



## **CABINET**

**15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

### **COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (Quarter 2)**

#### **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 six months of this financial year (to the 30<sup>th</sup> September 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 lifted.

##### **Revenue**

- 2.2 Note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 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 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

## **Corporate Plan Priorities**

- 2.5 Note the Quarter 2 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 30<sup>th</sup> September 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 second update of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31<sup>st</sup> 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 2 REPORT**

- 5.1 The Quarter 2 report is attached and comprises:
- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 2 (i.e. 30<sup>th</sup> September 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 6-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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 2 2021/22, that is, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

11.2 The Quarter 2 revenue budget position is projecting a £0.726M overspend and reflects the continuation of key pressures primarily within Adult and Children's Services. Work is underway across all services, as part of the Council's robust service and financial management arrangements, to contribute to bringing the financial position closer in line with budget.

11.3 The projected revenue budget position is set in the context of the significant on-going impact of Covid-19 on service delivery and takes into account additional Welsh Government funding to support additional costs and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic. 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.

11.4 Capital investment as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 is £31.718M, 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 progress made during the first 6 months of the year continues the Council's approach of long-term and sustained investment in infra-structure, the impact of which is supporting visible improvements in assets across the County Borough, taking account of Covid-19 safety requirements.

11.5 With regard to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, positive progress has been made during quarter 2, building on the work undertaken in quarter 1.

11.6 The further progress update on the delivery of recommendations to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events shows good progress overall, with key actions being taken forward to further strengthen the Council's arrangements.

**Other Information:-**

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Finance and Performance Scrutiny  
Committee**

**Contact Officer: Paul Griffiths**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

15<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30th September 2021 (Quarter 2)**

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

**Item: 3**

**Background Papers**

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT  
QUARTER 2 2021/22  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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- 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 2 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> September 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

Service Area	2021/22 – as at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 (Quarter 2)		
	Full Year Budget £M	Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 2 £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
<a href="#">Education &amp; Inclusion Services (2a)</a>	195.596	195.501	(0.095)
<a href="#">Community &amp; Children's Services (2b)</a>	167.999	168.933	0.934
<a href="#">Chief Executive (2c)</a>	30.722	30.435	(0.287)
<a href="#">Prosperity, Development &amp; Frontline Services (2d)</a>	60.235	60.362	0.127
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>454.552</b>	<b>455.231</b>	<b>0.679</b>
<a href="#">Authority Wide Budgets (2e)</a>	73.351	73.398	0.047
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>527.903</b>	<b>528.629</b>	<b>0.726</b>

## Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the Quarter 2 position (30<sup>th</sup> September 2021)

The full year revenue budget variance, projected as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, is a £0.726M 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 for the remainder of the 2021/22 financial year. Notwithstanding the on-going uncertainties associated with the pandemic, for example, the impact of moving to alert level zero in August 2021 and the effectiveness of the vaccination programme, the current estimated full year additional cost / income loss to the Council, forecasted at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, is £30M. This position will be kept under on-going review as part of the compilation and submission of monthly claims to Welsh Government (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 total forecasted full-year additional costs and income losses assumed to be recoverable.

Service Area	Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (Quarters 1 and 2)	Projected Additional Costs / Income Losses (Quarters 3 and 4)	Total Full Year Additional Costs / Income Losses (Actual and Projected)*
	£M	£M	£M
Education & Inclusion Services	-4.751	-1.696	-6.447
Community & Children's Services	-9.562	-8.287	-17.849
Chief Executive	-1.571	-0.848	-2.419
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-1.473	-1.627	-3.100
Authority Wide	-0.153	-0.087	-0.240
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-17.510</b>	<b>-12.545</b>	<b>-30.055</b>

\* 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.

## Revenue budget variances projected at Quarter 2

### 1. Community and Children's Services

#### ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.445M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.414M overspend); and
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.233M underspend).

#### CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£0.626M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.113M overspend);
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.133M underspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.184M underspend); and
- Management & Support Services (£0.083M underspend).

#### PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Community Services (£0.085M underspend);
- Communities & Wellbeing (£0.051M underspend); and
- Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.057M overspend).

### 2. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

#### FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Highways Management (£0.073M underspend);
- Transportation (£0.087M overspend);
- Strategic Projects (£0.095M underspend);
- Street Cleansing (£0.073M underspend); and
- Waste Services (£0.323M overspend).

### 3. Chief Executive

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Human Resources (£0.099M underspend);
- Legal Services (£0.058M underspend); and
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.070M underspend).

## 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 ensure effective and 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 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	
	Capital Budget £M	Actual Expenditure £M
<a href="#">Chief Executive (3a)</a>	4.732	0.768
<a href="#">Prosperity, Development &amp; Frontline Services (3b)</a>	90.145	22.478
<a href="#">Education &amp; Inclusion Services (3c)</a>	37.445	7.191
<a href="#">Community &amp; Children's Services (3d)</a>	10.775	1.281
<b>Total</b>	<b>143.097</b>	<b>31.718</b>

#### **Key Capital Variances at Quarter 2**

- 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) Active Travel Fund (£0.706M); WG Safe Routes in the Community (£0.082M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant (£0.200M); WG Flood Recovery Funding (£14.298M); WG Coal Tip Grant (£2.977M); WG 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools (£0.428M); WG Flying Start (£0.320M); WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Programme (£0.271M); and UK Government Levelling Up Fund (£0.125M).

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 <sup>th</sup> September 2021		As at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020		As at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021		As at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	% Turnover
<b>Turnover – Council Wide</b>	<b>10,979</b>	<b>6.71</b>	<b>10,716</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>10,888</b>	<b>6.84</b>	<b>6.49</b>
Community & Children's Services	2,939	6.46	2,931	2.87	2,946	6.59	4.73
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	921	7.60	957	2.61	941	6.70	3.54
Education & Inclusion Services	1,244	5.06	1,269	2.84	1,258	6.52	4.77
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,976</u>	<u>7.60</u>	<u>4,875</u>	<u>4.41</u>	<u>4,873</u>	<u>7.47</u>	<u>8.70</u>
Primary	3,108	6.34	3,048	4.07	3,043	7.49	7.08
Secondary	1,868	9.69	1,827	4.98	1,830	7.43	11.50
Chief Executive's Division	899	4.00	684	2.49	870	4.83	5.84

### • 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 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 %	As at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020 %	As at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 %	As at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2019 %	As at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020 %
<b>% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>4.16</b>
Community & Children's Services	6.80	5.53	6.14	5.42	5.59
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	5.47	4.37	4.99	3.91	4.74
Education & Inclusion Services	3.70	2.19	3.20	3.33	3.70
<u>Schools</u>	<u>2.94</u>	<u>2.02</u>	<u>2.88</u>	<u>3.13</u>	<u>3.56</u>
Primary	3.12	2.21	3.21	3.31	3.79
Secondary	2.63	1.70	2.33	2.83	3.18
Chief Executive's Division	3.27	1.65	2.62	2.39	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 Quarter 2 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by [clicking here](#) with specific updates included setting out the implications to date of Covid-19 and the work being undertaken / planned to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

## **Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN**

Corporate Plan priority action plans for 2021/22 were reported to and approved by full Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 covering the three priorities of People, Places and Prosperity. A summary of the progress made across the three priorities as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 is set out in Sections 5a – c and electronic links have been included to each approved action plan, providing more detailed information on progress.

### **Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update**

- **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

#### **PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful**

##### **Summary of progress to 30<sup>th</sup> September 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. Our new 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 planning application for the extra care scheme in Porth has been submitted and demolition work has begun on site.

We have also opened a supported accommodation scheme in Mountain Ash and all apartments have now been allocated. We will open a similar scheme in Llanhari following a refurbishment of Elm Road accommodation 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 Care Inspectorate Wales standards.

We are working with carers and partners to ensure respite provision is meeting the needs of both the people who use services and their carers so that people are able to live in their family homes for longer.

Demand for domiciliary care remains high in line with increasing need for this service. We continue to work with homecare providers to build capacity and resilience to improve market stability and ensure we can meet demand and ensure good quality care. As a result, we have not made as much progress as we would have liked to review and redesign our domiciliary care support model. 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. A range of engagement activity is underway, supported by the launch of the ["My Day My Way"](#) website to provide an engagement platform so that people can explain the things that are important to them, and how they would improve urgent day services.

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 new gym at Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd and reopened Lido Ponty following the damage caused by Storm Dennis in

## **PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful**

February 2020. The Lido Ponty was set to close its doors for the main 2021 season on October 3, having welcomed over 85,000 visitors this year alone – despite the restrictions that remain in place due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. However, due to popular demand, it was decided to extend the main season until Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October to allow more visitors to enjoy it.

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. We are also planning to further develop the online Leisure for Life offer to allow members to access classes and workouts at home. Equipment has been purchased and staff now require training.

Work has commenced on the Treorchy Cultural Hub, with the works to Treorchy Library due to be completed by December 2021. A Community Engagement Plan is also 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 the end of the year. It is now planned that theatres will reopen for live events during Quarter 4 in line with Welsh Government guidance.

We are working with our partners to ensure adequate support to meet resident needs is available through collaboration with third and voluntary sector. We have co-produced community booklets to build relationships amongst Community Organisations/Groups and local neighbourhood network discussions have commenced 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. Our work to review and redesign Community Mental Health Services with Health is ongoing. As part of this we will complete a review of current Community Mental Health Services and develop options to redesign our joint Service offer to meet current and future need and demand pressures.

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. This work will be taken forward in 2022/23 when staff are released from the Track Trace and Protect Service.

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

## **PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful**

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

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 Children Looked After). The commissioning process will be completed in January 2022.

We continue to focus on enhancing the wellbeing of our learners. 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. During the summer holidays, we delivered the school holiday enrichment programme (SHEP) to 15 schools and we are currently evaluating the programme. We are also implementing our Action Plan for Enhanced Counselling Support for Children and Young People to further improve our school-based counselling provision. Our work with Continuing Care and the CAHMS service is not progressing as planned due to recruitment issues. We are now looking at alternative ways of delivering emotional wellbeing outcomes in-house.

We are delivering the Early Years Transformation agenda in Rhondda Cynon Taf 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. A full test of health data will begin in October 2021. 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 2

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>1</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Update</b>
Extracare Housing	6.974	<p>This investment funding covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site (Aberaman) – completed and the first residents moved into the new facility in May 2020.</li> <li>• Pontypridd - works commenced in July 2019 and are progressing well with the project due to be completed in October 2021.</li> <li>• Porth - agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020. Progress to date includes: the vacation of the building; site surveys completed; demolition works commenced; and preparatory work underway to enable the main contract works to be tendered.</li> </ul> <p>Consideration of development proposals for Treorchy and Mountain Ash schemes are on-going.</p>
Tackling Poverty Fund	0.300	<p>This investment funding, along with Arbed 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>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.274</b>	

<sup>1</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

The Council's Enforcement Team continues to tackle environmental crime. 1,891 fly-tipping incidents have been recorded this year to date, 346 more incidents than reported in the same period of 2019/20. Parking enforcement and focussed work with landlords regarding communal bin collection points continues.

Work is on-going to encourage good recycling practices that will reduce municipal waste and have a positive effect on the environment. Our recycling trailer has been out in communities during [Recycling Week](#) (September 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>) promoting the 'Be Mighty and step it up for recycling and climate change!' campaign. The tonnage of recycled waste for quarters 1 and 2 is higher than the same period last year (50,645 tonnes compared to 48,791 tonnes in 2020/21) and our overall recycling percentage<sup>2</sup> has increased to 71% (68.53% at Quarter 2 in 2020/21). This figure now incorporates a higher proportion of wood recyclable materials that had previously been in storage. This position also exceeds the Welsh Government target of 70% recycling by 2025.

We continue to progress 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. A successful trial of an EV van has also been undertaken with positive performance feedback on the range and drive. The Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy is currently out to consultation, and an Implementation Plan is in the process of being drafted. Three EV charging points have been installed for Electric Taxis at Pontypridd, Porth and Aberdare, and work is progressing to connect to the electricity supply to enable the charging points to be brought into use. A report has also been presented to the Licensing Committee on [14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 \(Item 52\)](#) that agreed to temporarily amend licensing conditions to enable the operation of the five electric taxi vehicles delivered as part of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal "try before you buy" taxi trial.

Our highways investment programme activity continues across the County Borough, together with work on repairs and flood mitigation measures. Various schemes have been completed to date including:

- Talbot Road/ A4119 Junction – traffic signals replacement;
- First phase of repairs to Ynys Meurig Bridge, Abercynon;
- Park Lane, Trecynon Flood Alleviation Scheme;
- Replacement of Highway Culvert under Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmboi; and
- Flood Alleviation works to the A4059 at Aberdare.

Some schemes have also been delayed for various reasons including third party constraints, lack of contractor resources due to Covid-19, supply chain issues and project complexities being identified. All delayed projects have revised delivery dates.

A [Review of Regulation of Awareness and Enforcement of Flood and Water Legislation](#) was presented and agreed by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> September that highlighted the need to build further resilience and sustainability into local flood risk management arrangements. Additional dedicated resources for Flood Risk Awareness and Enforcement will now be progressed to work proactively with local communities to manage flood risk.

<sup>2</sup> Recycling – provisional recycling data

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

Our community cohesion work continues despite some resource issues due to TTP commitments and recruitment issues in specialised areas. We continue to progress and develop our formal approach to community asset transfer and to ensure that 'social value' is included as part of this process. Through our 'Sustainable Food Network' we now have a good understanding of the priorities in RCT, and will reflect these in the next round of '[Sustainable Food Places](#)' applications, to ensure our residents have access to good quality food, reducing food waste and food poverty.

We continue to work with partners in Bridgend County Borough Council to recommission Tier 1 and 2 substance misuse services so that they align with provision at Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf Councils. Our substance misuse service, [Barod](#), continues to link with housing providers to provide harm reduction services to those that are 'hard to reach'. Mental health and substance misuse nurses are now in post, and trauma counsellors have also been recruited through MIND. This resource seeks to support those with complex needs and provide improved outcomes for people who use the service. We also continue to raise awareness of the harms associated with substance misuse through social media and the promotion of events and support e.g. Distribution of Naloxone posters to pharmacies supported by a social media campaign in a bid to save lives and reduce drug-related-deaths; Promotion of Service User Groups; and A Recovery Walk and International Overdose Awareness Day.

To keep our communities safe, a relaunch of the 'Ask Angela' campaign has commenced in partnership with South Wales Police, which will be promoted through the [Pubwatch Scheme](#). A new Public Spaces Protection Order on intoxicating substances, including alcohol in our town centres, has now been agreed by [Cabinet in September 2021](#).

We continued to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. Our Playground Investment Programme is progressing despite some delays due to play equipment and material shortages. In early August, the [Gravity Family Bike Park](#) at Dare Valley Country Park, officially opened with an outdoor activity offer for all ages.

Our work to establish natural carbon storage solutions continues and we are actively engaging with communities through our [Let's Talk Wildflowers](#) (via '[Lets Talk RCT - Our New Engagement](#)' website). We continue to work with partners such as Natural Resources Wales to support projects like '[Healthy Hillides](#)' and '[Living Landscapes](#)'.

We continue to access external grant funding where available to improve our park infrastructure and attract tourism to Rhondda Cynon Taf. 'Southern Wales Tourism' have recently filmed a [promotional video](#) at Dare Valley Country Park to promote this Discovery Gateway site, which has been [hosted on their webpage](#). More promotional filming is planned in the future.

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

## Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 2

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>3</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Update</b>
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	7.928	The additional resources (including the approval of a further £1.5M by full Council on 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021) 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 <sup>th</sup> September 2021, 6 had been completed, 3 were under construction, 4 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 9 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 <sup>th</sup> September 2021, 2 schemes had been completed and 2 are to be designed, costed and scheduled.
Structures: Brook Street Footbridge	1.287	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	5.721	The investment funding (including the approval of a further £0.5M by full Council on 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021) has been allocated to support structure projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge Strengthening – works are underway on site.</li> <li>•Ynys Meurig Bridge Parapet Replacement – completed August 2021;</li> <li>•Major retaining wall refurbishments – two wall refurbishments completed and others at commissioning and design stage; and</li> <li>•Bodringallt Bridge Infilling – estimated start date January 2022.</li> <li>•Llanharan Railway Footbridge - replacement of the bridge.</li> </ul>
Parks Structures	1.597	The investment funding (including the approval of a further £0.5M by full Council on 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021) has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks:

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

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>3</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Update</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridge deck and parapet replacement of Maesyfelin Footbridge (Pontyclun) – progressing well and nearing completion;</li> <li>• Replacement of Abercynon Recreation Ground Footbridge - works commenced on-site during quarter 2; and</li> <li>• Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.</li> </ul>
Parks and Green Spaces	0.996	This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The 2021/22 programme currently comprises of 65 schemes; almost half of the schemes have been completed and start dates confirmed for remaining works.
Llanharan Bypass	4.127	This investment funding (including the approval of a further £2.0M by full Council on 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021) is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology surveys. The project is currently in the pre-Planning Application Consultation (PAC) stage including public exhibitions scheduled for the 12 <sup>th</sup> and 14 <sup>th</sup> October. Following PAC and a review of all comments received, a full planning application will be submitted.
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	8.099	This investment funding (including the approval of a further £2.0M by full Council on 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021) is supporting the dualling of the highway between the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters roundabout and Coed Ely roundabout. The tender process to procure a contractor has commenced and work is on-going to secure the land required through the Compulsory Purchase Order process.
Community Hubs	0.458	This investment funding relates to supporting the Treorchy Community Hub (at Treorchy Library). External works have been completed and the tender process is progressing for internal works.
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.

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>3</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Update</b>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cwmbach – works commenced and scheduled for completion in quarter 3;</li> <li>• Property Flood Resistance Programme – on-going engagement with property owners and provision of flood prevention measures e.g. flood gates.</li> <li>• Supporting 9 Welsh Government grant funded schemes across Rhondda Cynon Taf which are scheduled to be completed by March 2022.</li> </ul>
Porth Interchange Metro + LTF	1.500	As set out in the Porth Regeneration Strategy, a new Transport Hub in the Town Centre is currently being developed. During Quarter 2 the project design and procurement of the construction phase has progressed.
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.921</b>	

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 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

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 with construction due to complete by the end of the year and the redevelopment of the Town Hall is currently being delivered with a private sector led approach, with workspace being marketed in advance of project completion in November. 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 as a flexible business space, which is now close to completion. The roll out of town centre wifi in Pontypridd is underway, with all equipment installed, testing is underway and 'Go-live' planned for November. The appointment of a contractor for the Porth Transport Hub is imminent, with construction due to commence in January 2022 and a bid to the UK Levelling Up Fund submitted to support the scheme. This will form a key part of the Porth Town centre strategy, transforming the northern entry to the town.

Work to deliver major transport schemes is continuing. The works for dualling the A4119 are currently out to tender, with a bid to the UK Levelling Up Fund submitted to support delivery of the scheme. Pre-application consultation has also commenced for the Llanharran bypass scheme and preparatory work to progress the Cynon Gateway North project is on-going.

With regard to the above references to the UK Levelling Up Fund, the UK Central Government announced on the 27<sup>th</sup> October the First Round Successful Bids. In the case of Rhondda Cynon Taf, 3 bids were successful amounting to £20.4M for the Muni Arts Centre (Pontypridd), Porth Transport Hub and A4119 Coed-Ely Dualling Scheme, and represents further significant investment to support the Council's on-going programme of economic regeneration across the County Borough.

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. Progress is dependent on funding, with decisions from Cardiff Capital Region expected in quarter 3.

Work continues to develop the visitor economy. The Visit RCT Tourism Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 23 September 2021, and is now the official and adopted strategy that will underpin all tourism related work and efforts, and a Tourism Steering Group involving key stakeholders continues to meet on a quarterly basis. Gravity Bike Park has begun operating at Dare Valley Country Park and discussions are ongoing with Rhondda Tunnel society on the Rhondda Tunnel. Social media content is being shared to support key visitor businesses, with a sustained promotional campaign due to launch next quarter.

A new Education Directorate strategic plan has been co-constructed with headteachers and widespread engagement is now underway with schools, stakeholders and the wider community. In partnership with Central South Consortium, we continue to support all schools, regularly reviewing progress and ensuring effective assessment and tracking systems are in place to

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

identify and support those learners most adversely affected by Covid-19. A local authority literacy plan has been launched in autumn term and progress will be monitored throughout the academic year. 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. The family engagement officer pilot in secondary schools is continuing, with 13 further posts now being appointed in primary settings.

Support for early years includes the Jabadao physical literacy project with training being provided for registered early years providers. The Early years, childcare and play development partnership has been re-established and provides a forum for sharing information and good practice. The next Childcare sufficiency assessment will take place later in the autumn. Covid-19 continues to impact on the supply of childcare, with several childminders and two other settings closing in the last quarter.

Investment in our school buildings continues, with the revised Band B strategic outline programme submitted to Welsh Government in July. Outline business cases for Penygawsi Primary school, Llaniltud Faerdref Primary school and Pontyclun Primary school have been approved by Welsh Government. Following consultation, proposals for a new Welsh Medium school for YGG Llyn y Forwen have also been approved by Cabinet. On the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 Cabinet received an update in respect of the Council's revised 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Strategic Outline Programme (SOP), this being approved in principle by Welsh Government, with investment increasing significantly from £167M to £252M.

Support for people seeking work continued through our Employment Support programmes, with a mix of face-to-face and online delivery to suit client needs. In work support continues to be offered, with the main requests for increasing hours and upskilling. Links with local employers continue to be strengthened, including through developing relationships with Business Improvement Districts within local towns. However, there is still a delay in information from UK Government regarding future funding for employment support.

Work continued to develop opportunities for our school pupils to gain knowledge of careers and working life, including piloting the Gatsby + project in schools. Filming is underway for 'virtual work experience' video interviews to assist young people who may have had limited opportunity for physical work placements due to the pandemic. A further 28 apprentices and 18 graduates commenced employment with the Council across a wide variety of service areas. Work placements for young people both at the Council and other employers are being provided as part of the Kickstart scheme. We also continue to work with contractors to develop apprenticeship and training opportunities on schemes such as the Porth Transport hub.

Work continues in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and developers to increase the supply of energy efficient housing and commercial developments. Work with Rhondda Housing Association and other partners to construct a zero-carbon home in the Treherbert area is progressing, with design/concept works now complete. Work is currently underway to agree land purchase for the scheme and submit a planning application. Options for the Porth Infants school site continue to be 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 consideration of hybrid systems, and maximising existing and new opportunities for external funding. 50 Heat and save applications have been received, with advice and support provided to all applicants, and 17 ECO3Flex grants and 17 RCT heating grants processed.

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

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

**Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 2**

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>4</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Update</b>
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	This investment funding is supporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cymmer Primary – demolition of the canteen and erection of fencing was completed in August 2020;</li> <li>• YGG Llyn Y Forwyn Primary (transferring the school to a new building on a new site) - site investigation surveys have been undertaken, land has been purchased and project / cost managers have been appointed to support delivery of the scheme; and</li> <li>• Covid-19 related capital works – site visits and scoping works are underway to install canopies and undertake ventilation works in over 50 schools.</li> </ul>
Transport Infrastructure	2.500	This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress design work for pedestrian crossing enhancement projects at Tonyrefail, Groesfaen, Llanharan and Nantgarw (to improve road safety and promote active travel).</li> <li>• A4058 Asda Tonypandy junction - extend entry lane lengths from the north and include cycle facilities to improve junction capacity and traffic flow and promote active travel. The tender process is progressing and works are scheduled to commence in quarter 3.</li> <li>• A4059 / Bowls Club junction - feasibility study ongoing to investigate improving the junction to improve traffic flow along the A4059.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>4</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Update</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A473 Upper Boat - WeITAGs are ongoing and improvements to Maesmawr Lane have been completed.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>Pontyclun - feasibility design to improve an existing facility is ongoing in partnership with Network Rail and Transport for Wales.</li> <li>Porth – phase 3 preliminary design has been completed and planning permission has been granted. Detailed design will continue for the remainder of this year.</li> </ul>
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 construction phase of the project is progressing well and the project is scheduled for completion in the last half of the financial year.</p>
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robertstown – good progress made during Quarter 2 including completion to a number of plots: installation of doors, windows and insulation; internal partition walling; and fire protection. In parallel, electrical and mechanical installation underway and construction of the access road.</li> <li>Coed Ely – the building was handed over on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and the tenant is now in occupation of the building. Snagging items have been identified and are being addressed.</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.737</b>	

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

The 18<sup>th</sup> 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.

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