



CABINET

21st March 2022

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st December 2021 (Quarter 3)

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

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

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first nine months of this financial year (to the 31st December 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 31st December 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 31st December 2021 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).

2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31st December 2021 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

2.5 Note the Quarter 3 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 31st December 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 third 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), investment priority updates 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 3 REPORT

- 5.1 The Quarter 3 report is attached and comprises:
- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 3 (i.e. 31st December 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 9-months of 2021/22; as a result, there are no equality and diversity or socio-economic duty implications to report.

7.0 WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Welsh language implications as a result of the recommendations in this report.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 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.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

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

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

11.1 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.

12.0 CONCLUSION

12.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council as at Quarter 3 2021/22, that is, 31st December 2021.

12.2 The Quarter 3 revenue budget position is projecting a £0.353M overspend, this being an improved picture compared to quarters 1 and 2 and reflects the continuation of key pressures primarily within Adult and Children's Services. Work is ongoing across all services to identify cost reduction measures to contribute to bringing the financial position closer in line with budget at year-end.

12.3 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 in-year Welsh Government funding to support additional costs and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic. As has been the case for the year to date, 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.

12.4 Capital investment as at 31st December 2021 is £55.338M, with a number of schemes being re-profiled during the quarter to reflect changes in costs and new external grant funding approvals received, with the programme of capital investment supporting visible improvements in assets across the County Borough.

12.5 With regard to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, positive progress overall has been made during Quarter 3 alongside services continuing their recovery from the pandemic and building on the work undertaken during the first half of the year.

12.6 The 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

21st March 2022

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st December 2021 (Quarter 3)

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

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 3 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 3 position statements are included within the following sections:

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

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

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

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

This Executive Summary, bringing together and summarising the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st December 2021, continues to be 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 31 st December 2021 (Quarter 3)		
	Full Year Budget £M	Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 3 £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	195.536	195.400	(0.136)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	168.059	168.730	0.671
Chief Executive (2c)	31.720	31.383	(0.337)
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d)	59.237	59.427	0.190
Sub Total	454.552	454.940	0.388
Authority Wide Budgets (2e)	73.351	73.316	(0.035)
Grand Total	527.903	528.256	0.353

Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the Quarter 3 position (31st December 2021)

The full year revenue budget variance, projected as at 31st December 2021, is a £0.353M 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 impact of the omicron variant and the effectiveness of the vaccination booster programme at the end of 2021, the current estimated full year additional cost / income loss to the Council, forecasted at 31st December 2021, is £33.5M. 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). 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 the Year-End Performance Report.

Welsh Government have also indicated that additional funding will be provided to local authorities in quarter 4 to support the on-going financial implications of the pandemic, for example, demand pressures across social care and council tax collection, plus additional capital resources. Additional funding received will be considered through quarter 4 and consolidated at year end with any flexibility used to support the Council's financial resilience, including our levels of earmarked and general reserves, in line with our medium term financial planning arrangements. This is also within the context of the WG hardship fund not continuing for 2022/23 and the need for us to monitor the financial implications of this, using any flexibility afforded within our available reserves to transition any permanent additional costs into our base budget over the medium term. This was as set out in the Revenue Budget Strategy for 2022/23.

An updated position in this regard will be incorporated within the Council's Year-End Performance Report and Statement of Accounts.

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 - 3)	Projected Additional Costs / Income Losses (Quarter 4)	Total Full Year Additional Costs / Income Losses (Actual and Projected)*
	£M	£M	£M
Education & Inclusion Services	-6.336	-0.771	-7.107
Community & Children's Services	-12.991	-1.989	-14.980
Chief Executive	-2.830	-1.960	-4.790
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-2.186	-0.573	-2.759
Authority Wide	-1.650	-2.221	-3.871
TOTAL	-25.993	-7.514	-33.507

* 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 3

1. Community and Children's Services

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.194M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.687M overspend);
- Provider Services (£0.164M overspend); and
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.247M underspend).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£0.576M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.194M overspend);
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.211M underspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.173M underspend); and
- Management & Support Services (£0.147M underspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Public Protection (£0.091M underspend); and
- Community Services (£0.135M underspend).

2. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

PROSPERITY & DEVELOPMENT

- Prosperity & Development (£0.053M underspend).

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Highways Management (£0.087M underspend);
- Transportation (£0.082M overspend);
- Strategic Projects (£0.125M underspend);
- Street Cleansing (£0.098M underspend); and
- Waste Services (£0.491M overspend).

3. Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Human Resources (£0.163M underspend); and
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.104M 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 31 st December 2021	
	Capital Budget £M	Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive (3a)	4.419	1.463
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b)	83.109	37.324
Education & Inclusion Services (3c)	31.806	14.461
Community & Children's Services (3d)	8.326	2.090
Total	127.660	55.338

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 3

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (£0.698M); WG Capital Maintenance Grant Schools (£4.052M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant (£0.506M); WG Placemaking (£0.159M); ULEV – WLGA Third Party Grant (£0.300M); WG Ventilation Grant (£0.185M); WG Private Rented Sector Lease Scheme (£0.106M); WG All Wales Play Opportunity Grant (£0.411M); and UK Government Levelling Up Fund (£20.386M).

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 31st December 2021		As at 31st December 2020		As at 31 st March 2021		As at 31st December 2019	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	10,990	8.82	10,881	5.52	10,888	6.84	10,555	8.32
Community & Children’s Services	2,983	8.62	2,974	5.01	2,946	6.59	2,858	6.58
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	901	9.21	930	4.84	941	6.70	952	5.36
Education & Inclusion Services	1,232	6.98	1,257	5.57	1,258	6.52	1,263	7.13
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,996</u>	<u>9.59</u>	<u>4,893</u>	<u>6.27</u>	<u>4,873</u>	<u>7.47</u>	<u>4,785</u>	<u>10.41</u>
Primary	3,211	7.79	3,058	6.05	3,043	7.49	3,026	8.79
Secondary	1,785	12.83	1,835	6.65	1,830	7.43	1,759	13.19
Chief Executive’s Division	878	7.29	827	3.63	870	4.83	697	7.32

• Sickness Absence

With specific regard to Covid-19 and the recording of sickness absence, where staff have been unavailable for work due to: self-isolating; being part of the shielded list; have underlying conditions that places an individual at risk, such as being pregnant; or lives in the same household as someone that needs to be shielded, these occurrences have not been categorised as ‘sickness absence’ and as such are excluded from the analysis below.

Service Area	2021/22	2020/21		2019/20	
	As at 31st December 2021 %	As at 31st December 2020 %	As at 31 st March 2021 %	As at 31st December 2019 %	As at 31 st March 2020 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	5.08	3.84	3.96	3.98%	4.16
Community & Children’s Services	7.27	5.96	6.14	5.53	5.59
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	5.99	5.03	4.99	4.44	4.74
Education & Inclusion Services	4.48	3.00	3.20	3.49%	3.70
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4.01</u>	<u>2.78</u>	<u>2.88</u>	<u>3.35</u>	<u>3.56</u>
Primary	4.15	3.07	3.21	3.57%	3.79
Secondary	3.77	2.31	2.33	2.97%	3.16
Chief Executive’s Division	3.74	2.45	2.62	2.35	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 3 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by [clicking here](#) with specific updates included setting out the implications to date of Covid-19 and the work being undertaken / planned to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

As part of the quarter 3 update process, it has not been deemed necessary to revise Strategic Risk Register risk ratings to those reported as at quarter 2. This position will however be kept under on-going review and, where revisions are considered necessary, these will be included in future Strategic Risk Register updates.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority action plans for 2021/22 were reported to and approved by full Council on the 20th October 2021 covering the three priorities of People, Places and Prosperity. A summary of the progress made across the three priorities as at 31st December 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 31st December 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, opened on the 15th October 2021 and 30 people have agreed a tenancy. We are also working on a business case and design options for a similar scheme in Treorchy and this work will be progressed in 2022/23 in line with a wider review of health and social care development options in the Rhondda geographical area. Planning permission for the extra care scheme in Porth has been granted and demolition work has been completed at the site of the former Dan Y Mynydd Care Home. Groundworks are progressing 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; assessments have been completed and places have been allocated ready for the completion of the project 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. This work has been delayed during quarter 3 but it is anticipated that the plan will be completed by the end of March 2022.

We continue to invest in reablement services to prevent escalation of need increasing or enable recovery and independence. This has included a review and redesign of our Support@Home Service and Adaptations & Community Equipment (ACE) Service to reflect demand and promote independence.

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. A “More than respite” carer engagement event was held to inform respite service offer development plans for 2022/23.

Demand for domiciliary care remains high as demand for services increase. 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, and this will be an on-going programme of work.

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

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

employment to achieve their personal goals and live ordinary lives. A range of engagement activity has been undertaken including 'The My Day, My Way' engagement programme which has now closed. All survey responses and other feedback is being collated to be shared and inform development of a draft Day Opportunities Strategy.

We continue to encourage all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing. As well as opening the brand new gym at Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd in April 2021 and Ponty Lido having its most successful season, we have also reopened Hawthorn Swimming Pool in October 2021.

We also have a full programme of outdoor exercise opportunities throughout RCT leisure facilities and Parks (where applicable). Two outdoor rigs have been installed in Ynysangharad Park and Dare Valley Country Park as part of the Leisure For Life fitness offer. A rig has also been purchased for Abercynon Sports Centre with installation timescales rescheduled for March 2022. We are also developing a programme for 2022 for wider community outdoor opportunities and promotion of increased participation to encourage residents to utilise our outdoor spaces, and are planning to further develop the online Leisure for Life offer to allow members to access classes and workouts at home. The equipment has been purchased and a revised timescale for implementation is being planned to allow sufficient time for staff training.

Work has commenced on the Treorchy Cultural Hub, with the works to Treorchy Library completed in December 2021. Work at the Park & Dare Theatre foyer area is planned, subject to funding. A Community Engagement Plan is also being developed to ensure that our theatres are more inclusive and accessible to the whole community, and we have continued to plan for online and blended delivery until the end of the year (noting that it is planned for theatres to reopen for live events during Quarter 4 in line with WG guidance). We are also working with our partners to ensure residents are heard and have the opportunity to influence decisions, activities & services in their communities. An RCT Together Survey is live and we will share the results of this survey with Neighbourhood Networks <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/RCTTogether/CommunityConversationsConsultations/RCTTogetherSurvey.aspx>

We are working with Health to explore options for the development of an integrated community health and social care locality model and have completed a review to inform this work, with an optimal integrated community model agreed by regional partners for cluster development planning and implementation in 2022/23. 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.

Our work to review and redesign Community Mental Health Services with the Health Service 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. Redesign work has continued but completion has been delayed primarily due to covid pressures. A new work programme and timescales will be agreed with the Health Service for 2022/23.

Using the RCT Neighbourhood Network Groups, we will begin to co-produce/design with partners a social prescribing model and following this we will work with partners to review

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

gaps in provision and identify ways to address unmet needs. This work will be taken forward in 2022/23 when staff are anticipated to be released from the TTP 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. These play sessions are being offered at pre-pandemic levels, with capacity back to normal operating level. However, take-up has been slow in certain areas with families apprehensive about allowing their child, potentially with medical needs, to mix with a bubble of children outside of their school or personal bubble. We have also enhanced the provision of support to 16-25 year olds delivered by the Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS). Projects include entrepreneurship courses, pre-employment skills, mental health and wellbeing, amongst others.

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 have developed a Participation Strategy which incorporates different communication approaches when engaging with children and young people. We have successfully bid for a Graduate Officer who, once appointed, will build capacity and take forward the Participation Strategy in 2022/23. 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) which will go live in January 2022. We also plan to co-produce a prevention of youth antisocial and criminal behaviour strategy with the Community Safety Team which will ensure the positive engagement of young people in community life. This work is currently delayed due to current delivery requirements and will be taken forward in 2022/23.

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. The Central South Consortium continues to provide a comprehensive professional learning offer to all schools across the region to develop effective approaches to improve mental health and wellbeing. 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 and a shared approach has been agreed with Health to take this forward.

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. Health characteristics data transfer has been completed and an Early Years Vulnerability Project plan is in place and a full profile test underway. A draft 3-year strategic plan for the region identifying key milestone and outcomes at each stage has been

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

developed and a series of workforce development sessions for early years practitioners and other partners communicating the vision and aims of the Early Years Transformation Programme are due to be delivered in Quarter 4. In parallel, work is ongoing to widely communicate operational changes to families, community organisations and providers around early years services being universal and not confined to Flying Start areas.

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

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE		
Investment Area	Investment Value¹ £M	Quarter 3 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 "Cwrt yr Orsaf" Extra Care Housing Scheme) – completed 15th October 2021. • Porth - agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3rd December 2020. Progress to date includes: the vacation of the building; site surveys and demolition works completed; and planning permission granted 16th December 2021 (following which groundworks commenced). <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>
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 31st December 2021

The Council's Enforcement Team continues to tackle environmental crime. 2,514 fly-tipping incidents have been recorded this year to date, 312 more incidents than reported in the same period of 2019/20. All prosecutions relating to fly-tipping offences have been made public on the Council's [webpages](#), enforcing the zero tolerance message. In partnership with Keep Wales Tidy, a [national campaign](#) has commenced to tackle dog fouling with clear stencilled messages on paths and on footways in our parks and playing fields enforcing the requirements of the Dog Fouling PSPO, and encouraging responsible dog ownership. We continue to work successfully with partners on 'blitz' programmes on social housing sites and focussed work with landlords regarding communal bin collection points continues.

Work continues to encourage good recycling practices that will reduce municipal waste and have a positive effect on the environment. The tonnage of recycled waste for quarters 1 to 3 is higher than the same period last year (72,681 tonnes compared to 71,240 tonnes in 2020/21) and our overall recycling percentage² has increased to 70.62% (68.99% at Quarter 3 in 2020/21). This position also exceeds the Welsh Government target to achieve 70% recycling by 2025. We continue to work towards a sustainable 'Circular Economy' through our partnership work to renew, recycle and repair and our new Aberdare High Street Reuse shop is scheduled to open in April 2022. This quarter has also seen the launch of our new [Green Waste Collection Service](#), collecting green waste fortnightly from registered residents who have been supplied with new, reusable green waste sacks reducing the Council's overall plastic bag usage by 3 million annually and contributing to the Council's Climate Change efforts.

Our climate change agenda also continues to be progressed 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. We are also investigating the possibility of using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel instead of diesel in our vehicles; consulting on the Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and developing an Implementation Plan. The 'Try before you buy' electric vehicle taxi trial has started and 5 electric taxis have commenced operation. Supporting this trial, the 3 dedicated 65kw EV taxi charging points at Pontypridd, Porth and Aberdare will become operational by the end of March 2022. Day's Rental are managing the scheme and will be collating the feedback from the drivers after their 30-day trial.

Our latest Annual [Air Quality](#) Report was submitted to Welsh Government in October 2021 and included a recommended delay in the review of Air Quality Action Plans until 2022 due to the uncertainty of how the pandemic has affected air quality and how this could impact on future air quality trends.

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 the design for the Castle Inn footbridge Treforest and the Cwmbach Industrial Estate Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS). Two of our bridge replacement schemes were also recognised in the [Annual ICE Wales Cymru Awards](#). St Alban's Bridge in Blaenrhondda won the Roy Edwards Award for demonstrating excellence in - concept, planning, design, contract management and construction with a final cost of less than £5m, and the Ynysangharad

² Recycling – provisional recycling data

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Footbridge (M&S Bridge) repair in Pontypridd has been highly commended in the Alun Griffiths Award for Community Engagement. Some schemes have been delayed for various reasons including alterations to original plans, 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.

Our statutory work as lead Flood Authority continues and following the installation of new technology, we are now better able to remotely monitor and report on key culverts and drainage systems. This information is relayed directly to the Central Emergency Control Centre at Ty Elai.

We have commenced our Welsh Government grant bidding process for the 'Safe Routes in Communities' Programme following discussions with schools, Councillors and communities on schemes to be considered. We continue to progress opportunities to develop Active Travel routes including schemes in Treorchy, between Pontygwaith and Maerdy, links with Treforest Industrial Estate and communities around the Church Village Community Route. We are also looking at concepts for routes that link with our town centre enhancements at Aberdare, Porth and Pontypridd. In November a number of activities across RCT were organised supporting [Road Safety Week](#) including child pedestrian training and cycle training.

Our community cohesion work progresses. A draft Community Asset Transfer Policy is out for review with Members, and the development of RCT as a Sustainable Food Place continues at a pace with the recruitment of a Sustainable Food Coordinator, the holding of a partnership update meeting in December and the approval of funding applications by [Sustainable Food Places](#) to progress actions relating to food poverty. We also continue our work to keep our communities safe and protected from [fraudulent sales](#), and working in partnership with the Welsh Trading Standards Team to crackdown on illegal operations in Wales including [Operation CeCe](#) where 1M illegal cigarettes were seized.

Following Covid-19 restrictions, the Aberdare Community Alcohol Partnership will now be progressed next year. We continue to develop the Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Cwm Taf, with a focus on those individuals needing help but unlikely to engage with the service. The [Barod](#) Outreach Team link with hostels and those in temporary accommodation to provide advice and assistance, and work with partner organisations to provide a comprehensive service. In November, Barod were also awarded the contract to recommission Tier 1 and 2 substance misuse services so that they align with provision at Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf Councils.

We continue to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. In October, thirteen of our parks and gardens were recognised as [Green Flag and Community Award winners](#) by Keep Wales Tidy. We are progressing our Playground Investment Programme recognising that challenges remain in terms of the availability of play equipment and materials.

Our work to establish natural carbon storage solutions continues and we are actively engaging with communities through our [Let's Talk Wildflowers](#) (via '[Let's Talk RCT](#)' - Our New Engagement' website). The Draft '[Action for Nature](#)' recovery plan is currently out for consultation until March and 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 with work to improve existing footpaths and improve

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visitor signage at Dare Valley Country Park, and a contractor has been appointed to deliver the National Lottery Heritage Fund work which will support further phases of the redevelopment of Ynysangharad War Memorial Park.

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

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value³ £M	Quarter 3 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	7.928	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 31 st December 2021, 7 had been completed, 5 were under construction, 3 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 7 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 31 st December 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 start date for works is January 2022 and discussions are on-going with Transport for Wales in respect of the work to be undertaken.
Structures	5.721	The investment funding has been allocated to support structure projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ynys Meurig Bridge Parapet Replacement – completed August 2021; •Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge Strengthening – works have commenced on site; •Major retaining wall refurbishments – A4059 Taff's Well Wall works are scheduled to start in January 2022; and •Llanharan Railway Footbridge – demolition and replacement footbridge works scheduled to start in January 2022.
Parks Structures	1.597	The investment funding has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bridge deck and parapet replacement of Maesyfelin Footbridge (Pontyclun) – works completed; •Replacement of Abercynon Recreation Ground Footbridge - on-site works progressing; and •Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.
Parks and Green Spaces	0.996	This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The

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

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value³ £M	Quarter 3 Update
		2021/22 programme currently comprises of 77 schemes - over half of the programme has been completed and start dates confirmed for the remaining schemes.
Llanharan Bypass	4.127	This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology surveys. The project has been through the pre-Planning Application Consultation (PAC) stage including public exhibitions held on the 12 th and 14 th 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 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 is progressing and work is on-going to secure the land required through the Compulsory Purchase Order process. Advanced works including tree clearance is due to commence in January 2022.
Community Hubs	0.458	This investment funding relates to supporting the Treorchy Community Hub (at Treorchy Library) - external works have been completed and internal Library works have also been completed.
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. A planning application has been submitted and the decision is awaited.
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 Bryn Pica Waste Management Facility. Discussions are on-going with Welsh Government in respect of funding opportunities.
Dinas Community Recycling Centre	0.250	This investment funding relates to the provision of a new office building and improvements on the site of Dinas Community Recycling Centre following the demolition of the previous site building. Works have been completed.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value³ £M	Quarter 3 Update
Land Drainage	0.511	<p>This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes works at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cwmbach – works were substantially completed in quarter 3; • Property Flood Resistance Programme – on-going engagement with property owners and provision of flood prevention measures e.g. flood gates. • Supporting 20 Welsh Government grant funded schemes across Rhondda Cynon Taf which are scheduled to be completed by March 2022.
Porth Interchange Metro + LTF	1.500	<p>As set out in the Porth Regeneration Strategy, a new Transport Hub in the Town Centre is currently being developed. During Quarter 3, the Council was successful in its application to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund and has secured £3.586m grant towards the construction of the Transport Hub. A contractor has been appointed for the project and they are currently mobilising resources and personnel in readiness for the construction phase to commence.</p>
Total	36.921	

o **PROSPERITY** (Section 5c)

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

Summary of progress to 31st December 2021

The UK Central Government announced on the 27th October 2021 the First Round Successful Bids for the UK Levelling Up Fund. 3 bids in Rhondda Cynon Taf 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.

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 was completed in November, replacing two unused buildings and a derelict area of land with an extension to the town centre car park and other improvements. The redevelopment of Mountain Ash Town Hall is also substantially completed with the first tenants for the flexible working spaces being signed up. In Pontypridd, work continues to redevelop the YMCA building which will complete this financial year and, as outlined above, Levelling up funding will support the redevelopment of the Muni building into a major cultural hub. In addition, the former M&S, Burton and Dorothy Perkins buildings have been acquired and options for future use are being developed. In Tonypany, the redevelopment of Llwynypia Courthouse is now complete to a high standard, with over 100 people working in the flexible business space across a range of businesses. On January 17th, construction work commenced at Porth Transport hub, with work scheduled to complete in Spring 2023 and 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 the scheme supported by UK Levelling Up Fund funding. Pre-application consultation has been completed for the Llanharran bypass scheme. Preparatory work to progress the Cynon Gateway North project is on-going, although delays to Welsh Government planning decision are impacting project timescales. Planning applications have been submitted for park and ride schemes at Porth and Llwynypia.

Work continues to prepare the Preferred Strategy for the revised LDP, however the Preferred Strategy process was not suitably advanced to go to public consultation in November and alternative timetables and options are being considered to progress with the revisions of the LDP.

Following adoption of the new Tourism Strategy in September, work continues to develop the visitor economy, with promotional activities including social media campaigns and work with partners to promote key businesses and their offerings including the Coal, Coin and Cheers package with Royal Mint Experience, Welsh Coal Mining Experience and Hensol Distillery.

Support continues for the development of low carbon homes, including 15 Modern Methods of Construction schemes currently within the Social Housing Grant Programme development plan. The Council continues to work with Rhondda Housing to develop the Skyline project and with Cynon Taf Housing to explore options for Porth Infants School site. 66 applicants to the Heat and Save scheme have been provided with advice and support with grant applications or grant assistance to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

A new Education Directorate strategic plan has been agreed and will be implemented in the new financial year, outlining priorities for the next 3 years. In partnership with Central South

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

Consortium, we continue to support all schools, regularly reviewing progress and ensuring effective assessment and tracking systems are in place to identify and support those learners most adversely affected by Covid-19. How schools devise and implement Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards plans will continue to be reviewed. A local authority literacy plan has been launched in autumn term and despite the challenges of capacity, 92% of schools have engaged in the Comparative judgement element of the project, providing intelligence on technical writing skills. Progress will continue to be monitored with improvement partners this term. The readiness of schools for the new curriculum is also being discussed by Local Authority and Central South Consortium Officers. Central South Consortium's brokerage arrangements ensure that appropriate support is provided expediently to schools, including signposting schools to CSC's professional learning offer, co-ordinating collaborative sharing of good practice between schools and supporting the profile of curriculum development through cluster-based working.

In early years, an early intervention programme is promoting the acquisition of early developmental skills in the foundation phases. All settings are using information from training modules to improve the environment in their settings, for example, creating a physical movement play area, with support brokered by Improvement partners where necessary. Schemes to improve early years facilities at Dolau Primary school, Gwauncelyn Primary school and YGG Llantrisant, funded by Welsh Government's Early Years Grant, have been completed, with 2 additional schemes at YGG Aberdar and Cwmlai on-going. The next Childcare sufficiency assessment is currently being prepared, including consultation responses from 800 parents, with the draft report due in February 2022.

Investment in our school buildings continues, with outline business cases for Bryncelynnog and Hawthorn high school approved by Welsh Government in December 2021. The New Welsh Medium Primary School Final Business Case has been submitted to Welsh Government and is awaiting panel scrutiny. A combined outline/final business case is being prepared for Pontypridd High school at the request of WG. Designs are progressing as per programme schedule.

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 addition 46 new clients engaged with in-work support this quarter, for assistance in improving their skills and job progression or increasing their working hours. The Council's Cabinet has approved a regional approach to Employment and Skills funding and the CELT CRF regional project has had approval. There is still a delay in information from UK Government regarding future funding for employment support although detail of the Shared Prosperity Fund is expected in the Spring.

Work continued to develop opportunities for our school pupils to gain knowledge of careers and working life, including piloting the Gatsby + project in schools. Recruitment for the next round of Graduate opportunities in the Council is now underway, with further apprenticeships to be advertised in April. We also continue to work with contractors to develop apprenticeship and training opportunities on schemes such as the Porth Transport hub.

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

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value ⁴ £M	Quarter 3 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	This investment funding is supporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cymmer Primary – demolition of the canteen and erection of fencing was completed in August 2020; • 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, project / cost managers have been appointed to support delivery of the scheme and a Design and Build tender process commenced in December 2021; and • Covid-19 related capital works – following site visits and scoping works, work is underway to install canopies and undertake ventilation works in over 70 schools.
Transport Infrastructure	2.500	This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including: <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 Tonypanydy junction - extend entry lane lengths from the north and include cycle facilities to improve junction capacity and traffic flow and promote active travel. Works commenced in December 2021. • 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.
Park and Ride Programme	0.586	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

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

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value⁴ £M	Quarter 3 Update
		<p>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 and detailed design work is on-going.
Strategic Regeneration Investment	0.200	This funding has been approved for the Guto Square development (Mountain Ash) which has enabled 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 now complete and the area has re-opened for public use.
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robertstown – good progress made during Quarter 3 including the completion to all plots of: the installation of doors and windows, external wall panels and roller shutter installation. Other works progressing include: installation of solar panels, electrical and mechanical works, fire protection works, drainage works and site exit works. • Coed Ely – the building was handed over on 15th January 2021 and the tenant is now in occupation of the building.
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.
