*Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council*
*Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Castell-nedd*

*Democratic Services*
*Gwasanaethau Democrataidd*


*Chief Executive:* Steven Phillips


**Date: 20/07/20**


Dear Member,


**CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 23RD JULY, 2020**


Please find attached the following addendum reports/urgent items for consideration at the next meeting of the **Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - Thursday, 23rd July, 2020.**


**Item**


5. **Policy, Democratic and Digital Services- Current Service Delivery and Recovery Plans (to follow)  (Pages 3 - 24)**


Yours sincerely


p.p Chief Executive

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Neath Port Talbot Council

# Policy & Democratic Services

# Work completed during COVID-19 Emergency Response
# And Focus of Work Going Forward

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# Policy & Democratic Services

## Service Areas

- Corporate Policy & Performance

- Electoral Services

- Executive Support Team

- Mayoralty

- Democratic Services

- Communications and Community Relations

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# Our work since lockdown

Corporate Policy (4):

- Worked remotely from home since March
- Members of team re-deployed (Safe and Well Service (2) / Insights(2))
- Community Impact Assessment (PSB) – supported the framework design, preparation of questions with partners, facilitated workshops
- Dissemination and sharing of key information to Armed Forces Community
- Co-ordinated VE Day and Armed Forces Day celebrations (virtual)
- Provided support and assistance to senior officers in completing Integrated Impact Assessments
- Assisted with enquiries from members of the public – in relation to equalities issues
- Liaised with external organisations on equalities issues – e.g. Equalities & Human Rights Commission
- Re-negotiated the Council's performance management and risk management software contract
- Started preparation of the Corporate Plan Annual Report (2019/2020)
- Started preparation of the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report (2019/2020)
- Preparation of a Daily Briefing Paper setting out key UK and Welsh Government announcements and guidance
- Research – behavioural insights, staff skills audit approaches, food poverty funding schemes
- Ongoing work to secure Health Foundation funding for research across Swansea Bay
- Supported the sourcing of material of the staff Coronavirus section on Intranet

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# Our work going forward

Corporate Policy:

– Prepare "Statement" setting out corporate priorities for the remainder of the year (due to draft Corporate Plan 2020/2023 prepared pre COVID-19 now obsolete)

– Continue to develop arrangements to ensure the Council meets the requirements contained in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill in terms of corporate planning, governance and performance management

– Present Welsh Language Standards Annual Report (2019/2020) to Cabinet (July)

– Present Strategic Equality Plan – SEP (2020-2024) to Cabinet for approval (September)

– Prepare for Armed Forces Festival – October (virtual)

– Present Corporate Plan Annual Report (2019/2020) to Cabinet for approval (October)

– Prepare a statement setting out the actions to achieve the equalities objectives set out in the above SEP and present to Cabinet for approval (December)

– Continue preparing Daily Briefing Paper setting out key UK and Welsh Government announcements and guidance

– Consider how best to refresh our race equality work going forward

– Continue work to secure Health Foundation funding for research across Swansea Bay

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# Our work since lockdown

Electoral Services (2):

- Worked remotely from home since March
- Team re-deployed to Communications and Community Relations (to support Social Media monitoring)
- Provided advice to Town and Community Councils on postponed by elections and casual vacancies following the introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020 / Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020
- Started preparation for the 2020 Annual Canvass
  - Carried out tender exercise to appoint printer for Annual Canvass
  - Set up digital response channels in preparation for Household responses
- Implemented Canvass Reform (relevant training attended by team remotely in preparation)
- Prepared internal systems in readiness for applications to register to vote from 14 and 15 year olds and Qualifying Foreign Nationals as a result of the Welsh Government Franchise Changes which came into place on 1st June (relevant training taken remotely in preparation)
- Completion of Police & Crime Commissioners Election 2020 Reimbursement of abortive costs
- Completion of UK Parliamentary Election 2019 accounts for reimbursement from Central Government

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# Our work going forward

Electoral Services :

- Canvass correspondence to be received by approximately 60,000 properties on the 5th August, and responses to be processed accordingly by the team during August

- Toolkit to be developed to engage with schools and colleges to raise awareness of the Welsh Government Franchise Changes, allowing 14 and 15 year olds to register to vote (residents will not be able to vote at Senedd Elections until they are 16 years of age)

- Review of the Electoral Arrangements of the County Borough of NPT –Final Recommendations Report due

- Preparation for the physical canvass/door knocking stage while taking into account COVID-19 guidelines. This year also sees the introduction of iPads to collect responses from households, as opposed to forms as utilised in previous years

- Publication of Revised Register on the 1st December 2020

- Planning in preparation for the postponed by-elections to be carried out between 1st February to 16th April 2021; and for the combined Senedd and Police & Crime Commissioner Elections in May

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# Our work since lockdown

Executive Support Team (4):

- Worked remotely from home since March
- Provided support to the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet, Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer
- Provided support to the following meetings:
  - Leader/Deputy/CEX/ACE update meetings
  - Group Leader Meetings
  - Constituent MS meeting
  - Regional MS meetings
  - Political Cabinet Meetings

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# Our work going forward

Executive Support Team (4):

– Continue to provide support to Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer

– Continue to provide support to the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet

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# Our work since lockdown

Mayoralty(2):

– Worked remotely from home since March (1)

– 1 member of staff re-deployed to Safe and Well

– Provided on-going support the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

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# Our work going forward

Mayoralty:

– Continuing  to support the Safe and Well Service

– Provide on-going support the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

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# Our work since lockdown

Democratic Services (8)

- Worked remotely from home since March
- One member of the team redeployed to Safe and Well , one team member redeployed to support the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer, one team member redeployed to TTP
- Development and coordination of the Urgency Action Decision Process
- Creation and ongoing facilitation of an amended Forward Work Programme
- Ongoing Member liaison/welfare phone calls / publication of Members Bulletin
- Worked with Digital Services to establish remote meetings
- Provided Member IT Training and Support to enable participation in remote meetings
- Facilitated Member survey for Recovery Panel
- Finalised webcasting proposals
- Facilitation and support of remote meetings requirements (agenda publication, minutes etc.)
- Provided support with Shielding phone-calls
- Provided support to meetings of CDG / CMB

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# Our work going forward

Democratic Services

- Develop a robust Forward Work Programme for September to December and establishment of meetings accordingly

- Development and facilitation of 'hybrid meetings' model

- Development and facilitation of new scrutiny model

- Continue Member liaison/welfare phone calls

- Continue to develop arrangements to ensure the Council meets the requirements contained in the Local Government and Elections (Bill) in terms of public participation (e.g. producing a public participation strategy / petitions scheme)

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# Our work since lockdown

Communications and Community Relations (9)

- Worked remotely from home since March
- Early March – prepared a plan setting out our communications approach to COVID-19
- Member of team redeployed to support WLGA
- Published a special edition of the staff newsletter
- Within a day or so the team fundamentally changed the way it operated
- Set up a communications cell including corporate communications, digital services, web and customer services teams
- Delivered a communications service from 8am-9pm, 7 days a week in the early weeks of the pandemic
- Staff redeployed into the service with complementary skill sets from across the Council to manage different aspects of communications and to provide resilience
- Used new technology to create content which helped us communicate simply and quickly e.g. videos
- Started to utilise data and insight from analysis of a wide range of channels to evaluate and shape messaging and impact
- Utilised the Citizens Panel to gain feedback on how COVID-19 has affected them
- Supported the PSB in developing, delivering and analysing a survey as part of a Covid Community Impact assessment (1259 responses)

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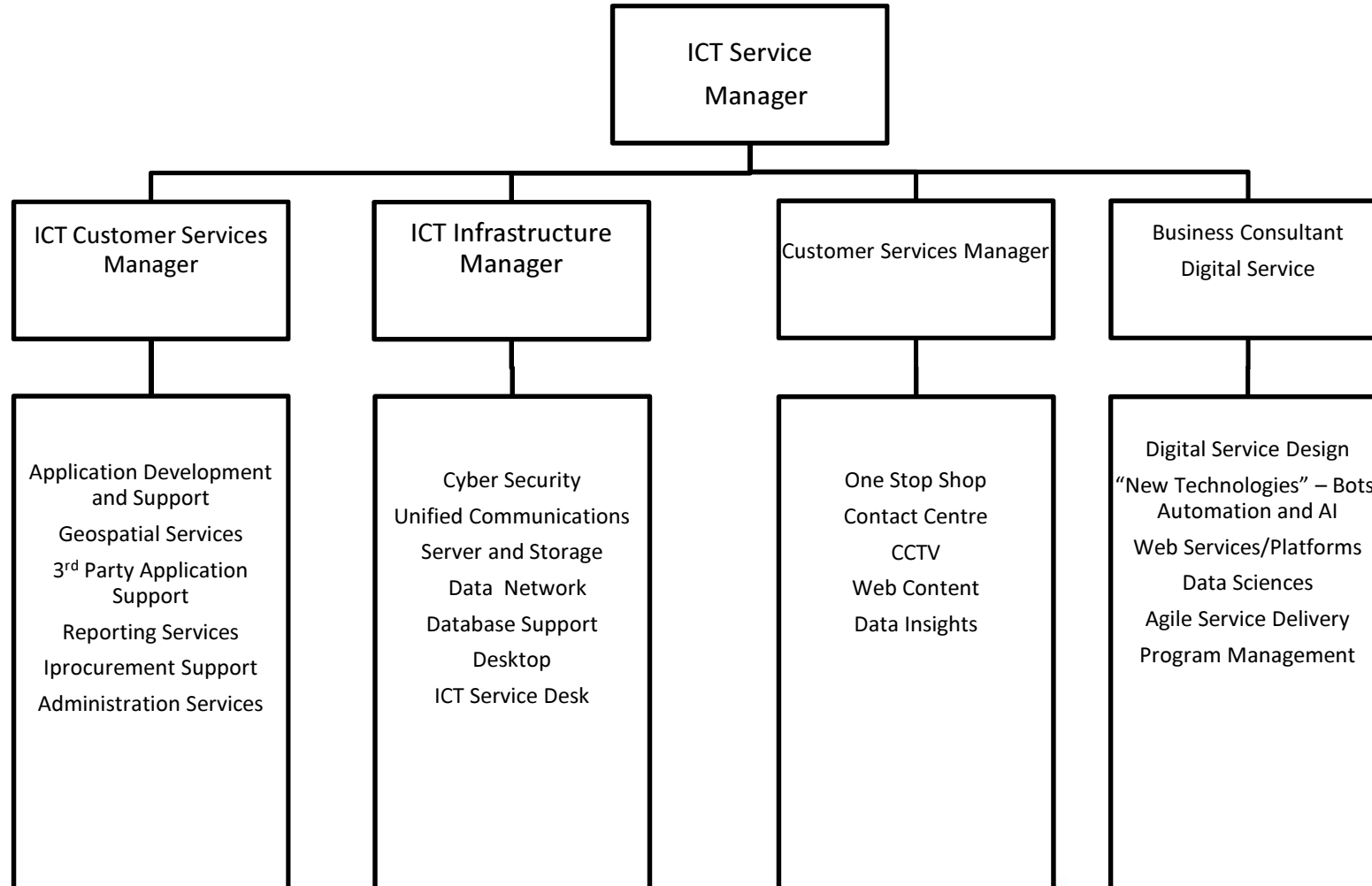Neath Port Talbot Council

# Our work going forward

Communications and Community Relations

- Update the Communications and Community Relations Strategy in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and its continuing impact on communities and businesses
- To continue to use data and insight to inform how we deliver the right information in the right way (to change behaviour)
- Propose to introduce a NPT Safe & Well printed update to reach those who are not online
- Continue the wider communications team set up – i.e. corporate communications, web, digital services and customer contact centre teams
- Develop an 'invest in NPT' proposition based on the new NPT place brand
- Develop and deliver a NPT BuyLocal campaign – attracting shoppers back into town centres and promoting our local shopping offer
- Finalise and implement the Employee Communications Strategy
- Develop an internal mechanism for assessing which topics the Citizens' Panel surveys will concentrate on as part of our engagement programme for the year.
- Recruit a Digital Communications Officer to support continued innovation
- Creating an apprenticeship opportunity, to build more resilience into the team and to support efforts to combat unemployment and NEETs
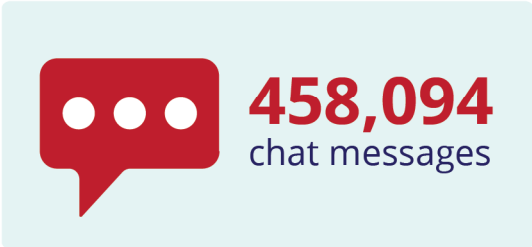
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# Digital Services Division
## (ICT and Customer Services)

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ICT Service
Manager
```

**ICT Customer Services Manager**

**ICT Infrastructure Manager**

**Customer Services Manager**

**Business Consultant Digital Service**

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**ICT Customer Services:**

Application Development and Support

Geospatial Services

3rd Party Application Support

Reporting Services

Iprocurement Support

Administration Services

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**ICT Infrastructure:**

Cyber Security

Unified Communications

Server and Storage

Data Network

Database Support

Desktop

ICT Service Desk

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**Customer Services:**

One Stop Shop

Contact Centre

CCTV

Web Content

Data Insights

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**Business Consultant:**

Digital Service Design

"New Technologies" – Bots, Automation and AI

Web Services/Platforms

Data Sciences

Agile Service Delivery

Program Management

**821**

# Microsoft Team Sites in NPTCBC

**16,548** meetings organised

**2,426** active users

**4,122** group voice / video calls

**54,810** 1 to 1 voice / video calls

**458,094** chat messages

**74,733** messages in team sites & 45,904 replies

## NPT Website

**64,900** **COVID page views** (20th Mar 2020 - 14th July 2020)

**26%** increase in views to **NPT webpages**
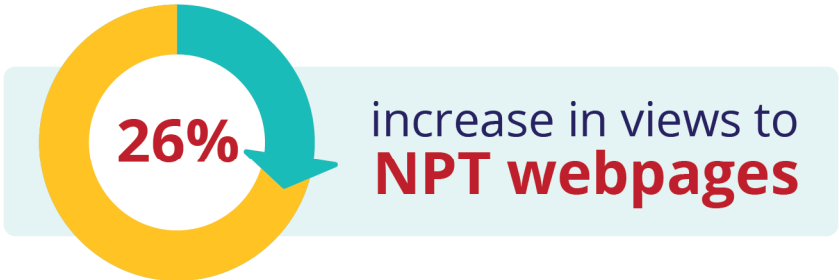
## Customer Services

### Live Chat

**1,825**

conversations by customer service live **webchat** instead of phone since April

### Chatbot

**18,492** conversations

customers dealt with by **automation**
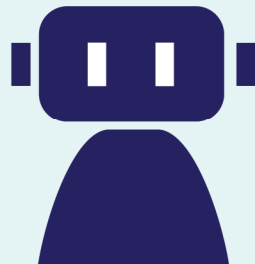
## Buy Local

**11,739** Visitors to this webpage since lockdown
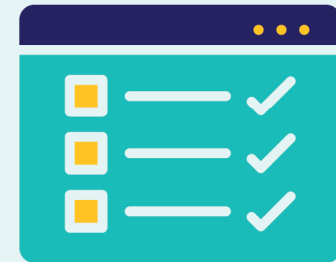
**119** local businesses listed on NPT Buy Local

## 30 Hours Childcare Scheme

**304** parents applied for the childcare replacement scheme

## HR Redeployment

**928** employees responded

→ **107** ← staff redeployed

→ **761** ← staff not redeployed

## Homeworking

**700** new laptops given to staff

## Recycling Centre

**18,787** bookings made for the recycling centre

## Digitally Excluded Learners

**1,100** laptops

**250** mobile WiFi devices

**requested**

**690** laptops have been sent out to children

**96% online**

## School Meal Payments

**5,368** children eligible for **free school meals**

**5,045** children are claiming free school meals

**45,909** payments made since lockdown **totalling £1,427,263.50**
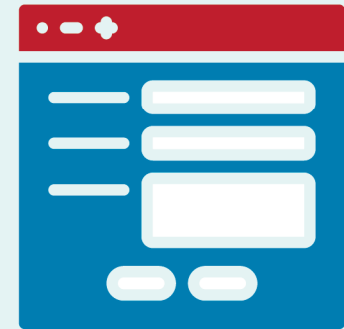
## Council Tax

**646 new** households have signed up for **Council Tax Direct Debit** to pay instead of paying by cash at the cash office

**458** households completed the online form for **council tax payment assistance**

# Business Grants

## £25,480,000 Total paid out to businesses

### 10k Small Business Grants
2,613 letters issued to businesses

2,053 businesses applied

1,937 businesses paid

**Totalling £19,370,000**

### 25k Retail / Leisure
313 letters issued to businesses

232 businesses applied

222 businesses paid

**Totalling £5,550,000**

### 10k Charity / Sports Clubs
102 letters issued to businesses

70 businesses applied

56 businesses paid

**Totalling £560,000**

## Safe and Well

**5,341** residents on the shielded list

**1,222** referrals into the Safe & Well system

**318** from shielded properties

**904** from unshielded properties

**535** properties receiving **food parcels**

**162** shielded properties

**373** unshielded properties

**595** volunteers managed by the system

### Geospatial data

allows the system to find the nearest **volunteer** to any referral

shows hotspots of **shielded residents** in NPT on a map

# Digital Services Division (ICT and Customer Services )

| Goals – 2020/21 | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Revamped Service Delivery Model OSS and Front Door Services | Develop Agile Service Delivery / Change Management function |
| Extend Digital transformation: Bots, Robotics and AI. | SSIP and HWB Program (Schools ICT Infrastructure) |
| Develop Data Science function to inform service design | Enhanced automated contact services (Voice Recognition, Bots and IM) in Contact Centre |
| Develop new systems to support Service initiatives | Further develop CCTV as a sustainable monitoring service |
| New ICT Systems: Payroll /HR , Debtors | Exploit use of Cloud Services to provide improved BC/DR and support new working models |
| Enhanced Cyber Security Model | Develop Citizen and Business accounts |
| Rollout of Unified Communications and O365. | Extend GDS services gov.notify and gov.pay to more service areas |
| Migration and redevelopment of legacy in-house applications to new technology. | Rolling program to maintain / replace desktop estate to reflect new models of operation |

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