



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**27<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

#### **COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Quarter 3)**

#### **REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE & GROUP DIRECTOR – FINANCE, DIGITAL & FRONTLINE 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 nine-months of this financial year (to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022).

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the context of the Council's Services continuing to manage the on-going effects of communities recovering from the pandemic and 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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary).

##### **Capital**

- 2.3 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (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).
- 2.7 Note the progress update in respect of the Council's response to tackling Climate Change (Section 7 of the Executive Summary).

## **3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To agree the Council's financial and operational performance position as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 third update of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31<sup>st</sup> 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 updates in respect of enhancing the Council's response to extreme weather events and to tackle climate change.
- 4.3 The report is set in the context of the on-going impact of Covid-19 and 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 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. 31<sup>st</sup> December 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](#).
- **Tackling Climate Change** – Section 7 setting out the work being progressed across services to support the delivery of the Council’s [Climate Change Strategy ‘Think Climate RCT’](#).

## 6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS AND SOCIOECONOMIC DUTY

6.1 The Council’s Performance Report provides an update on financial and operational performance for the first 9-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 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 Council meeting, it was agreed that the Corporate Plan priorities would also serve as its Well-being Objectives in line with the Act.

## **11.0 CONCLUSION**

11.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council as at Quarter 3 2022/23, that is, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

11.2 The Quarter 3 revenue budget position is projecting a £10.469M full year overspend, this being in line with the positions set out in the quarter 1 and 2 Performance Reports, and the main budget pressures due to increases in demand for services, particularly social care services; additional inflationary cost pressures; and less income received by some services due to reduced take-up during the early part of the year. The Council wide review process to identify options to bring the position closer in line with budget has been completed and has enabled one-off earmarked reserves to be re-allocated to fully fund the additional in-year costs. In addition to the above, the cost implications of the 2022/23 pay award for NJC staff and teachers is £10.5M above budgeted levels, with the in-year funding arrangement for this now in place.

11.3 Capital investment as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 is £78.399M, this being in line with the on-going strategy of significant capital investment in the Council's assets and infrastructure across the County Borough.

11.4 The third quarter progress updates for the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity demonstrate positive progress overall in supporting the delivery of improved outcomes for residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

11.5 The programme of work to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events is progressing well, with key actions being delivered to support the Council's arrangements.

11.6 The work undertaken during quarter 3 across Council Services to support the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy – ‘Think Climate RCT’ is demonstrating clear progress toward the long-term targets for this area.

**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**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

27<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Quarter 3)**

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE & GROUP DIRECTOR –  
FINANCE, DIGITAL & FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE  
RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR LEYSHON)**

Item: 9

**Background Papers**

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT  
QUARTER 3 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 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 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 to enhance the Council’s response to extreme weather events.

**Section 7 – THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE**

Progress update on the work being progressed across services to support the delivery of the Council’s Climate Change Strategy ‘Think Climate RCT’.

## **Section 1 – INTRODUCTION**

The Executive Summary brings together and summarises the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Quarter 3).

The Quarter 3 update continues to be set in the context of the Council's Services managing the on-going effects of communities recovering from the pandemic and 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**

	<b>2022/23 – as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Quarter 3)</b>		
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Full Year Budget £M</b>	<b>Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 3 £M</b>	<b>Variance Over / (Under) £M</b>
<a href="#">Education &amp; Inclusion Services (2a)</a>	207.676	207.520	(0.156)
<a href="#">Community &amp; Children's Services (2b)</a>	181.078	188.695	7.617
<a href="#">Chief Executive (2c)</a>	35.078	34.850	(0.228)
<a href="#">Prosperity, Development &amp; Frontline Services (2d)</a>	64.007	67.261	3.254
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>487.839</b>	<b>498.326</b>	<b>10.487</b>
<a href="#">Authority Wide Budgets (2e)</a>	78.953	78.935	(0.018)
<b>Total</b>	<b>566.792</b>	<b>577.261</b>	<b>10.469</b>
Funded By Drawdown from Earmarked Reserves			(10.469)
<b>Projected Full Year Position</b>			<b>0.000</b>

With regard to the overspend position, appropriate cover has now been identified across our earmarked reserves and accordingly a breakeven position is reported for this financial year. This has included funding for:

- High demand and cost of social care (Adult Services and Children's Services);
- Inflationary cost pressures, for example, Home to School Transport; and



- Lower levels of service take-up resulting in reduced levels of income received, for example, Leisure Services and noting that for this service area income levels are showing an improved position compared to quarters 1 and 2.

In addition to the above position and as reported at quarter 2, both the NJC pay award and the Teachers Pay Award were agreed at levels above which the Council had budgeted. The funding arrangement for this (final cost at £10.5M) has now been put in place, including appropriate drawdown from reserves.

Following on, revenue budget variances, projected at Quarter 3, for each Service Group are set out below.

### **Revenue budget variances projected at Quarter 3**

#### **1. Education & Inclusion Services**

##### **EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES**

- Additional Learning Needs (£0.132M underspend); and
- Education other than at School (£0.184M underspend).

##### **21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS**

- Catering (£0.242M overspend).

#### **2. Community and Children's Services**

##### **ADULT SERVICES**

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.366M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£5.601M overspend);
- Provider Services (£1.188M overspend);
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.899M underspend), and
- Management, Safeguarding & Support Services (£0.230M overspend).

##### **CHILDREN SERVICES**

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£1.647M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.083M underspend);
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.085M underspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.789M underspend); and
- Management & Support Service (£0.081M underspend).

##### **TRANSFORMATION**

- Group & Transformation Management (£0.079M underspend); and
- Service Improvement (£0.085M underspend).

##### **PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION**

- Public Protection (£0.288M underspend);
- Community Services (£0.143M underspend);
- Communities & Wellbeing (£0.169M underspend); and
- Leisure, Countryside and Cultural Services (£1.324M overspend).

### 3. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

#### PROSPERITY & DEVELOPMENT

- Prosperity & Development (£0.120M underspend).

#### FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Highways Management (£0.059M overspend);
- Transportation (£3.491M overspend);
- Street Cleansing (£0.066M overspend);
- Waste Services (£0.205M underspend); and
- Parks Services (£0.061M underspend).

### 4. Chief Executive

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Democratic Services & Communications (£0.085M underspend);
- Legal Services (£0.082M underspend);
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.167M underspend); and
- Corporate Estates (£0.058M overspend).

### 5. Authority Wide Budgets

- Levies (£0.144M overspend); and
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme (£0.101M underspend).

### **Earmark Reserve Update**

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

## **Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

### **Capital Programme Budget**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2022/23 - as at 31st December 2022</b>	
	<b>Capital Budget £M</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure £M</b>
<a href="#">Chief Executive (3a)</a>	4.162	1.051
<a href="#">Prosperity, Development &amp; Frontline Services (3b)</a>	80.735	44.227
<a href="#">Education &amp; Inclusion Services (3c)</a>	64.985	30.676
<a href="#">Community &amp; Children's Services (3d)</a>	8.391	2.445
<b>Total</b>	<b>158.273</b>	<b>78.399</b>

### **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) National Empty Homes Grant Scheme (£5.057M); WG Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Transformation Fund (£0.123M); WG Transforming Towns (£1.511M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (£0.117M); WG Childcare Grant (£0.425M); WG WEFO ERDF Modern Industrial Units Development (£0.707M); and UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (£18.322M).

For information on how the Capital Programme is funded see [Section 3e](#).

### **Prudential Indicators**

For a detailed breakdown of Prudential Indicators, see [Section 3f](#).

## Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- Turnover

Service Area	2022/23		2021/22			
	As at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022		As at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021		As at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
<b>Turnover – Council Wide</b>	<b>10,870</b>	<b>9.16</b>	<b>10,990</b>	<b>8.82</b>	<b>11,079</b>	<b>11.30</b>
Community & Children's Services <sup>1</sup>	2,747	12.34	2,983	8.62	2,976	12.70
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	785	6.11	901	9.21	945	11.22
Education & Inclusion Services	1,275	4.47	1,232	6.98	1,233	9.08
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4,956</u>	<u>9.62</u>	<u>4,996</u>	<u>9.59</u>	<u>5,013</u>	<u>11.35</u>
Primary	3,112	7.90	3,211	7.79	3,238	9.51
Secondary	1,844	12.53	1,785	12.83	1,775	14.70
Chief Executive's Division	1,107	6.78	878	7.29	912	9.54

- Sickness Absence

Service Area	2022/23	2021/22	
	As at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022 %	As at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021 %	As at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022 %
<b>% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide</b>	<b>5.45</b>	<b>5.08</b>	<b>5.40</b>
Community & Children's Services <sup>1</sup>	7.96	7.27	7.46
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	4.97	5.99	5.62
Education & Inclusion Services	4.84	4.48	4.88
<u>Schools</u>	<u>4.73</u>	<u>4.01</u>	<u>4.61</u>
Primary	5.18	4.15	4.77
Secondary	3.98	3.77	4.31
Chief Executive's Division	3.46	3.74	3.54

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

<sup>1</sup> 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 is reviewed on an on-going basis to take account of the changing internal and external operating environment, including the on-going impact of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.

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

The Council's Strategic Risk Register, as at quarter 3, can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

## **Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN**

Corporate Plan priority action plans are in place and cover the three priorities of People, Places and Prosperity. Each action plan includes a number of performance measures to accompany key actions, to provide Members with a full as picture as possible of the Council's performance. For Members information, the reintroduction of in-year reporting of performance measures from quarter 2, the first time since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, will be an on-going process and be subject to revision / refinement to ensure they help measure the difference the Council's work is having on residents and communities.

A summary of progress made across each of the three priorities as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (Quarter 3) is set out in Sections 5a - c. Members will note that 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 third quarter of the year.

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

- **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

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

##### **Summary of progress to 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 has been delayed due to the main contractor entering administration. We are working with Linc Cymru to plan for the continuation of the project following retender of a new contractor. Our plans for a further three extra care facilities in Mountain Ash, Treorchy and Ferndale are being developed in line with the overall review of the Council's residential care homes for older people in Rhondda Cynon Taf (further detail provided below). The development of Extra Care housing 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.

Working with [Trivallis](#), we opened a [supported accommodation scheme](#) in Llanhari following a refurbishment of Elm Road accommodation. This scheme provides a safe, secure and high-quality environment for adults with learning disabilities and autism. Assessments have been completed and individuals have started to move into their accommodation. A similar supported living scheme in Treorchy is also under construction in partnership with [Cynon Taf Housing Association](#) and is progressing as planned and is due to be completed in Spring 2023. A care provider has been appointed to provide support at the scheme when it is opened. A further scheme is also planned at the '[Big Shed](#)' development in Tonypany. Proposals for the [former Bronllwyn Care Home in Gelli](#) were approved by [Cabinet](#) in July 2022. The development will provide new specialist care accommodation for people with learning disabilities as part of the wider modernisation of Council residential care provision. The development is progressing as planned, with Planning Application submitted and tender advertised in December 2022.

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

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

changing needs in the long term. A draft report was considered for [pre-scrutiny by Overview & Scrutiny Committee in November 2022](#). Following this, a [report was provided to Cabinet in December 2022](#) which set out preferred options on the future provision of accommodation with care for older people in each of the Council's nine residential care homes. The proposals to modernise local residential care services include a major investment to build four state-of-the-art new care accommodation while retaining five Council care homes. This preferred option focuses on preventative services, well-being and future needs. This option would increase choice for people requiring accommodation with care and offers viable alternatives for those able to remain independent within their communities. The [consultation](#) on the preferred option will be open until 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and provides an opportunity for residents that may be affected by the proposals, their families, carers and advocates, staff members and the public to find out more and have their say. [Drop in sessions](#) within the community will also be held in January to allow residents to discuss the proposals with officers. Once complete, the consultation and involvement results will enable the Cabinet to make informed decisions on the preferred options for each home in the New Year.

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. We have created additional residential care "step up step down" beds in the Council's In-house Residential Care Homes to avoid hospital admission and support discharged. As of 31st December 2022, 15 people were supported in an interim placement.

We continue to maximise technology to enhance independence and assist with care. We are working with partners to pilot a '[Just checking](#)' and '[Just roaming](#)' project from January 2023 across our Supported Living Service to explore the opportunities available to promote more independence for individuals and improve cost effectiveness. These technologies allow adults with learning disabilities and autism to live independently and safely within their supported living homes. Work on the Adult Services Digital Strategy and work plan have been delayed due to operational priorities so this work will now be taken forward in 2023/24.

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 have been completed and the information will be introduced in January 2023. We commissioned [Community Catalyst](#) to support people and local partners to develop small enterprises and ventures that can provide real choice and increase the number and range of homecare and support options for local people. We will launch this project to the public in January 2023.

We are also building on our engagement in 2021/22 and learning from the pandemic to inform the on-going transformation of day services 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 and volunteering are a specific element; a range of co-production events are being held to inform the draft strategy and will be reported to Cabinet in March 2023.

### **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

## PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

of long-term illnesses such as heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes. We continue to invest in our playgrounds and work is progressing on our programme of investment for 2022/23, with 11 projects completed so far. We have also improved the fitness suite in [Hawthorn Leisure Centre](#), which is now open to the public. A new 3G pitch in Baglan Field/Ynysfio Field, Treherbert is also available for use by the public and sports clubs. This means that Rhondda Cynon Taf now has 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 has been achieved. We also trialled [cold water swimming sessions](#) in Lido Ponty to provide further opportunities for activity. Winter sessions can appeal to a different kind of swimmer at Lido Ponty, especially those who are already – or are considering – dipping their toes into the increasingly-popular cold water swimming movement which has been linked to mental health benefits. Triathletes and those who compete in Iron Man competitions will also benefit from the chance to train in wetsuits. The trial was very successful and further sessions will be held in Quarter 4.

We also [launched our new-look Leisure for Life APP](#) in December 2022, which can be downloaded free of charge and enhances the customer experience, providing opportunities to book classes, check availability of classes, make payments for pay-as-you-go sessions, provide feedback on individual classes and make suggestions to improve the services on offer.

As part of our work with partners to give residents access to health and wellbeing information and activities, in partnership with Moondance Cancer Initiative charity, we have successfully delivered [a learning programme](#) in Pontypridd High School that aimed to improve pupils' understanding of cancer and in particular bowel cancer to raise awareness of this type of cancer, the causes, symptoms and the importance of early detection through screening. By improving pupils' understanding, understanding in the wider community e.g. parents, carers, grandparents would also be improved. This learning programme is an investment to influence long-term behaviour change within younger generations by educating them about cancer, cancer treatment, and the connection to healthy behaviours. It aligns with the new curriculum in Wales, and contributes to the national aim to develop healthy, confident, informed citizens. It also explores intergenerational learning, by raising awareness of bowel screening, signs and symptoms amongst the wider school community alongside teaching the dedicated cancer module.

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 seventeen 'Community Conversations' sessions, engaging 299 individuals across Rhondda Cynon Taf 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. We had planned to produce more online content for residents, but suitable training has not been found for staff, so this work is not continuing at this time.

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 ensure older people feel safe and welcome in their communities by working in partnership with the Older People's Advisory Group to develop a plan to achieve Age Friendly Wales status. Progress is being made with local developments noted within the Gilfach Goch Community Venue.



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

We want to increase the opportunities for people to learn and use Welsh within their communities and we are working with Menter Iaith to deliver Welsh courses and classes across Rhondda Cynon Taf and enhancing the provision at [Garth Olwg Centre](#) as part of this.

### **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 Services Model which was agreed by the [Regional Partnership Board](#) in October 2022, pending completion of an implementation plan. Once agreed, the model will be presented to Cabinet for approval. We are also working together to improve patient experience and redesign unscheduled care pathways to embed 'home first' discharge principles from Hospitals. This includes working with Health to 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](#). Following delay, a phased D2RA implementation commenced in January 2023.

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 and will now be linked to the agreement of the Integrated Community Services model referred to above.

### **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 Rhondda Cynon Taf Families website is complete and the website [www.rctfamilies.co.uk](http://www.rctfamilies.co.uk) has been live since October 2022. It has been promoted to staff within the Council and our relevant partners, including schools, childcare providers and community partners. It has received 500+ views so far with the Tips for Parents and Programmes and Courses being the most popular. We are currently reviewing the capacity and ability to develop multi-use areas and evaluate building capacity within our Children and Family centres to support the development of an access plan for community groups, during day time, evenings and weekends going forward. As part of the [development of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Families website](#) and social media opportunities, the promotion and profile of Centres is being raised, showing the resources available and signposting to sources of advice and support in community settings.

We continue to focus our services on early intervention and prevention to improve the life outcomes for children in Rhondda Cynon Taf. 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 understand areas that could be improved to encourage more to join the Approved Providers List. This supports the delivery of integrated support pathways supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children, young people and families. We are embedding a suite of 16+ Support projects that are being offered to young people leaving education with a destination including the Becoming Independent Project and Reducing Risk of Youth Homelessness Project. In Quarter 3, the 16+ team have also been delivering sessions in youth clubs re: safety, delivering sessions in colleges

## PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

re: bullying, drug awareness, trafficking and exploitation and offering support at drop in sessions at job centres.

We 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. A [Residential Children's Services Strategy](#) and action plan for the next 5 years has been drafted. The draft strategy was subject to pre-scrutiny in [November 2022](#) and will be presented to Cabinet for consideration in February 2023. 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 and 13 new foster carers have been approved to date against a target of 19. 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 Rhondda Cynon Taf 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 Rhondda Cynon Taf on behalf of the region. The data continues to be reviewed and reported on a regular basis to Senior Managers in the Council and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board. Works continues to capture more data on self-referrals to establish if these are triggered by Health Visitor discussion.

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

## Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 3

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>2</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 3 Update</b>
Extracare Housing	6.974	<p>This investment funding covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Porth - agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020. Progress to date includes: the vacation of the building; site surveys and demolition works completed; and planning permission granted 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Due to the main contractor entering administration, work is progressing to plan for the continuation of the project following a re-tender process being completed.</li> </ul> <p>(For information, 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> <p>Plans for a further three extra care facilities in Mountain Ash, Treorchy and Ferndale are being developed in line with the overall review of the Council's residential care homes for older people.</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. In parallel, funding has been secured via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a local scheme for Heating Grants and Solar Panels, to further support this priority area.</p>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.274</b>	

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

o **PLACES** (Section 5b)

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

**Summary of progress to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

**Keeping RCT clean through efficient street cleaning services, minimising the amount of waste we send to landfill, achieving our recycling targets through weekly recycling and regular refuse collections, and reducing our carbon footprint**

We continue to promote good recycling practices through campaigns and education. The [Education Centre at Bryn Pica](#) has reopened offering schools to take part in face to face visits which will run alongside our online sessions. During 'Recycling Week' (17-23 Oct) we attended local supermarkets and asked residents to '[KEEP IT REAL for RCT!](#)', and reminded residents to rinse out items before recycling, and where they can recycle items not eligible for kerbside collection. Our campaigns have also focussed [on key recycling activity](#) over the festive period promoting [Christmas tree collections](#), a Christmas [card recycling challenge](#) and [a short story competition](#) for primary schools.

A report was submitted the Council's Climate Change, Frontline Services & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in October regarding [Recycling Performance](#) with detail on all recycling data over the last 4 years. The tonnage of recycled waste to date is lower than the same period last year (56,612 tonnes compared to 66,754 tonnes in 2021/22) and our overall recycling percentage is also lower i.e. 65.11% compared to 68.63% at Quarter 3 2021/22. This quarter a [Revised Waste Management Strategy](#) was presented to Council's Cabinet in November which proposed future changes to waste collection that would have a positive effect on recycling tonnages. Residents have been invited to '[have a say](#)' on these changes via the Council's '[Let's Talk](#)' engagement platform. The consultation will end early January 2023.

Our work with landlords, agents and residents to encourage good recycling practices that will reduce municipal waste continues and we have launched '[A day in the life....](#)' to provide an insight into daily recycling routines for the Council.

The Council's Enforcement Team has continued to monitor and act against fly-tippers with 2,391 recorded incidents to date this year (2,514 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 Public Spaces Protection Order for dog controls including taking [relevant court action](#) for this and against those illegally [fly-tipping](#). Enforcement is also being supported by a new team of [Community Wardens](#)

We are progressing our climate change agenda and continue to explore areas where we can create renewable energy e.g. [The Coed Ely Solar Farm](#) and Hydro Electric Generation at [Dare Valley Country Park](#) and [Treforest Weir](#). Our funding bid for the Eco Park and Plastics Reprocessing Plant at Bryn Pica was not approved by Welsh Government but it is hoped that a scaled down operation will be more acceptable and we are working on this. There continues to be an on-going focus on implementing procurement policies to reduce the use of single use plastic items. In addition, the new reuse shop in Aberdare hosted a successful '[BIG RCT Toy swap](#)' in December.

**Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality**

Our highways investment programme activity continues across the County Borough, and we have continued to [keep our roads accessible and safe](#) through the winter months. We have seen

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

some slippage this quarter at the [Imperial Bridge](#), [Porth Bodringallt Bridge Infilling](#) and [Llanharan Railway Footbridge Replacement](#). All of these major schemes have revised delivery dates and will continue into 2023/24. We have progressed plans for improvement work at [Glenboi Pumping Station](#), Mountain Ash; undertaken stakeholder consultation on the Pentre Flood Alleviation Scheme and the first phase construction of the [Treorchy](#) and [Upper Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmboi](#) Flood Alleviation Schemes are nearing completion.

We also continue to progress the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act and flood risk 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, two further Section 19 Flood Reports have been released for [Mountain Ash](#) and [Bleanllechau/Ferndale](#). This [completes the 19 Reports](#) expected this year. We have also undertaken flood alleviation works in [Pentre](#), and commenced public consultation on [Land Drainage Byelaws in RCT](#) and on the [updating of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#) as agreed by Cabinet in [November](#). We have also awarded the contract for the [next phase of the Tylostown Landslip Work](#).

Active travel initiatives are being progressed and this quarter we have invited residents to '[Have your say on future Safer Routes scheme in Llantwit Fardre](#)' and have also completed [pedestrian crossing upgrades](#) in the area. Work on Maes Y Bryn Safe Routes in Communities continues to provide a safer pedestrian environment, encouraging more parents and pupils to walk to and from school, and reduce vehicle emissions in the area.

The [RCT Electric Vehicle Charging Implementation Plan](#) was [discussed](#) at a meeting of the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee in [October](#) and an [update report](#) was presented to the Climate Change, Frontline Services and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in November. We have also submitted our Air Quality Action Plan to Welsh Government and await their approval on the action presented.

### **Ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe**

Our community cohesion work is being progressed and are providing opportunities to engage through our Community Hubs. Additional funding received will provide opportunities to develop this further. '[Winter Welcome Centres](#)' have been established this quarter to provide warmth and shelter to residents funded by Welsh Government's 'Winter Hubs' support scheme. 92 Centres have been established in RCT and, to mid-January, 3,100 residents are [reported to have used these facilities](#).

Supporting work to develop 'An age friendly Rhondda Cynon Taf', a '[Vintage Recipe Book](#)' was launched in December containing traditional family recipes that had been compiled in partnership with the Local Food Partnership, the Llantrisant and District 50+ Older People's Forum and students at Tonyrefail Community School. Funding was received from [Sustainable Food Places Wales](#), and the idea for the book came out of the wider '[Food for the Planet](#)' campaign, which supports the Council's commitment to tackle Climate Change and highlights that our food system contributes about 30 per cent to global greenhouse gas emissions - more than transport or energy. Additionally, a third of the food we produce goes to waste. We also continue to progress work to achieve bronze award status in [Sustainable Food Places](#).

Our work to prevent anti-social behaviour in town centres continues in partnership with the Probation Service and Pobl. In December the Council secured its first [anti-social behaviour civil injunction](#) against a young person causing alarm and distress to their local community. This

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

demonstrates a clear message of zero tolerance to anti-social behaviour. It is expected that the presence of our newly appointed Community Wardens in our town centres will help prevent the escalation of anti-social behaviour in our town centres.

The [Barod](#) Integrated Substance Misuse Service (now including Bridgend) continues to run various courses to educate on the harms associated with substance misuse. Whilst there has been limited outreach work due to staff shortages during the quarter, it is hoped that this will once again increase in the last quarter.

Our new joint Oasis Centre and Domestic Abuse Service is expected to be operational from the Oasis Centre in the next financial year. The Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP) is now operational from the Oasis Centre and an evaluation will be undertaken at the end of 2022/23.

To keep our communities safe, we continue to publish cases where rogue traders have been prosecuted on the Council's website including a case relating to the sale of [illegal tobacco products](#) and a [Store Closure Order](#) for the sale of counterfeit tobacco products and disposable vapes to children. A [paper](#) was submitted to Community Services Scrutiny Committee in October updating on the role of Trading Standards in protecting vulnerable consumers.

In November, we also co-ordinated a series of community and school activities as part of [Road Safety Week](#) (14-20<sup>th</sup> November) in partnership with the road safety charity [Brake](#). The theme this year was 'Road Safety for All', and activities included '[Kerbcraft](#)' [child pedestrian training](#), a '[Megadrive](#)' event: a Road Safety Talk; [National Standards Cycle Training](#); '[Pass Plus Cymru](#)' sessions; and an 'Exchanging Places' intervention session regarding the risks of being close to heavy goods vehicles.

We continue 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, and 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. A [Cabinet Report](#) was presented in December updating on the current support being provided to refugees.

### **Getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces**

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, as set out in the People priority update, 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](#) with the strategy providing a framework to support carbon reduction across both the Council and the County Borough. An associated Decarbonisation Plan to reduce specific carbon reduction elements that inform the Council's Carbon Footprint and meet Welsh Government reporting requirements is expected to be published by year end.

In support of biodiversity, work to establish natural carbon storage solutions continues with commissioned Peat Bog investigations commencing in Cwmparc. Reports were submitted to the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee in October regarding progress in '[Peatland](#)'

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

management, and the [Action for Nature: The Local Nature Plan for RCT](#). In addition a report on '[Biodiversity and the Local Nature Partnership in RCT](#)' was also presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group in November. In December, the 'Section 6 Biodiversity Duty – 3 Year Report to Welsh Government 2020-2022' was presented and [approved](#) for reporting to Welsh Government by the [Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee](#).

Work continues at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park with the commencement of the relaying of [footpaths](#) and the progressing of [Bandstand improvements](#).

We continue to progress activity in support of the 2024 National Eisteddfod for Wales. This quarter has seen the [announcement of the RCT 2024 Officials](#). We continue to work collaboratively with the Eisteddfod team to discuss ideas of how to promote the National Eisteddfod within Rhondda Cynon Taf, and an accommodation communications group has been established to aid the flow of information.

During this quarter many events and activities have been held in RCT including: The [Halloween Spooktacular](#), [A Festival of Remembrance](#) and the [Pontypridd Remembrance Sunday Parade](#), [Santa's Toy Mine](#), [Christmas Events in our Town Centres](#) and the [RCT Santa Appeal](#), which was once again [very successful](#) and well supported by both staff and residents; our [Annual Pantomime](#) and the opportunity for [Boxing and New Year's Day swim](#) or [a cold water swim at the Lido](#) and to take part in the annual [Nos Galan Races](#).

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 Value <sup>3</sup> £M	Quarter 3 Update
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	6.826	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	0.600	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 21 streets which are included in the programme, 9 were completed as at the end of quarter 3 and the remaining 12 schemes are scheduled to be completed during the year.
Play Areas	0.814	There are 19 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2022/23. As at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022, 11 had been completed; 2 were under construction; 3 have been designed, costed and scheduled; and 3 are to be designed.
Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas	0.391	There are 4 schemes which form the planned programme. As at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022, 2 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 2 are planned to be delivered in 2023/24.
Structures: Brook Street Footbridge	2.351	This funding is supporting the replacement of the footbridge. Construction works have progressed with the main structure works scheduled to be completed in quarter 4.
Structures	3.516	The investment funding has been allocated to support structure projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge Strengthening and Maerdy Mountain walls – works complete.</li> <li>• High Street Wall, Llantrisant – main works completed and no further long-term traffic management required to High Street). Minor follow up scheme required in quarter 4.</li> <li>• Other major retaining wall refurbishments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Retaining walls at Salem Terrace (Llwynypia) and Dinas Road (Dinas) – timescale to undertake tender process rescheduled from quarter 3 to quarter 4.</li> <li>○ Retaining wall at Brewery Terrace (Pontygwaith) - to be rescheduled for 2023/24 to enable prioritisation of other works in the area.</li> <li>○ Harcourt Terrace Wall, Penrhiwceiber - works being completed by Transport for Wales as part of a jointly funded project with the Council.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> 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 <sup>3</sup> £M	Quarter 3 Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Llanharan Railway Footbridge – further to the re-commencement of works on site following licence / Natural Resources Wales approvals, piling is nearing completion.</li> <li>○ Imperial Bridge – works scheduled for 2022/23 have been completed and the second phase of the scheme will be scheduled for 2023.</li> <li>○ Bodringallt Bridge Infilling – drainage design underway.</li> <li>○ Rhigos Rock Anchors – tender process on-going, with tenders due to be returned in quarter 4.</li> <li>○ Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>● Pentre Footbridge - works complete.</li> <li>● Gelli Isaf – Scheduled Monument Conservation Scheme – phase 1 repairs have been completed with planning work underway to consider funding options for a phase 2.</li> <li>● Rhondda Heritage Park Wall - tender process progressing.</li> <li>● Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes.</li> </ul>
Parks and Green Spaces	2.755	<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 3, 33 schemes have been completed. The remaining schemes will be progressed during 2022/23 as part of an on-going programme of work.</p>
Llanharan Link Road	5.558	<p>This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology surveys. Following the Pre-Planning Application Consultation (PAC) which took place in 2021, work to enable a planning application is progressing (noting that the timing of submission of a planning application is subject to the outcome of Welsh Government's Road Review, that is scheduled to be announced in quarter 4).</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. Further to the commencement of works in August 2022, temporary traffic management arrangements are in place to enable site clearance and substantial earthworks on the eastern side of the road. Works remain on programme to complete in 2024.</p>

<b>Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES</b>		
<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>Investment Value<sup>3</sup> £M</b>	<b>Quarter 3 Update</b>
Community Hubs	0.190	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 WelTAG stage 1 has been completed and is in the process of review to inform WelTAG stage 2.
Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Link Road	1.551	This investment funding relates to the preliminary design, planning application and tender preparation for a link road from A4059 Aberdare to join the A465 Heads Of the Valleys road. Following receipt of planning permission, work is ongoing to procure a designer for the detailed design stage of the project and risk mitigation. 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.
Streetcare (New scheme)	0.020	This investment funding is to be used across the County Borough to replace worn/damaged bins (mainly dog bins). The bins were ordered in quarter 3 and will be installed in line with identified need.
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 3, works continued mainly on the external areas of the Transport Hub and is scheduled to be completed in the first half of 2023/24.
Leisure – Darran Park 3G Pitch	0.175	This investment funding is to develop the Astro Turf Pitch in Darran Park (Ferndale) into a 3G pitch.
<b>Total</b>	<b>34.191</b>	

- 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 2022**

**Investing in our town centres, bringing jobs and homes into our town centres to create vibrant, thriving places people wish to live, work and socialise**

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. Work is also continuing to improve the accessibility of Council tenders to local Small and Medium Sized Enterprises through improved communication and consideration of lotting structures.

An approved offer of Transforming Towns grant support up to March 2025 has been received from Welsh Government which will support town centre property improvements and form the basis of our improvement programme for the next 3 years and a pipeline of prospective projects has now begun to be delivered.

Existing town centre projects continue to be progressed, including the Porth Transport Hub, where construction is progressing well and on track for completion in Summer 2023. At Pontypridd Southern Gateway, the redevelopment of the former M&S and Burtons properties is currently undergoing detailed site investigation and design works and a contract for the demolition and clearance of the site is currently subject to a procurement process. Also in Pontypridd, construction of the YMCA is close to [completion](#), detailed design work continues on the Muni redevelopment and further detailed scoping and design work is commencing for a mixed use development of the former Bingo Hall site. A package of town centre improvement projects for Aberdare is currently being developed to form part of the draft regeneration strategy for engagement and consultation. In addition, approval has been received from Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to take forward active travel projects in Aberdare town centre, and feasibility options are currently being assessed. A range of key projects are currently being developed as part of the Tonypany town centre strategy, including Rhondda Housing Association Wales delivering [13 affordable apartments in Tonypany town centre](#) to regenerate a town centre site where the previous building was damaged by fire, following the Council providing funding through Welsh Government's Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme for demolition work at the site. Key Target projects in the Mountain Ash Town Centre Framework are being successfully delivered and are now close to completion.

**Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough**

Preparation continues for the revised Local Development Plan, which will contain strategic level policies on land use and protection including carbon reduction and climate change. A second [call for candidate sites](#) was undertaken in Summer 2022 to identify locations suitable for potential development and further engagement with key stakeholders and analysis of detailed evidence continues to take place.

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

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 for 299 dwellings has been submitted for the Aberdare site and will be considered by the Planning and Development committee in February. Pre-application advice has been provided for the scheme at Heol y Wenallt and a planning application is due to be submitted. Discussions for a funding package to remediate the former Cwm Coking works site are ongoing between the housing developer and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

Work is ongoing to deliver the [A4119 Coed Ely dualling scheme](#) which will also provide a separate community route. A planning application for the Llanharan link road is due to be submitted in quarter 4. Tender documents have also been prepared for the Cynon Gateway North scheme, but further work is on hold pending an announcement of the findings of the Welsh Government Roads Review. Work continues with broadband suppliers and Welsh Government to improve connectivity within the County Borough, although there are some delays to planned timescales due to Welsh Government tenders.

Work continues to develop the visitor economy. The Tourism delivery action plan has been signed off, providing clear direction for the five key themes in the RCT Tourism Strategy, and planned work has commenced. Improvement works continue at Ynysangharad Park, as noted in the Places priority plan, including new community and training facilities and restoration of the bandstand and sunken garden. Work is ongoing to progress opportunities for cross promotion at our Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateway sites.

### **Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great Education**

Work continues in partnership with Central South Consortium (CSC) 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. A Team Around the School protocol is in place for schools requiring co-ordinated local authority / CSC support. 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. A teaching and learning conference will take place in March to share good practice. 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 January, and proposals for tranche 3 have been agreed. A good practice conference for Step 4 also took place in the summer term.

The Writing Project, a commissioned literacy project aimed at improving standards of writing in primary and secondary schools, has been rolled out and a CSC report produced outlining the impact of the project to date.

Attendance and Wellbeing services are continuing to focus on data led interventions for all pupils with a focus on the most disadvantaged. Support and challenge meetings have been reintroduced for schools where exclusion levels are a potential level of concern, and preliminary meetings held with four schools. The new Wellbeing Strategic Plan for Education has been revised following consultation, including a child friendly version, and is awaiting formal sign off.

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

Work continues to ensure effective anti-bullying strategies in our schools. Presentations have been delivered to primary and secondary Headteacher meetings to raise awareness of peer-on-peer sexual harassment and guidance has been provided to all schools. Training provided through the Whole School Approaches grant has covered peer on peer sexual harassment and group evaluation is being undertaken. Improvements have been made to data collection systems to ensure all incidents of bullying are appropriately recorded; however, due to concerns raised over low rates of reporting by incidents, a bullying survey has been undertaken in secondary schools to gather data directly from pupils. The results are being reviewed and circulated to schools and will be discussed at the next Headteachers partnership meeting.

Support continues for schools to implement new ALN legislation, including a professional learning programme, and review of schools self- evaluation which identified areas for development. Specific professional learning will be provided to Headteachers/ALNCos regarding self evaluation of ALN during the summer term, in collaboration with Principle Improvement Partners. A revised cluster based model is in place with funded release time for cluster leads to attend professional development and work with ALNCos. The Early years ALN coordinator forum continues to meet and share good practice. Work has been undertaken between the Council, schools and early years settings to enhance transition from early years settings into schools for children with additional learning needs, and the Transition protocol has been reviewed and revised. A pilot is also underway to evaluate an enhanced post-16 transition protocol for learners with additional learning needs. Collaborative work is underway with other Local Authorities to progress a South Central Regional working group to develop a regional approach to 'reasonable need' for specialist post-16 placements.

The Early Years Strategic Plan has been finalised following consultation and is ready for implementation in the spring term. Project planning has been finalised and settings identified for a pilot project to promote early language development.

Investment in our school buildings continues. Construction has commenced at the [Welsh medium Primary School Rydyfelin; Bryncelynnog Comprehensive](#); Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High. Work has also begun on three MIM Primary Schools (Pontyclun: Penygawsi; and Llanilltud Faerdref) following [confirmation of funding](#) approval from Welsh Government. [Planning permission](#) has been granted for YGG Llyn y Forwyn. All new build elements will be net zero carbon in operation. However, a MIM project to deliver a new secondary block for Ysgol Llanhari has been delayed due to current financial volatility in the worldwide markets.

Support for pupils to engage with careers and the world of work continued. 'Inspire me' was piloted in Porth Community school in November, delivering inspirational talks, activities and work experiences by people from the local community. We continue to work closely with the career leader network to maintain and develop Gatsby benchmarks within our schools, with all 20 eligible schools showing continued progress. The Green Light Project, which provides intensive careers guidance to vulnerable learners, has been extended to support those in danger of becoming NEET.

### **Increase the number of quality homes available and affordable to provide greater housing choice for residents**

The Council is working in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to increase the supply of energy efficient, low carbon homes. Following the addition of 2 new schemes, 22 of the 29 schemes (78%) in the social housing grant programme development plan are now categorised as 'new build – modern methods of construction'. Following the sale of Porth Infants School to Cynon Taf Community Housing Group, planning consent was gained in October and a S106 agreement is now

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being drafted. Rhondda Housing Association Wales are unable to progress the Skyline project due to it being unviable with further considerations planned in terms of options.

The [Local Housing Market Assessment](#) was [presented to Cabinet](#) and approved and will be used to inform the new RCT Housing Strategy, which is currently being produced.

Cabinet also approved the new [Empty Homes Strategy](#) on [17<sup>th</sup> October](#). The interventions, actions and support provided in the previous Empty Homes Strategy 2018-22 reduced the number of empty homes from 3,556 to 2,894. The new strategy contains [five clear objectives](#) to build on current progress. Council has also agreed to consult on proposals for a Council tax premium for long term empty homes. We continue to implement Houses into Homes loans to bring empty properties back into use, with £128,000 of loans completed during October to December. Welsh Government have considered and approved a national empty homes scheme, with RCT acting as Lead Administrator, which will make £50M available across local authorities.

Following research into best practice, the allocation of extra care provision via the social housing allocation policy has been approved and information is being updated to inform Homefinder applicants about the extra care offer. Review of the allocation process for applying for adapted housing is underway, following data analysis which has identified a large need for adapted/accessible properties. A user focus group has been set up to provide a customer perspective.

The [Rapid Rehousing Plan](#), which develops a housing led approach for rehousing people who have experienced homelessness, where possible reducing or removing the need for temporary accommodation, was approved by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> July. Work is ongoing to source suitable properties to provide supported temporary accommodation for single person homeless households. Work continues to develop a Private Rented Sector strategy, which will be presented to Cabinet in due course, and to deliver the [Treforest Property Accreditation Scheme](#).

### **There will be a broad offer of skills and employment programmes for all ages**

Support for people seeking work continued through our Employment Support programmes. Between April and December 2022, 21% of those supported into work through the Communities for Work Plus scheme had work limiting health conditions and disabilities. Council staff continue to engage with Welsh Government to review future priorities and national funding arrangements. There was a slight delay in approval of the Shared Prosperity Fund regional investment plan from the UK Government, which was received in December. WG indicative funding allocation was also received in late December and more detailed delivery plans and staffing structures will now be developed. 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 Welsh Government Youth Guarantee Grant fund scheme. Engagement and employment outcomes for the scheme are positive, with annual targets already reached. CRF CELT (Community Renewal Fund Connect Engage Listen Transform) project delivery was completed at the end of December, with 218 engagements and 139 outcomes achieved. As part of the expansion of employment routes for 16 to 24 year-olds, the first cohort of the 'Black sheep' programme was delivered. This construction skills course is aimed at young people with a variety of learning needs. 8 young people completed the course, gaining 5 qualifications each. Employers offered 8 vacancies on completion, with 4 young people entering employment to date.

Work continues to develop work placements and work experience within the Social Work and Social Care sectors and improve engagement with schools and colleges. Although there have been delays in the Social Care Wales led work to develop guidance for work experience/apprenticeship

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placements, potential work placements for Health and Social Care students from Coleg y Cymoedd will be explored in the new financial year and there has been good engagement from schools in the Ambassador programme.

20 new graduate and 45 new apprentices have now completed their inductions and commenced employment across a variety of services. However the next [Step in the Right Direction Traineeship](#) intake has been delayed to March 2023. 3 people with learning disabilities are currently completing Gateway to employment placements and 6 young people are currently on placement with Access to Employment, a 12-month programme for young people with barriers to employment who have been identified as having high potential. Five work placements were supported for the Care2work programme as part of the pilot [Care2Customer Service project](#) in partnership with Treorchy Business Improvement District. Following the successful pilot, further projects are being explored for 2023.

The final RCT kickstart placements completed during this reporting period, following the end of the scheme nationally. Kickstart provided funding for paid 6 month placements for young people on Universal credit and at risk of long term unemployment to gain work related experience and skills. In total 313 placements were administered through RCT acting as a gateway for the scheme. From 21 placements filled across the Council, 10 individuals secured ongoing employment within the Council following the end of the placement and 5 secured employment at other organisations.

We also continue to provide more informal learning opportunities to engage people in learning and support wellbeing, including a range of courses at Garth Olwg Centre. A series of family learning engagement programmes is being developed in targeted communities, with courses currently running in Penrhys and Pontygwaith Primary Schools.

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 <sup>4</sup> £M	Quarter 3 Update
Empty Property Grant	2.213	54 applications have been received and are progressing in 2022/23. 42 applications have been approved and the remaining 12 are currently being supported by the Local Authority through to approval.
Schools	3.103	<p>This investment funding is supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YGG Llyn Y Forwyn Primary (transferring the school to a new building on a new site) - site investigation surveys have been undertaken, land has been purchased, project / cost managers have been appointed to support delivery of the scheme and a Design and Build contractor has been appointed to undertake the land reclamation works and construct a new Primary school (the design development for the school is on-going). Welsh Government have approved the Outline Business Case and the scheme can now progress to Full Business Case.</li> <li>• Other works (as approved by Cabinet 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022) - toilet refurbishments (£0.300M), boiler replacements (£0.468M in 2022/23 and £0.232M re-scheduled to 2023/24), roof renewals (£1.445M) and classroom upgrades (£0.126M) – the majority of works were completed during the 2022 summer holidays and the remainder will be programmed for 2023/24.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Progressing design work for pedestrian crossing enhancement projects at Groesfaen, Llanharan and Ty Nant (to improve road safety and promote active travel) – all projects are scheduled for construction from quarter 4 2022/23.</li> <li>• A4059 / Bowls Club junction - feasibility study completed to investigate junction / traffic flow improvements along the A4059, with the information being used to develop a preferred option.</li> <li>• A4059 Quarter Mile junction - feasibility proposals have been developed and the next steps will be preliminary design including ground investigation work.</li> </ul>
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

<sup>4</sup> 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 <sup>4</sup> £M	Quarter 3 Update
		for All, improved CCTV coverage and Electric Vehicle charging points at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Porth – phase 3 detailed design work has been completed.</li> <li>• Pontyclun - feasibility design to improve an existing facility has been undertaken and options are being considered.</li> </ul>
Drainage	1.000	This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes: design and business case developments at 3 locations; design and works construction at 5 locations; and delivering, as match funding contributions, 21 Welsh Government grant funded schemes across the County Borough.
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robertstown – the scheme is now complete.</li> <li>• Coed Ely – scheme completed and the tenant occupied the premises from July 2021.</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.163</b>	

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

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

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

## **Section 7 –The Council’s response to tackling Climate Change**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022, following engagement with residents and communities, Cabinet agreed its response to tackling Climate Change in a wide-ranging Climate Change Strategy – ‘Think Climate RCT’. Cabinet also agreed that the monitoring of the Strategy is included in the Council’s quarterly Performance Reports and thereafter scrutinised by the Climate Change, Frontline Services and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

[The Climate Change Strategy](#) contains a series of actions which are being developed to mitigate and adapt to the impact of Climate Change and to take steps that will reduce our Carbon Footprint and enable the Council to meet its ambitious targets by 2030, i.e.:

- Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will be a Carbon Neutral Council;
- Rhondda Cynon Taf will be as close to Carbon Neutral as possible; and

- Rhondda Cynon Taf will have contributed to the Welsh Government’s ambition of a Net Zero Public Sector.

Detailed plans that affect all services across the Council, structured around the Corporate Plan priorities, and a Decarbonisation Plan to support the reduction of the Council’s Carbon Footprint are in development. Key updates include:

- On 15 November 2022, [the Climate Change, Frontline Services and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee](#) considered an Update Report on the [Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy](#), pre scrutinised the [RCT Tree, Woodlands and Hedgerow Strategy](#) and also considered an update on progress made to date on the Council’s [Porth Town Centre Strategy](#) including the Porth Transport Hub which, among things, is a key pillar in our plans to expand low Carbon Transport and Active Travel across RCT. We also [launched resident engagement](#) in respect of our Local Flood Risk Management Plan and proposals to [increase recycling](#) by moving to three weekly residual waste collections. On a seasonal note, ‘The Shed’ in Aberdare introduced [a pre Xmas Big RCT Toy swap](#) so that younger residents were able reuse and swop unwanted toys.
- At its meeting on 6 December 2022, [the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee](#) received reports on considerations of Hydro electric generation at [Treforest Weir and Dare Valley Country Park](#), feedback from [Pre Scrutiny of the Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy](#), [the Council’s 2021/22 Carbon Footprint](#) and the statutory 3 yearly report to Welsh Government in respect of the Council’s Bio diversity duty under [Section 6 of the Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#). The next meeting of the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee is scheduled for [23 March 2023](#).

This is an on-going programme of work and progress updates will be incorporated within quarterly Performance Reports

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