – Section 2f provides a breakdown of expenditure against service areas.

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital programme budget – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 3a Chief Executive;
- 3b Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services;
- 3c Education and Inclusion Services;
- 3d Community and Children’s Services; and
- 3e Capital Programme Funding.

Prudential Indicators – a detailed breakdown is included in Section 3f.

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- Turnover;
- Sickness Absence;
- Organisation Health related investment areas; and
- Council Strategic Risks.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority progress updates – Quarter 1 position statements are included within the following sections:

- 5a – People;
- 5b – Places; and
- 5c – Prosperity.

Section 6 – ENHANCING THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Progress update on the implementation of recommendations agreed by Cabinet on 18th December 2020 to enhance the Council’s response to extreme weather events.

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

This Executive Summary, bringing together and summarising the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 30th June 2021, is set within the context of Council service delivery operating within a very challenging environment as a result of the on-going impact of Covid-19, as was the case during 2020/21. This has required the Council, like all local authorities in Wales, to continue to adapt and change the way it provides services, many in partnership with others, to help meet the needs of residents and businesses. Where appropriate, service specific information has been included within this Executive Summary to provide the reader with a full as picture as possible in this regard.

In addition, throughout the Executive Summary electronic links have been included that enable the reader to access more detailed information, as required.

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance

	2021/22 – as at 30th June 2021 (Quarter 1)		
Service Area	Full Year Budget £M	Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 1 £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	195.725	195.646	(0.079)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	168.293	168.798	0.505
Chief Executive (2c)	30.857	30.601	(0.256)
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d)	60.235	60.400	0.165
Sub Total	455.110	455.445	0.335
Authority Wide Budgets (2e)	72.793	72.873	0.080
Grand Total	527.903	528.318	0.415

Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the Quarter 1 position (30th June 2021)

The full year revenue budget variance, projected as at 30th June 2021, is a £0.415M overspend. This forecasted position assumes that additional costs and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic will be offset by the continuation of additional funding being made available by Welsh Government to all local authorities in Wales. Notwithstanding the on-going uncertainties associated with the pandemic, for example, the impact of easing of restrictions, the effectiveness of the vaccination programme and the potential for a further 'wave' during the autumn / winter period, the current estimated full year additional cost / income loss to the Council, forecasted at 30th June 2021, is £29M. This position will be kept under on-going review alongside Welsh Government's intentions for the continuation of additional financial support (including with regard to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme) and updated information will be included within Performance Reports during the year.

For information, the specific financial assistance provided to local authorities includes: additional costs in respect of housing / homelessness, free school meal payments, Adult Social Services and staff cover due to absence; and income losses where there has been a need to temporarily suspend or reduce service provision (for example, Leisure Centres, Theatres and visitor attractions).

The Table below sets out the additional costs and income losses incurred and accounted for relating to Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

Service Area	Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (Quarter 1)*
	£M
Education & Inclusion Services	-2.211
Community & Children's Services	-5.146
Chief Executive	-0.416
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-0.848
Authority Wide	-0.040
TOTAL	-8.661

* Excludes additional costs incurred / projected in respect of Test, Trace and Protect and supporting the delivery of the vaccination programme, the funding for which is being made available by Welsh Government and the Local Health Board respectively, in line with guidance. Also excludes spend incurred and funded on Welsh Government schemes where the Council is acting as an agent.

Revenue budget variances projected at Quarter 1

1. Community and Children's Services

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.341M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.463M overspend);
- Provider Services (£0.075M underspend); and
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.302M underspend).

CHILDREN SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£0.108M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.088M overspend); and
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.088M underspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.076M overspend).

2. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Transportation (£0.062M overspend);
- Street Cleansing (£0.052M underspend); and
- Waste Services (£0.196M overspend).

3. Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Human Resources (£0.070M underspend); and
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.063M underspend).

4. Authority Wide Budgets

- Miscellaneous (£0.080M overspend).

Earmark Reserve Update

- A breakdown of full year expenditure against approved earmark reserves for Service Areas can be viewed at Section 2f by clicking [here](#).

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Council and its contractors / suppliers have continued to build on the work undertaken during 2020/21 to ensure safe working arrangements and, in doing so, enabled the on-going delivery of capital programme projects.

Capital Programme Budget

Service Area	2021/22 - as at 30th June 2021	
	Capital Budget £M	Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive (3a)	3.447	0.227
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b)	74.410	7.877
Education & Inclusion Services (3c)	43.510	1.424
Community & Children's Services (3d)	10.283	1.096
Total	131.650	10.624

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 1

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Targeted Regeneration Investment (TR) Programme (£0.594M); WG ENABLE (£0.349M); Heritage Lottery Fund (£1.144M); Integrated Care Fund (£0.160M); WG Local Transport Fund (£0.828M); WG Road Safety Grant (£0.157M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (£0.488M); and WG Local Places for Nature Grant (£0.135M).

For information on how the Capital Programme is funded see section 3e by clicking [here](#).

Prudential Indicators

For a detailed breakdown of Prudential Indicators, see section 3f by clicking [here](#).

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- **Turnover**

Service Area	2021/22		2020/21				2019/20
	As at 30 th June 2021		As at 30 th June 2020		As at 31 st March 2021		As at 30 th June 2019
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	10,897	2.52	10,630	1.03	10,888	6.84	1.97
Community & Children's Services	2,941	2.62	2,909	1.17	2,946	6.59	2.39
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	907	4.74	949	0.74	941	6.70	1.57
Education & Inclusion Services	1,247	2.25	1,277	0.47	1,258	6.52	1.98
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,920</u>	<u>2.30</u>	<u>4,820</u>	<u>1.16</u>	<u>4,873</u>	<u>7.47</u>	<u>1.71</u>
Primary	3,077	2.37	3,040	1.09	3,043	7.49	1.79
Secondary	1,842	2.17	1,780	1.29	1,830	7.43	1.56
Chief Executive's Division	882	1.59	675	0.89	870	4.83	2.64

- **Sickness Absence**

With specific regard to Covid-19 and the recording of sickness absence, where staff have been unavailable for work due to, for example, self-isolating, having an underlying condition that places an individual at risk, these occurrences have not been categorised as 'sickness absence' and as such are excluded from the analysis below.

Service Area	2021/22	2020/21		2019/20	
	As at 30 th June 2021 %	As at 30 th June 2020 %	As at 31 st March 2021 %	As at 30 th June 2019 %	As at 31 st March 2020 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	4.31	3.29	3.96	4.14	4.16
Community & Children's Services	6.13	5.59	6.14	5.25	5.59
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	5.26	4.06	4.99	3.76	4.74
Education & Inclusion Services	4.25	2.47	3.20	3.65	3.70
<u>Schools</u>	<u>3.28</u>	<u>2.21</u>	<u>2.88</u>	<u>3.89</u>	<u>3.56</u>
Primary	3.58	2.39	3.21	4.16	3.79
Secondary	2.78	1.90	2.33	3.42	3.16
Chief Executive's Division	3.02	1.47	2.62	2.73	2.39

For a more detailed breakdown of 2021/22 sickness absence information, click [here](#).

Organisation Health related investment areas

There will be a continued focus on investing in organisational health related areas, for example, IT infrastructure and invest to save energy efficiency schemes, with projects being delivered operationally within services across the Council.

- **Council Strategic Risks**

The Council's Strategic Risk Register has been reviewed and updated to take account of the changing internal and external operating environment. This has informed revisions to the Strategic Risk Register as follows:

- Updating risk descriptions to ensure they continue to be focussed on the key areas of risk to be managed by the Council, for example, the on-going implications of Covid-19; workforce health and well-being and recruitment and retention; increasing pressures within demand led services; and imminent national reforms in respect of the education curriculum and additional learning needs;
- The removal of the specific Brexit related risk, with this area being incorporated within an existing risk associated with the Council's overall recovery arrangements from the Covid-19 pandemic; and
- A new risk in respect of the physical impacts of climate change as a result of the likelihood of increased frequency of extreme weather events.

The Council's updated Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority action plans for People, Places and Prosperity have been compiled and continue to be action orientated, rather than driven by performance indicators, and are focussed on: the Council's recovery arrangements from the Covid-19 pandemic and the support being provided to communities and businesses; the on-going transformation and improvement of services; and the delivery of key projects that will have significant positive impacts across the County Borough.

The priority action plans are in draft form, subject to consideration / approval by full Council in October, with a summary of progress made across each of the three priorities as at 30th June 2021 (Quarter 1) set out in Sections 5a - c. For Members information, as part of the summaries of progress, electronic links have been included to each priority action plan, providing more detailed information on the progress during the first quarter of the year.

Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update

- **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

Summary of progress to 30th June 2021

We have continued our work to support our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life. Despite some delays earlier in the year, our extra care facility in Pontypridd, Cwrt yr Orsaf, is currently progressing well and is due to be completed by October 2021. We are also working on a business case and design options for a similar scheme in Treorchy. The extra care scheme in Porth has been delayed at the planning stage but it is anticipated that progress on construction will be made once planning has been granted.

We have also opened a supported accommodation scheme in Mountain Ash and all apartments have now been allocated. We had hoped to open a similar scheme in Llanhari following a refurbishment of Elm Road accommodation but this will now be completed by the end of March 2022. We are also developing a supported accommodation strategy and investment plan to continue to provide a range of modern fit for purpose supported housing options for vulnerable people that meets their needs and is supported, where appropriate, by access to community facilities.

We are taking forward the Council's review on the future shape of residential care for older people to ensure we create the right model of service delivery to respond to increasing demand and changing needs. This includes drafting for approval a modernisation programme and investment plan for the Council's 9 care homes in line with CIW standards.

We continue to deliver the Assistive Technology Project as part of Regional Stay Well in Community Transformation Programme and we are developing an Adult Services Digital Strategy and work plan to deliver a new approach that maximises the use of technology enabled care solutions. We will use our experiences of how technology was used during the pandemic to complete this.

We are also building on our engagement and learning from the pandemic to inform the transformation of day services going forward so that people with a learning disability have access to meaningful activity and opportunities in their own communities, including employment to achieve their personal goals and live ordinary lives.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

We continue to encourage all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing. Following the easing of Covid restrictions, we opened the brand new gym at Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd and reopened Ponty Lido following the damage caused by Storm Dennis in February 2020. We also have a full programme of outdoor exercise opportunities throughout RCT leisure facilities and Parks (where applicable). One outdoor rig has been installed in Ynysangharad Park and others planned for Dare Valley Country Park and Abercynon Sports Centre. We are also developing a plan for wider community outdoor opportunities and promotion of increased participation to encourage residents to utilise our outdoor spaces.

Work has commenced on the Treorchy Cultural Hub and a Community Engagement Plan is being developed to ensure that our theatres are more inclusive and accessible to the whole community. We have continued to plan for online and blended delivery until Welsh Government guidance on theatres re-opening is clarified.

We are working with our partners to ensure adequate support to meet resident needs is available through partnership with third and voluntary sector. We have co-produced community booklets to build relationships amongst Community Organisations/Groups and Local neighbourhood networks have commenced in discussions with key Partners / organisations. Mapping of areas to support residents' needs is ongoing.

We are working with Health to explore options for the development of an integrated community health and social care locality model and have commenced a review of options for an integrated community model. We are also working together to improve patient experience and redesign the pathways for integrated primary and community based urgent care services and 'home first' discharge from hospital services. This includes a review and refresh of the hospital discharge protocol, including performance standards and measures to deliver effective transfers of care from Royal Glamorgan hospital. We also continue to deliver SW@H Phase 1 and 2 projects as part of Regional ICF and Transformation Programmes. An evaluation of the project continues in line with the Regional Transformation Programme and draft options appraisal work has commenced. We are also working with Health to review and improve end of life community care to ensure that any current issues are addressed, and care meets the person's needs and to complete a review and redesign of Community mental health services to provide responsive access and effective mental health support. The Taf Community Mental Health Team has relocated to a new joint facility at Dewi Sant Hospital and we are reviewing accommodation options for the Rhondda Community Mental Health Team. Work to review and redesign Community Mental Health Services has been delayed pending further discussions to review the current operating model.

Using the RCT Neighbourhood Network Groups, we will begin to co-produce/design with partners a social prescribing model. Following development of the social prescribing model, we will work with partners to review gaps in provision and identify ways to address unmet needs.

Our priority is to improve services for children and young people and ensure the needs of children are considered in everything we do. We will ensure that the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of children and young people aged 0-25 and their families are central to the delivery of services. This work has included delivering a programme of Targeted Play provision for vulnerable 5-14 year olds with care and support needs, piloting a Wellbeing Support Programme for children aged 8-11 years requiring one to one support to improve their wellbeing and build their resilience and enhancing the provision of support to 16-25 year olds delivered by the Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS). YEPS has undergone a restructure to bring together all support services for young people aged 16 - 25. The 16+ Support Team is assisting young people

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

transition out of statutory education, tackling youth homelessness and offering key life skills qualifications to support young people to transition into adulthood.

Work has begun on a 'Prevention of youth anti-social behaviour' strategy. Ensuring the positive engagement of young people in community life is a collective priority and will be central to the strategy.

We will continue to strengthen participation of children and young people to promote engagement specifically with Children Looked After and partner agencies to ensure coproduction and that the voice of children and young people are heard in service development and delivery. We are developing a Participation Strategy and incorporating different communication approaches when engaging with children and young people. We are seeking to provide effective Edge of Care services to ensure that children, young people and families receive the right support at the right time, supporting their physical and mental wellbeing. This includes development of the Regional MAPPS Service (Therapeutic Regional Service for CLA). The commissioning process has been delayed and timescales have been revised.

The Integrated Wellbeing Pathway which was established during the pandemic to help children return to school has been reviewed and is continuing to operate. Additional funding has been secured to continue the additional capacity for dedicated stress and anxiety courses that young people can access outside of school. We have also purchased Play therapy and devised a well being programme with Bluemind for families to help them address their emotional well being issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

We are delivering the Early Years Transformation agenda in RCT in order to ensure early years services are universally available and specialist services are targeted by need and not geographical location. Funding has been secured to undertake the technical development of the Early Years Vulnerability Profile. A pilot which is utilising health data alongside Council data to build a full profile is progressing well and all relevant health information for 0-1 year olds has been transferred to the Council's database. The first run of the data is due to take place in July 2021 and following this pilot a full test will begin. Work has commenced to produce a 3 year strategic plan for the region identifying key milestone and outcomes at each stage. Work is ongoing to widely communicate operational changes to families, community organisations and providers. An information leaflet has been produced to share information with families on the changes; meetings have taken place with other Local Authorities to share good practice from RCT's Early Years Transformation Project; and a workshop has taken place with all Health Visitors to reiterate the changes.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 1

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE		
Investment Area	Investment Value¹ £M	Quarter 1 Update
Extracare Housing	6.974	<p>This investment funding covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site (Aberaman) – completed and the first residents moved into the new facility in May 2020. • Pontypridd - works commenced in July 2019 and are progressing well with the project due to be completed in 2021. • Porth - agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3rd December 2020. Progress to date includes: the vacation of the building; site surveys completed; contract for demolition has been awarded; and preparatory work underway to enable the main contract works to be tendered. <p>Consideration of development proposals for Treorchy and Mountain Ash schemes are on-going.</p>
Tackling Poverty Fund	0.300	<p>This investment funding is to help address areas where there are high levels of poverty (including fuel poverty) to increase the disposable income of households, for example, by supporting households to reduce energy bills, helping to overcome barriers to find employment.</p>
Total	7.274	

¹ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

o **PLACES** (Section 5b)

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play

Summary of progress to 30th June 2021

The Council's Enforcement Team has continued to monitor and take action against fly-tippers with 999 recorded incidents this quarter (453 last year) and enforced off street parking restrictions and school keep clear zones to ensure the safe passage of both drivers and residents.

Work is on-going with landlords, agents and residents to encourage good recycling practices that will reduce municipal waste and have a positive effect on the environment, for example, reducing plastic bottle use in schools and kitchens and progressing the development of re-use outlets. Recycling awareness raising events have been limited during the pandemic, in line with restrictions, and it is anticipated that some activity can start to resume later this year. The tonnage of recycled waste during quarter 1 is higher than the same period last year (23,110tonnes compared to 21,567tonnes in 2020/21); however, our overall recycling percentage is lower i.e. 62% compared to (66.34% at quarter 1 in 2020/21) - this is primarily due to the storage of wood until such time that it can be transported and recycled.

We are progressing our climate change agenda through developments in alternative fuelled fleet vehicles, public transport and taxis; looking at ways where we can create renewable energy; reuse of hard plastic; development of the Eco Park at Bryn Pica; and implementing procurement policies to reduce the use of single use plastic items.

Our highways investment programme activity continues across the County Borough, together with work on repairs and flood mitigation measures. The requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act are being progressed together with recommendations contained in the review of the Council's response to Storm Dennis [Cabinet Report 18 December 2020](#) (see Section 6 of this Executive Summary). We are also progressing active travel initiatives across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Our community cohesion work is being progressed and we are reviewing the approach to community asset transfers and ensuring that elements of 'social value' are being considered as part of this process. We have also established a Sustainable Food Network to ensure access to good quality food, reducing food waste and food poverty.

We continue to work with partners in Bridgend to recommission Tier 1 and 2 substance misuse services so that they align with provision at Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf. Our substance misuse service, [Barod](#), has been strengthened with the recruitment of two outreach workers, and new initiatives including an out of hours needle exchange service and establishing links with housing services to provide harm reduction services to those individuals deemed homeless and 'hard to reach'. Our new specialist Housing Outreach Service has already supported fifteen people with complex needs, and numbers are expected to increase as the service develops. A Short Term Offender Project has also been progressed that will offer support to reduce homelessness and repeat reoffending. We are also improving our domestic violence and sexual violence provision through our work with Women's Aid and have started the recruitment for a Child and Young Person IDVA.

To keep our communities safe, a three-month pilot scheme of Safe Street Ambassadors has commenced that will inform recommendations for safe spaces within our communities. A third-year evaluation of our PSPO on intoxicating substances, including alcohol in our town centres, has been completed which will inform a report to Cabinet later in 2021.

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play

We continued to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. Our Playground Investment Programme is progressing and includes the [Gravity Family Bike Park](#) at Dare Valley Country Park.

Work to establish natural carbon storage solutions has commenced, and we are actively promoting awareness of our wildflower grass management and initiatives like 'Grab a Rake' to get our communities involved in supporting our biodiversity campaigns. We continue to work with partners such as Natural Resources Wales to support projects like '[Healthy Hillside](#)s' and '[Living Landscapes](#)'.

We have also progressed projects that are grant funded through the [Valleys Regional Park](#) including Dare Valley Country Park and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, and continue to look at ways to promote [Discovery Gateway](#) sites as part of the Valleys Regional Parks initiative.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking [here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 1

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value² £M	Quarter 1 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	6.428	The additional resources are being used in conjunction with existing resources to deliver a programme of highways infrastructure repairs between 2021/22 and 2023/24.
Play Areas	0.564	There are 22 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2021/22. As at 30 th June 2021, 4 had been completed, 1 was under construction, 7 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 10 are to be designed.
Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas	0.191	There are 4 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2021/22. As at 30 th June 2021, 1 scheme is complete, 1 is under construction and 2 are to be designed, costed and scheduled.
Structures: Brook Street Footbridge	1.287	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brook St. Footbridge – the estimated start date for works is quarter 4 of 2021/22 and discussions are on-going with Transport for Wales in respect of the work to be undertaken.
Structures	5.221	<p>The investment funding has been allocated to support structure projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge Strengthening – works are underway on site. • Ynys Meurig Bridge Parapet Replacement – due for completion summer 2021. • Major retaining wall refurbishments – two wall refurbishments completed, others at design stage. • Bodringallt Bridge Infilling – estimated start date January 2022.
Parks Structures	1.097	<p>The investment funding has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge deck and parapet replacement of Maesyfelin Footbridge (Pontyclun) – currently in progress on site. • Replacement of Abercynon Recreation Ground Footbridge - due to commence in quarter 2. • Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.
Parks and Green Spaces	1.226	This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The

² Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ² £M	Quarter 1 Update
		2021/22 programme currently comprises of 64 schemes at various stages of completion.
Llanharan Bypass	2.127	This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology surveys. The next stage programmed is the pre-Planning Application Consultation that is scheduled to be undertaken during Autumn 2021 and thereafter the submission of a planning application.
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	6.099	This investment funding is supporting the dualling of the highway between the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters roundabout and Coed Ely roundabout. Detail design work has been completed; tender document preparation for the construction phase is progressing; and work is on-going to secure land required and the associated Compulsory Purchase Order has been submitted.
Community Hubs	0.458	This investment funding relates to supporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treorchy – procurement process underway for works to be undertaken to improve the proposed site of Treorchy Community Hub at Treorchy Library.
Gelli/Treorchy Link Road	0.393	This investment funding relates to investigatory works for a solution which will help alleviate congestion at Stag Square. Feasibility and a WelTAG stage 1 has been completed. The next steps are to develop a preferred option through WelTAG stage 2.
Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Bypass	1.899	This investment funding relates to the preliminary design, planning application and tender preparation for a bypass continuation from A4059 Aberdare to join the A465 Heads Of the Valleys road.
Bryn Pica Eco Park	1.400	This investment funding is to support enabling works, planning and ecology for the development of an Eco Park at the Waste Management Facility.
Dinas Community Recycling Centre	0.250	This investment funding relates to the provision of a new office building and improvements on the site of Dinas Community Recycling Centre following the demolition of the previous site building. Works have been substantially completed subject to some rendering work being completed.
Land Drainage	0.511	This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes works at:

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES

Investment Area	Investment Value² £M	Quarter 1 Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cwmbach – works commenced and scheduled for completion in the first half of 2021/22; • Property Flood Resistance Programme – on-going engagement with property owners and provision of flood prevention measures e.g. flood gates. • Supporting 9 Welsh Government grant funded schemes across Rhondda Cynon Taf which are scheduled to be completed by March 2022.
Total	29.151	

o **PROSPERITY** (Section 5c)

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

Summary of progress to 30th June 2021

Integrated support continues to be provided for town centre businesses, including support for 69 businesses to develop their outdoor spaces to improve trading opportunities. We continue to engage with businesses to inform developing packages of support.

The Council continues to lead on the £15M Transforming Towns grant across the Cardiff City Region and a strong pipeline of potential projects is in development, including review of currently disused sites. A range of property and site redevelopment projects are currently underway in our town centres. In Mountain Ash, the redevelopment of Rhos (Guto) square is currently onsite and the former Barclays bank building is being transformed into a multiuse facility for Cynon Valley Cancer Care. In Pontypridd, work continues to redevelop the YMCA building and a bid has been made to the UK Government Levelling Up Fund to redevelop the Muni building into a major cultural hub. A draft placemaking plan is currently being developed for Tonypany, with projects including the redevelopment of Llwynypia Courthouse and the demolition and redevelopment of properties in Dunraven street recently damaged by fire. The roll out of town centre wifi has been completed in Tonypany although in Pontypridd it has been delayed until September due to BT Openreach requirements.

Working with Cardiff Capital Region, we are progressing Housing viability gap funding to remediate contaminated land conditions across 3 brownfield sites at the former Cwm Coking works, former Aberdare hospital site and Heol y Wenallt, which could deliver over 1,400 new homes.

Work continues to develop the visitor economy, including finalising work at Dare Valley Country Park, with the gravity bike park opening in August. A Tourism Steering Group involving key stakeholders has been established and a new Tourism Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf is due to be presented to Cabinet for approval in September.

As schools returned to face-to-face delivery during the summer term, work continued in partnership with Central South Consortium to regularly review the progress of all schools, and ensure effective assessment and tracking systems are in place to identify and support those learners most adversely affected by Covid-19. The readiness of schools for the new curriculum is also being discussed by Local Authority and Central South Consortium Officers, and will continue to be monitored in the autumn term. Following the initial pilot of family engagement officers in six secondary/through schools, there have been encouraging initial results in supporting wellbeing and attendance. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has made it difficult to fully evaluate the impact and the pilot is being continued for another year in secondary schools and extended to 13 primary school settings so further information can be gathered before consideration of any wider roll out.

Investment in our school buildings continues, with contractors appointed for the Greater Pontypridd school projects on a design and build basis and works on site commenced to provide additional capacity at YG Rhydwaun and YGG Aberdar. Outline Business Cases have been submitted for pathfinder MIM schemes for Penygawsi, Llanilltud Faerdref and Pontyclun Primary schools. Consultation has also been completed on developing a new Welsh Medium School for YGG Llyn y Forwen, the results of this will be reported to Cabinet in September.

Support for people seeking work continued through our Employment Support programmes, with some face-to-face delivery recommencing for those individuals who find engaging through virtual methods challenging, for example, those without digital skills. Work is also being undertaken to

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

engage local businesses in the support available to them both with recruitment and increasing skills in the existing workforce.

Work continued to develop opportunities for our school pupils to gain knowledge of careers and working life, including developing a pilot project to help pupils who are currently disengaged in school to link their current studies to potential future careers. Work is also currently underway to develop further opportunities for extended work placements and explore the potential for junior apprenticeships, as well as providing 'virtual work experience' through video interviews to assist young people who may have had limited opportunity for physical work placements due to the pandemic.

Work took place in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and developers to increase the supply of energy efficient housing and commercial developments. Work is underway with Rhondda Housing Association and other partners on a feasibility study to construct a zero-carbon home in the Treherbert area, and options for the Porth Infants school site are being explored with Cynon Taf Housing. The Council also continues to work with local manufacturers and installers to identify opportunities for retrofitting schemes to decarbonise the existing housing stock, including existing and new opportunities for external funding. 6 registered companies are now delivering ECO flex funding in RCT and the Council has attracted Arbed am Byth (Welsh Government Warm Homes) funding into Penrhiwceiber.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking [here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 1

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 1 Update
Empty Property Grant	1.245	Following the use of Welsh Government Valleys Taskforce Grant funding during 2020/21 to support bringing empty properties back into use, the Council's funding has been re-introduced for 2021/22. The Council's funding allocation is now fully committed (and the on-line application process has closed) and it is anticipated that the expenditure will be incurred during 2021/22 and into 2022/23.
Schools	1.006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme on-going: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cymmer Primary – demolition of the canteen and erection of fencing was completed in August 2020. Carpark works to be completed during summer 2021. • New schemes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ YGG Llyn Y Forwyn Primary (transferring the school to a new building on a new site) - site investigation surveys have been undertaken and land has been purchased. ○ Covid-19 related capital works - to install canopies and undertake ventilation works in over 50 schools.
Transport Infrastructure	2.500	<p>This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress design work for pedestrian crossing enhancement projects at Tonyrefail, Groesfaen, Llanharan and Nantgarw (to improve road safety and promote active travel). • A4058 Asda Tonypany junction - extend entry lane lengths from the north and include cycle facilities. Design and tender documents have been completed during quarter 1, a contractor will be procured and construction works are programmed to commence during quarter 2. Works will improve junction capacity and traffic flow and promote active travel. • A4059 / Bowls Club junction - feasibility study ongoing to investigate improving the junction to improve traffic flow along the A4059. • A473 Upper Boat - WeITAGs are ongoing and improvements to Maesmawr Lane have been completed.

³ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value³ £M	Quarter 1 Update
Park and Ride Programme	0.586	<p>This investment funding is supporting the development work needed to create additional and formalised ‘park and ride’ car parking spaces with new and improved facilities such as Access for All, improved CCTV coverage and Electric Vehicle charging points at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pontyclun - feasibility design to improve an existing facility is ongoing in partnership with Network Rail and Transport for Wales. • Porth – phase 3 preliminary design has been completed in quarter 1 and planning permission has been granted. Detailed design will now commence and continue for the remainder of this year.
Strategic Regeneration Investment	0.200	<p>This funding has been approved for the Guto Square development (Mountain Ash) which will provide a bigger and improved area for public use in the heart of the town centre for community events and business uses, and also additional car parking spaces for shoppers and visitors to the town. The demolition phase is now complete and the construction contract is underway. It is scheduled for the scheme to be completed by the end of 2021.</p>
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robertstown – good progress made during quarter 1 including completion to a number of plots: main frames, internal foul drainage, fire protection works, liner sheets and insulation, lightening protection tails, installation of metal decking to mezzanine level and roofing. • Coed Ely – the building was handed over on 15th January 2021. During quarter 1, the majority of snagging items have been finalised prior to tenant occupation and works have continued to secure the tenant for the unit.
Total	9.737	

Section 6 – ENHANCING THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

The 18th December 2020 Cabinet meeting agreed a series of recommendations to enhance the Council’s short and long term response to extreme weather events and which limit the impact of flooding on those communities most at risk.

The progress made by Council Services to implement the recommendations can be viewed [here](#) and will be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
