



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

26th September 2022

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30th June 2022 (Quarter 1)

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

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

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first three months of this financial year (to the 30th June 2022).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the context of the Council's Services managing the on-going effects of communities recovering from the pandemic and more recently the United Kingdom wide cost-of-living crisis, both of which are contributing to increases in demand for many services and significant inflationary cost pressures.

Revenue

- 2.2 Note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 30th June 2022 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary).

Capital

- 2.3 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 30th June 2022 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 30th June 2022 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

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

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To agree the Council's financial and operational performance position as at the 30th June 2022 to enable elected Members and other stakeholders to scrutinise the performance of the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides Members with the first update of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 2023.
- 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 The report is set in the context of the on-going impact of Covid-19 and, more recently, the cost-of-living crisis, both of which are contributing to significant increases in demand and cost pressures across a number of services. Members will note that the Welsh Government Covid-19 Hardship Fund, that funded the majority of additional expenditure and income losses incurred as a result of the pandemic, ceased from 1st April 2022 with the requirement for local authorities to manage any on-going service and financial implications from within existing resources. Within this very challenging and changing environment, the Council is maintaining its focus on frontline service delivery, in line with Corporate Plan priorities, to help support the needs of residents and businesses.
- 4.4 Further information on the above position together with the proactive steps being taken by the Council are included within the Executive Summary.

5.0 QUARTER 1 REPORT

5.1 The Quarter 1 report is attached and comprises:

- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 1 (i.e. 30th June 2022).
- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – e setting out the detailed projected financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted.
- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – e setting out capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3f covering Prudential Indicators.
- **Organisational Health** – includes information on turnover, sickness absence, organisational health related investment areas and Council strategic risks.
- **Corporate Plan Priorities** – three action plans (Sections 5a – c) setting out progress updates for the priorities of People, Places and Prosperity.
- **Enhancing the Council’s response to extreme weather events** - Section 6 setting out progress made to implement the recommendations agreed by Cabinet on [18th December 2020](#).

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS AND SOCI-ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1 The Council’s Performance Report provides an update on financial and operational performance for the first 3 months of 2022/23; 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 Overview and Scrutiny for review, challenge and where deemed required, the scrutiny of specific areas in line with the Committee’s Terms of Reference.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

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

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

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

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council as at Quarter 1 2022/23, that is, 30th June 2022.

11.2 The Quarter 1 revenue budget position is projecting a £10.405M overspend. This full year projection, forecasted at June 2022, takes into account estimated increases in demand for services, particularly social care services; additional inflationary cost pressures, for example, home to school contract costs; and where less income is anticipated to be received by services due to reduced take-up, for example, Leisure Services. Work is underway as part of the Council's robust financial and service management arrangements to review all areas of expenditure and income, in parallel with on-going discussions with Welsh Government around additional funding requirements, to bring the revenue position closer in line with budget by year-end.

11.3 Capital investment as at 30th June 2022 is £13.842M, with a number of schemes being re-profiled during the quarter to reflect changes in costs and updated delivery timescales, and also new external grant funding approvals received during quarter 1 being incorporated into the Capital Programme. The Capital Programme for the year ahead represents the continuation of a long-term programme of investment that is supporting visible improvements to infrastructure and assets across the County Borough.

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

11.5 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: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Contact Officer: Paul Griffiths

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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26th September 2022

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

Item: 4

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 1 2022/23
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

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

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

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

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

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

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

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

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

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

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

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

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

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

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

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Executive Summary brings together and summarises the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 30th June 2022 (quarter 1).

The quarter 1 update is set in the context of the Council's Services managing the on-going effects of communities recovering from the pandemic and more recently the United Kingdom wide cost-of-living crisis, both of which are contributing to increases in demand for many services and significant inflationary cost pressures. Within this very challenging and changing environment, the Council is maintaining its focus on frontline service delivery, in line with Corporate Plan priorities, to help support the needs of residents and businesses.

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	2022/23 – as at 30 th June 2022 (Quarter 1)		
	Full Year Budget £M	Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 1 £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	208.419	208.293	(0.126)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	182.177	189.854	7.677
Chief Executive (2c)	35.822	35.714	(0.108)
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d)	65.075	68.329	3.254
Sub Total	491.493	502.190	10.697
Authority Wide Budgets (2e)	75.299	75.007	(0.292)
Grand Total	566.792	577.197	10.405

The full year revenue budget variance, projected as at 30th June 2022, is a £10.405M overspend. Within this forecasted position, the main factors and conditions that are driving significant budget pressures, over and above the additional resources built into the 2022/23 revenue budget, are as follows:

- Rising demand and cost of social care:

- Adult Services – for external residential / nursing placements (specialist placements) and Supported Living Schemes; and
- Children’s Services – for in-house and external residential placements.
- Inflationary cost pressures driven by higher energy prices, higher wages in the external market and demand for some products outweighing supply – this has impacted Home To School contract costs in particular as a result of rising fuel prices and levels of pay, with the Council also incurring higher levels of expenditure on fuel and food in the direct delivery of services.
- Lower levels of service take-up resulting in reduced levels of income received – a key contributory factor being the on-going effects of the pandemic where customer behaviour has not to date fully returned to pre-pandemic levels, this position impacting Leisure Services in particular.

Furthermore, a pay award offer has been made, in respect of the financial year 2022/23, by the national employers for all NJC employees at a flat rate increase of £1,925 per employee, irrespective of their Spinal Column Point / Grade. The Welsh Government, who have devolved responsibility for teachers pay, have also offered an increase of 5%. For this Council, these amount to an increase in the pay bill above budgeted levels of £10.5M. This is not factored into the above position.

Work is underway as part of the Council’s robust financial and service management arrangements to review all areas of expenditure and income to bring the revenue position closer in line with budget by year-end. This will include :

- an assessment of existing earmarked reserves that have been set aside to support, amongst other things, projects and future liabilities, and will need to provide one-off funding opportunities to support some of the in-year pressures we now face;
- a review of further external grant funding opportunities;
- targeted marketing activities to help support service take-up; and
- the identification and early delivery of efficiencies in the current year.

The outcomes from this programme of work will be reported as part of Performance Reports during the year.

Following on, revenue budget variances, projected at quarter 1, for each Service Group are set out below.

Revenue budget variances projected at Quarter 1

1. Education & Inclusion Services

EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES

- Additional Learning Needs (£0.206M underspend); and
- Education other than at School (£0.189M underspend).

21st CENTURY SCHOOLS

- Catering (£0.336M overspend).

2. Community and Children's Services

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.413M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£3.003M overspend);
- Provider Services (£2.002M overspend);
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.742M underspend), and
- Management, Safeguarding & Support Services (£0.194M overspend).

CHILDREN SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£0.741M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.162M overspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.213M underspend); and
- Management & Support Services (£0.053M underspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Public Protection (£0.054M overspend);
- Community Services (£0.067M underspend); and
- Leisure, Countryside and Cultural Services– (£2.216M overspend).

3. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

PROSPERITY & DEVELOPMENT

- Prosperity & Development (£0.093M overspend).

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Highways Management (£0.059M overspend);
- Transportation (£3.159M overspend);
- Street Cleansing (£0.101M underspend); and
- Waste Services (£0.122M underspend).

4. Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Democratic Services & Communications (£0.082M underspend);
- Legal Services (£0.078M underspend);
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.089M underspend); and
- Corporate Estates (£0.105M overspend).

5. Authority Wide Budgets

- Miscellaneous (£0.292M 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

Capital Programme Budget

Service Area	2022/23 - as at 30 th June 2022	
	Capital Budget £M	Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive (3a)	4.939	0.198
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b)	76.269	7.833
Education & Inclusion Services (3c)	49.006	5.161
Community & Children's Services (3d)	18.234	0.650
Total	148.448	13.842

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 1

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Flying Start Grant (£0.126M); WG Community Focused Schools (£1.621M); WG VA Urgent Capital Repairs (£0.794M); WG PRS Lease Scheme (£2.345M); WG Resilient Roads Fund Grant (£0.400M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (£2.110M); WCVA Grant (£0.273M); and WG 20mph Grant (1.074M).

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	2022/23		2021/22			
	As at 30 th June 2022		As at 30 th June 2021		As at 31 st March 2022	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	10,898	3.02	10,897	2.52	11,079	11.30
Community & Children’s Services ¹	2,873	5.85	2,941	2.62	2,976	12.70
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	775	0.77	907	4.74	945	11.22
Education & Inclusion Services	1,249	0.88	1,247	2.25	1,233	9.08
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,928</u>	<u>2.37</u>	<u>4,920</u>	<u>2.30</u>	<u>5,013</u>	<u>11.35</u>
Primary	3,092	2.26	3,077	2.37	3,238	9.51
Secondary	1,836	2.56	1,842	2.17	1,775	14.70
Chief Executive’s Division	1,073	2.52	882	1.59	912	9.54

- **Sickness Absence**

Service Area	2022/23	2021/22	
	As at 30 th June 2022 %	As at 30 th June 2021 %	As at 31 st March 2022 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	5.52	4.31	5.40
Community & Children’s Services ¹	7.64	6.13	7.46
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	5.24	5.26	5.62
Education & Inclusion Services	5.06	4.25	4.88
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4.91</u>	<u>3.28</u>	<u>4.61</u>
Primary	5.17	3.58	4.77
Secondary	4.49	2.78	4.31
Chief Executive’s Division	3.42	3.02	3.54

For a more detailed breakdown of 2022/23 staff turnover and sickness absence information, [click here](#).

¹ 2022/23 position reflects service area restructures

Organisation Health related investment areas

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

- **Council Strategic Risks**

The Council's Strategic Risk Register has been reviewed and updated to take account of the changing internal and external operating environment, including the on-going impact of Covid-19 and, more recently, the cost-of-living crisis. The review has also identified the need to incorporate 3 new strategic risks into the Register as follows:

- Strategic Risk Register Reference 27 – Accommodation needs for our most vulnerable people;
- Strategic Risk Register Reference 28 – Disengaged learners; and
- Strategic Risk Register Reference 29 – Counter Terrorism.

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

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority action plans for People, Places and Prosperity have been compiled and continue to be action orientated to focus on the work Council Services are delivering to: support communities as they recover from Covid-19 and specific support measures to help families with the cost of living crisis; the on-going transformation and improvement of services; and the delivery of key projects that will have significant positive impacts across the County Borough.

The priority action plans are in draft form, subject to approval, with a summary of progress made across each of the three priorities as at 30th June 2022 (Quarter 1) set out in Sections 5a - c. For Members information, as part of the summaries of progress, electronic links have been included to each priority action plan, providing more detailed information on the progress during the first quarter of the year.

Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update

- **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

Summary of progress to 30th June 2022

Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life.

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. Construction of the new extra care facility in Porth is progressing well and plans for a further three extra care facilities in Mountain Ash, Treorchy and Ferndale are being developed. The development of Extra Care homes offers an opportunity for older people to lead a more independent life and prevent unnecessary admissions to residential care. Extra Care also enables people to have more control and be more involved in decisions about their environment and the services they receive. All of the new Extra Care homes have also been designed to achieve 'BREEAM' excellence, the world's leading sustainability assessment.

We will open a supported accommodation scheme in Llanhari following a refurbishment of Elm Road accommodation. This work has been delayed during the year as a result of design queries and material supply issues but it is anticipated that the plan will be complete by the end of September 2022. The scheme will provide a safe, secure and high-quality environment for adults with learning disabilities. Assessments have been completed and places have been allocated ready for the completion of the project. A similar supported living scheme in Treorchy is also under construction in partnership with Cynon Taf Housing Association and is due to be completed in October 2022. A further scheme is also planned at the ['Big Shed' development](#) in Tonypany.

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 in the long term. A report will be provided to Cabinet in October 2022 which will set out development proposals and options for modernisation of, and investment in, the Council's residential services.

We continue to invest in reablement services to prevent escalation of need increasing or enable recovery and independence. Commission Care & Repair have increased service capacity in order to reduce waiting times for minor adaptations and small and medium Disabled Facility Grants. It

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

was agreed that a new Intermediate Care Step Up and Step Down facility would be created to avoid hospital admission and support discharge. We are working with Health to open this new facility from October 2022.

We are also empowering people to be more independent at home by continuing to promote direct payments as a way of managing individual care needs. We have reviewed our existing direct payment policy and new guidance has been developed and shared with staff, service users and our commissioned direct payment support provider. The new policy and guidance will be introduced in September 2022.

We are also building on our engagement in 2021/22 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. The draft Day Services Strategy is currently being developed and employment is a specific element. We have developed a range of links with employers and pathways to employment are being developed with Elite. Volunteering opportunities continue to be developed with our partners and internally with community development officers. A range of co-production events are being held to inform writing of draft strategy.

Encouraging residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing.

We continue to encourage all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing as we know that this is key to living a long and healthy life, and reducing the risk of long-term illnesses such as heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes. We continue to invest in our playgrounds and have agreed our programme of investment for 2022/23. We are also improving the fitness suite in Hawthorn Leisure Centre. We had hoped to complete this work in June 2022 but due to delays in the supply of equipment which will now be delivered in September 2022. A new 3G pitch in Baglan Field/Ynysfio Field, Treherbert will also be available for use by the public and sports clubs in September 2022. Once completed, it will mean that Rhondda Cynon Taf will be home to 14 3G facilities spread across the County Borough, and crucially means that the ambition to ensure that residents have access to such a facility within a 3-mile radius of wherever they live will be achieved.

The pandemic highlighted how important and valued our libraries are to our communities. We are enhancing the services available at our new libraries in Llys Cadwyn and the Treorchy Cultural Hub with a focus on community engagement and partnership. We have also involved communities in fourteen 'Community Conversations' sessions across RCT as part of the implementation of the National Lottery Heritage Fund ['Altered Images' project](#). Feedback from the sessions will inform the Year 2 Action Plan. The main aim of the Altered Images project is to help record and research memorials and monuments throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf as well as capturing the diverse stories and memories of our neighbourhoods.

We continue to prioritise strengthening relationships with residents and community groups and finding out what is important to residents. This includes working to ensure that communities have access to information, advice and guidance both digitally and locally. Following the severe disruption of the pandemic, our Community Co-ordinators have now returned to working in community bases and our One4all services are also fully open including the re-introduction of a drop-in service at Pontyclun Library. We want to increase the opportunities for people to learn and use Welsh within their communities and we are working with Menter Iaith to look at the

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

delivery of Welsh courses and classes across Rhondda Cynon Taf and enhancing the provision at Garth Olwg Centre as well.

Integrating health and social care and providing support for those with mental health problems and complex needs.

We continue to collaborate with our partners to support older people to stay in their homes longer, prevent unnecessary stays in hospital and to help get people home from hospital more quickly when they are well enough. 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 of options for an integrated community model. A working group is in place and a draft proposal for development of new integrated Health and Social Care model is progressing well including changes being made to Regional Partnership Board's governance structures in order to progress a new regional integrated health and social care system. 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 working with Health to implement a review of the current health and social care system and implement the Welsh Government's [Discharge to Recover then Assess Model](#) (D2RA) pathways as part of the [6 goals for urgent and emergency care programme initiative](#).

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 **long term** need and demand pressures. Redesign work has continued but completion has been delayed due to covid pressures and planned organisational restructures in the Health Board. A new work programme and timescales have been agreed with Health for 2022/23.

Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do.

We continue to improve access to timely information, advice and assistance to facilitate improved access to, and engagement in, early intervention and prevention services for children, young people and families. The new RCT Families website is currently in development and is due to be live in September 2022.

We continue to focus our services on early intervention and prevention to improve the life outcomes for children in RCT. We have appointed an additional Mental Health & Wellbeing Officer to increase capacity in YEPS to meet the increased demand. We are also revising existing Children and Communities Grant contracts with providers to support the delivery of integrated support pathways supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children, young people and families. This work has included establishing a 'lot' for Counselling on the Approved Providers list, which includes counselling services for children and adults. Feedback received from the Resilient Families Service team identified a need for counselling for couples so this has been one of the areas of focus. Family therapy was also added but no providers have identified an interest so the team have made contact with some therapists with the aim to achieve applications. Supporting children and families to stay together safely and to thrive and providing effective support for children who need to become looked after are two essential responsibilities and key aims of Children's Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT). We are implementing a new pre-birth pathway and discreet service for very vulnerable (first time) parents. The new [MAGU Project delivery pathway](#) will improve pre-birth services and seek to reduce the number of children under one and children of parents who themselves are care leavers becoming looked after. A manager has been appointed and recruitment to the team has commenced to progress this new project.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

We also want to make sure that those children that cannot remain with their families can be looked after closer to home. We are continuing to work with providers to develop placement sufficiency close to home which includes carrying out a feasibility study to consider rebalancing residential placement provision over the next 5 years. This study has commenced and will inform how we develop and monitor a commissioning mix and range of placements that support children looked after and care leavers to achieve positive long term outcomes. We are working with [Foster Wales](#) to increase the recruitment of foster carers in particular those who are able to support children with more complex needs. Enquiries are increasing but only small numbers of new foster carers are being approved to date. We are also developing a revised Housing Options model for care-leavers to whom the Council owes a corporate parenting duty in order that they can leave care placements in a safe, planned way which avoids homelessness wherever possible. Two dedicated Housing Solutions Officers have been appointed and a referral pathway document has been drafted.

We continue to strengthen participation of children and young people to promote engagement and involvement specifically with Children Looked After and partner agencies to ensure co-production 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 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. This will also improve early intervention and prevention outcomes across the County Borough. Health characteristics data transfer has been completed. An Early Years Vulnerability Project plan is in place and a full profile test underway. However, full information sharing protocols are yet to be agreed. This work is being led by Public Health Wales. We continue to pilot the new integrated Early Years delivery model and are currently leading on the external evaluation of the new delivery model in RCT on behalf of the region. All data is being reviewed quarterly and reported to Senior Managers in RCT and CTMUHB.

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

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 1

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE		
Investment Area	Investment Value² £M	Quarter 1 Update
Extracare Housing	6.974	<p>This investment funding covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •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; planning permission granted 16th December 2021; and contractor on site and progressing with early works (and noting that previous projects delivered in this area include: the former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site (Aberaman) and Pontypridd "Cwrt yr Orsaf" Extra Care Housing Scheme, opened in May 2020 and October 2021 respectively). <p>Plans for a further three extra care facilities in Mountain Ash, Treorchy and Ferndale are being developed.</p>
Tackling Poverty Fund	0.300	<p>This investment funding is to help address areas where there are high levels of poverty (including fuel poverty) to increase the disposable income of households, for example, by supporting households to reduce energy bills, helping to overcome barriers to find employment. An application to the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund has been submitted and, if successful, the funding will be used for Heating Grants and Solar Panels in line with this existing priority area for the Council.</p>
Total	7.274	

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

o **PLACES** (Section 5b)

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

Summary of progress to 30th June 2022

We continue to promote good recycling practices through campaigns and education. The [Education Centre at Bryn Pica](#) has reopened this quarter and our campaigns have focussed on key recycling activity at [Easter](#) and the [Jubilee celebrations](#). The tonnage of recycled waste during quarter 1 is lower than the same period last year (20,970 tonnes compared to 23,110 tonnes in 2021/22) but our overall recycling percentage is better i.e. 64.78% compared to 62% at quarter 1 2021/22. Work is on-going with landlords, agents and residents to encourage good recycling practices that will reduce municipal waste and have a positive effect on the environment, and we continue to work with Caru Cymru (Keep Wales Tidy) to support community activity e.g. litter picks.

The Council's Enforcement Team has continued to monitor and act against fly-tippers with 843 recorded incidents this quarter (999 last year) and enforced off street parking restrictions and school keep clear zones to ensure the safe passage of both drivers and residents. We also continue to take appropriate action to enforce the PSPO for dog controls including taking [relevant court action](#).

We are progressing our climate change agenda through the trialling of alternative fuelled refuse vehicles and the development of a Draft ULEV Fleet Transition Plan. We have progressed plans for [EV charging facilities](#) across the County Borough and continue to explore areas where we can create renewable energy e.g. The Coed Ely Solar Farm, and potential hydro developments. We have also applied for WG grant funding to develop the Eco Park at Bryn Pica that include trials for recycling plastic and there is on-going focus on implementing procurement policies to reduce the use of single use plastic items.

Our highways investment programme activity continues across the County Borough, including progressing the [A4119 duelling scheme in Coed Ely](#), undertaking repairs at [Maerdy mountain](#) and commencing work at the [Imperial Bridge in Porth](#) and [White Bridge in Pontypridd](#). We also continue to progress the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act and flood risk flood mitigation measures. An update on the recommendations contained in the review of the Council's response to Storm Dennis [Cabinet Report 18 December 2020](#) can be found in [Section 6](#) of this Executive Summary. This quarter Section 19 Flood Reports have been released for [Trehafod](#), [Cwmbach](#) and [Abercwmboi, Fernhill and Porth](#). We have also hosted a public exhibition on the [Tylorstown Landslip Project](#). We are also progressing active travel initiatives across Rhondda Cynon Taf including schemes: Treorchy to Treherbert, and those on the Cynon Trail at Cwmbach and Abercynon.

Our community cohesion work is being progressed and are providing opportunities to engage through our Community Hubs. A paper relating to [Food Resilience](#) was presented to Council's Cabinet in June highlighting the work offered to residents experiencing food poverty and this included the work being done to achieve bronze award status in [Sustainable Food Places](#). We are also working towards becoming a member of the [World Health Organisation's \(WHO\) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities](#).

Our work to prevent anti-social behaviour in town centres continues in partnership with the Probation Service and Pobl, and includes the relocation of Mill Street Hostel. We are also [progressing](#) the appointment of [Community Wardens](#) to provide a high-profile presence in our town centres.

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The [Barod](#) Integrated Substance Misuse Service (now including Bridgend) commenced in April this year, and we continue to recruit resources to increase resilience in this area. We have improved booking arrangements for substance misuse training and have taken opportunities to share good practice wherever possible. We have also provided valuable 'Overdose Awareness' sessions to local hotel and hostel staff following a rise in local drug related deaths within supported accommodation. Additional 'Drop-in' centres have been developed at Penrhys, to nurture community relationships, and at Dare Valley Country Park for Ukraine evacuees to provide harm reduction support as required.

Our domestic abuse support provision has been improved with the recruitment of a Health IDVA at Royal Glamorgan Hospital, and despite some delays we are still progressing the Oasis Centre and Domestic Abuses Services joint working model. The 'Healthy Relationships' workshops will also inform early support for prevention and intervention of homeless families housed in temporary accommodation. The commissioning of a Regional Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP) across the CTM region is being progressed with funding agreed and service model approved.

To keep our communities safe, this quarter we have piloted a 'Young Friends' against scams (YFAS) awareness training event to children aged 8-12 years at Ysgol Nantgwyn which was positively received. We also continue to publish cases where rogue traders have been prosecuted on the Council's website including two cases relating to the sale of counterfeit goods at [Merthyr Tydfil](#) and [Mountain Ash](#). In addition, a case relating to [taxi licencing](#) was also published which demonstrates the Council's commitment to keeping residents safe.

To support the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Schemes (United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme and the Widening Dispersal Scheme, we are working with social landlords and tenants to prevent instances of homelessness through the provision of a new Virtual Tenancy Ready Classroom that provides information on what to expect when searching for and moving into a new home; tenant rights and responsibilities, and where to go for help and support. All information is translated to aid understanding. Newydd Housing are also submitting this project for consideration in the 'Welsh Housing Awards'.

We continue to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. Our [Playground Investment Programme](#) is also progressing to deliver planned improvements during 2022/23 and we continue to improve our digital platforms to provide a more accessible service to residents.

In June this year, the Council's [2022-2025 'Think Climate RCT' – Making Rhondda Cynon Taf Carbon Neutral by 2030](#), Climate Change Strategy was agreed by [Cabinet](#) that provides a framework to support carbon reduction in both the Council and the County Borough. Linked to this is a Council Decarbonisation Plan that is also being progressed.

In support of this, work to establish natural carbon storage solutions continues with a commissioned peat bog study in Cwmparc scheduled shortly, and 3 other potential peatbog sites being explored. Connected to this, the [Draft RCT Tree, Woodlands and Hedgerow Strategy](#) is to be considered by Cabinet. This Strategy recognises the important carbon storing role that trees, vegetation and soils have in the 'carbon cycle'. The Strategy is currently out for consultation with residents and stakeholders, more information is available in the [accompanying press release](#).

New biodiversity signage celebrating biodiversity has been installed at Dare Valley Country Park, and we continue to encourage residents to report sightings of wildlife and flora, and take

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part in activities like 'Grab a Rake' on the Council's [Biodiversity webpages](#). We continue to work with partners such as Natural Resources Wales to support projects like '[Healthy Hillside](#)s' and '[Living Landscapes](#)'.

We continue to progress activity in support of the 2024 National Eisteddfod for Wales. More information will be available following the Eisteddfod public meeting later this year. [Visit Rhondda Cynon Taf](#) also supported [National Coach Week 2022](#).

During this quarter many events have been held in RCT including [– The Teddy Bear's Picnic](#) at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, A [Classic Car Show](#) at the Rhondda Heritage Park and the [Aberdare Festival](#). [Further events](#) are planned (including those supported by local businesses) during the year.

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

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 1

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 1 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	5.826	The additional resources are being used in conjunction with existing resources to deliver a programme of highways infrastructure repairs between 2022/23 and 2024/25.
Unadopted Roads	0.500	To support a programme of work to private streets that the Council has identified as requiring specific improvements. Following completion of the necessary works, the streets will be adopted as highways maintainable at public expense. Of the 18 streets which are included in the programme, 3 were completed as at the end of quarter 1 2022/23, contractors are on site for a further 4 schemes which are ongoing and the remaining 11 schemes are scheduled to be completed during the year.
Play Areas	0.804	There are 19 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2022/23. As at 30 th June 2022, 2 had been completed, 1 was under construction, 4 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 12 are to be designed.
Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas	0.201	There are 3 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2022/23 and will be progressed during the year.
Structures: Brook Street Footbridge	2.351	The contractor has commenced works on site including progressing piled foundations for a bridge ramp and utility diversions. The existing footbridge is programmed to be removed in quarter 2.
Structures	3.516	The investment funding has been allocated to support structure projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge Strengthening – the project is scheduled for completion in quarter 2 • Major retaining wall refurbishments - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A4059 Taff's Well Wall - works completed in quarter 1 2022/23. ○ Retaining walls at Brewery Terrace (Pontygwaith), Salem Terrace (Llwynypia) and Dinas Dept - scheduled to go out to tender in quarter 3 2022/23. ○ Maerdy Mountain walls – works on site to coincide with a larger scheme that requires full road closure. Works due for completion August 2022. • Llanharan Railway Footbridge – demolition completed in January 2022, replacement footbridge has been procured

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

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value ³ £M	Quarter 1 Update
		<p>and currently awaiting a licence application to be completed prior to commencing build of the foundations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imperial Bridge – works commenced on site in April 2022 and are scheduled for completion in quarter 3. • Bodringallt Bridge Infilling – delays due to the need to consider drainage position. • Rhigos Rock Anchors – scheduled to go to tender in quarter 3. • Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.
Parks Structures	0.730	<p>The investment funding has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gelli Isaf – Scheduled Monument Conservation Scheme – works have commenced on site for Phase 1 of the repairs. • Pentre Footbridge – Scheme awarded, site works scheduled to start in September 2022. • Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.
Parks and Green Spaces	2.525	<p>This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The 2022/23 programme comprises of 72 schemes and as at quarter one 9 full schemes have been completed. The remaining schemes will be progressed during 2022/23 as part of an on-going programme of work.</p>
Llanharan Bypass	5.558	<p>This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology surveys. Pre-Planning Application Consultation (PAC) took place in 2021 and work is ongoing to prepare documentation in readiness for a full planning application expected later in 2022/23. This scheme is also subject to the Welsh Government’s Roads Review.</p>
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	7.035	<p>This investment funding is supporting the dualling of the highway between the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters roundabout and Coed Ely roundabout. Detail design work has been completed; tender document preparation for the construction phase is progressing; work is on-going to secure land required; and the associated Compulsory Purchase Order has been submitted. A contractor has been appointed with works programmed to start in quarter 2.</p>

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value³ £M	Quarter 1 Update
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. Works are being planned for the foyer area of the Park & Dare which forms part of The Hub and external funding opportunities are also being explored.
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 WeITAG stage 1 has been completed and is in the process of review to inform WeITAG stage 2.
Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Bypass	1.551	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. Planning permission has been granted and the next stage is to procure a designer to progress detail design. This scheme is also subject to the Welsh Government's Roads Review.
Bryn Pica Eco Park	1.286	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.
Porth Interchange Metro + LTF	--	As set out in the Porth Regeneration Strategy, a new Transport Hub in the Town Centre is currently under construction, funded by UK Government's Levelling Up Fund, WG Local Transport Fund and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (total project costs £5.4M). During quarter 1 the steel frame was constructed and works commenced towards making the building watertight. The construction is due to complete in March 2023.
Total	32.734	

- **PROSPERITY** (Section 5c)

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

Summary of progress to 30th June 2022

A range of support is available through the Council to support business growth and expansion in town centres, including the Enterprise Investment Fund and Town Centre Maintenance Grant. Given the current economic challenges these will be reviewed to ensure that the most appropriate mix of support is available to help businesses to navigate these challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities such as digital trading opportunities. Services continue to work closely with business representatives such as Business Improvement Districts to inform this work, and the development of a Business Engagement Strategy.

A new three year programme of funding for town centre property improvements has become available through the Welsh Government Transforming Towns fund and the identified pipeline of potential improvement projects in our town centres has been shared with Welsh Government officials as a basis for endorsement for funding. This will set the scene for our improvement programme over the next three years. Existing town centre projects continue to progress, including the Porth Transport Hub which is now well into the construction phase with the steelwork building framework erected. A study is currently underway to investigate potential active travel routes within Aberdare, Pontypridd and Porth Town centres, providing convenient access to key facilities including public transport.

Work continues to develop the visitor economy. A draft delivery action plan to deliver the RCT Tourism Strategy has been completed and is awaiting sign off, and will be delivered in partnership with business partners. Regular Tourism hub meetings are promoting partnership working, for example, a collaboration between Zipworld and Gravity Bike Park.

Working with Cardiff Capital Region, we continue to progress 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. A planning application has been submitted for the Aberdare site and discussions are underway with the developer for the Cwm Coking works with a view to a planning application being submitted next spring.

Working in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to increase the supply of energy efficient, low carbon homes. 17 schemes in the social housing grant programme development plan are categorised as 'new build – modern methods of construction'. Rhondda Housing Association Wales Skyline project has continued with progress. RHA Wales have made a Social Housing Grant submission during the reporting period for £145k. The sale of Porth Infants School to Cynon Taf Community Housing Group has now been complete. CTCHG have made a Social Housing Grant submission for £680k.

Work continues in partnership with Central South Consortium to regularly review the progress of all schools. The introduction of all school review meetings is helpfully contributing to this work and the information provided is being used to inform further action. Strategies being developed for the Curriculum for Wales are due to be operational from the next academic year, and CSC has ensured that its work programme will enable updates on progress for this area to be captured appropriately. The impact of covid-19 on learner progress continues to be a key area for Improvement partners to review and capture and local data is being collated by CSC. However, there is currently no agreed national approach to how schools are mapping learner progress. A report has been produced on the impact of Family Engagement Officers and an evaluation of Step 4 provision was produced in

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

January, with proposals for tranche 3 underway. It is also planned to produce and share case studies from schools where good practice has been identified.

Work continues to ensure effective anti-bullying strategies in our schools. Presentations have been delivered to primary and secondary Headteachers meetings to raise awareness of peer-on-peer sexual harassment and guidance has been provided to all schools. An anti-racism plan has been completed in consultation with the RCT BAME working group and is now being implemented. Improvements have also been made to data collection systems to ensure all incidents of bullying are appropriately recorded.

Support continues for schools to implement new ALN legislation, including development of a professional learning programme for release in the autumn term and review and schools self-evaluation. An Early years ALN coordinator forum has been established and additional capacity will be in place for September to enhance transition from early years settings into schools for children with additional learning needs.

Investment in our school buildings continues. Band B project Business cases have been submitted to Welsh Government in accordance with the Strategic outline programme and works on site commenced to provide additional capacity at YG Rhydwaun and YGG Aberdar, with a number of other projects commencing over the summer holidays or autumn term for the Welsh medium Primary School, Rhydyfelin; Pontypridd High; Hawthorn High; Pontyclun Primary School; Penygawsi Primary School; Llanilltud Faerdref Primary School and Bryncelynog Comprehensive. All new build elements will be net zero carbon in operation.

Support for people seeking work continued through our Employment Support programmes. Council staff continue to engage with Welsh Government to review future priorities and national funding arrangements. Proposals for a new employment support grant to be confirmed in Quarter 3 but it is hoped that future funding levels will be confirmed in September. Links have been made between employment and youth services to provide support and training for identified young people leaving school with no destination for work, study or training through the WG Youth Guarantee Grant fund scheme. We also continue to provide more informal learning opportunities to engage people in learning and support wellbeing. A series of family learning engagement programmes is being developed in targeted communities and a pilot course ran at Penrhys Primary school, with two further courses planned at other schools in the autumn. Recruitment has been completed for 20 new graduate and 46 new apprenticeship opportunities, with induction for these new starters taking place in June and September.

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

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 1

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY		
Investment Area	Investment Value ⁴ £M	Quarter 1 Update
Empty Property Grant	2.213	67 valid applications received in 2022/23 are progressing through to survey (in addition to work-in-progress applications carried forward from 2021/22), and the survey programme is due to be completed by the end of September 2022. The Council's funding allocation is now fully committed and the on-line application process has closed.
Schools	3.103	<p>This investment funding is supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YGG Llyn Y Forwyn Primary (transferring the school to a new building on a new site) - site investigation surveys have been undertaken, land has been purchased, project / cost managers have been appointed to support delivery of the scheme and a Design and Build contractor was appointed in quarter 4 to undertake the land reclamation works and construct a new Primary school. A strategy is being developed for the reclamation works and the design development for the school is on-going. • Other works (as approved by Cabinet 21st March 2022) - toilet refurbishments (£0.300M), boiler replacements (£0.700M), roof renewals (£1.445M) and classroom upgrades (£0.126M) – the majority of works are scheduled to be undertaken during the 2022 summer holidays.
Transport Infrastructure	2.118	<p>This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressing design work for pedestrian crossing enhancement projects at Tonyrefail, Groesfaen, Llanharan and Ty Nant (to improve road safety and promote active travel) – all projects are scheduled for construction in 2022/23. • A4059 / Bowls Club junction - feasibility study completed to investigate junction / traffic flow improvements along the A4059. The options will be considered and the preferred option taken forward to preliminary design. • A4059 Quarter Mile junction, feasibility proposals have been developed - the next steps will be preliminary design including ground investigation work.
Park and Ride Programme	0.529	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 Value ⁴ £M	Quarter 1 Update
		for All, improved CCTV coverage and Electric Vehicle charging points at: <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 detailed design work has been completed.
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robertstown – good progress continues to be made in quarter 1 with most of the units now complete and snagging works taking place. Works are continuing to the external areas. • Coed Ely – scheme completed and the tenant occupied the premises from July 2021.
Total	12.163	

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.
